

## JU UNDO SHIKI

### The rules of the dojo, by Master Dogen Comments by Master Etienne Mokusho Zeisler

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Tuesday February 3<sup>rd</sup> 1987

7 O'clock

From today on, I will comment the *Ju Undo Shiki*, the rules of the new building for the practice of zazen, the rules of the new dojo.

It is a very short text including twenty articles, written by Master Dogen. When Dogen came back from China, he returned to the Kennin-ji temple. He was deceived by the behavior of the monks. He said: "It is obvious that Buddhism is in the process of being degenerate. When I came back to Kennin-ji, the monks were only concentrated on their own comfort. In his room, everyone got his own lacquered furniture; everyone loved his beautiful clothes and collected treasures. In addition, they were only talking about worldly and frivolous matters."

Dogen left and settled in another temple, Kosho-ji. His temple was open to everyone, not only to the monks, not only to the professionals of Buddhism, but also to the lay people. Although his teaching was severe, many people were gathering around him to practice the true Way. Kosho-ji became too small. A new building, a new dojo, had to be build. Dogen was a monk, not an architect. He did not like the construction work, so he said:

"In our days, most of the people think that building temples is the mark of the diffusion of the Way. It is entirely wrong. No temple, even if it is built in gold, can be a mean to awaken us. Of course, the people who visit it feel something, a favorable atmosphere. But that is of no concern for the monks. We should remember us the words of Buddha and practice zazen in the hovels or under the trees. It is then that Buddhism will really propagate. But now, I must build a dojo and I put all my energy to find sponsors who will give money, although I know that it has nothing to do with the diffusion of Buddhism. I loose a maximum of time. I only have the hope to build this dojo to help the people lost in their illusions and in the goal that the practitioners of today could do zazen. Even if my project does not succeed, I will not be deceived. Even if I only succeed in erecting a single pillar, it will stay for my descendants as the mountain of my unfinished hope, and what will happen later is not of my concern."

When the dojo was finished, the day of the inauguration, Dogen said: "I clearly realized that my eyes are horizontal and my nose is vertical. I came back to Japan empty hands, without any sutra, and I know nothing about Buddhism."

It is at that time that he wrote the *Ju Undo Shiki*, the rules for the practice in the new building, the new dojo.

In the *Tenzo Kyokun*, Dogen explains to his disciples how to practice the Way in the daily life, in each of the action of our existence.

In the *Ju Undo Shiki*, it is how to practice in the dojo. Why are we practicing zazen? How to realize the true Way? How to do to understand ourselves?

Shakyamuni Buddha says: "The study, the observance of the precepts and the practice of zazen are unable to extinguish our desires. Although these practices are meritorious, it is difficult to have faith in them."

In the dojo, a law, a rule exists. You can read the rules of the dojo of Paris in the cloakroom. When Sensei wrote them, he was inspired by the rules of Dogen, the *Ju Undo Shiki*. In the dojo, the law, the rule is absolute. It is not possible to change it. Even if the Parliament votes a law, it cannot modify the rule of the dojo, this rule is *ho*, the dharma.

To follow the rule of the dojo is to follow the law which exists from millions of years: namely not to follow our ego, our personal ideas. If we follow only our categories, if we listen only to our front brain, to our personal consciousness, even if we study, even if we observe the precepts, even if we practice zazen, it is totally useless, inefficient. Understanding us, understanding our ego, means abandoning the ego, forget about the ego. If we abandon the ego, *ho*, the law exists, and the Way can be expressed, actualized. Ho - the law - has been passed from Buddha on all masters, on all patriarchs. Where the law does not exist, the Way cannot appear. This practice is not difficult. It is the dojo here and now. It is to follow the others, not to disturb the others. Our life must follow the law. Everything is important in this dojo: how to enter, how to walk, how to sit, how to breathe. The tiniest things become a question of life or death.

It is difficult to believe in the law, in the rule. But to have faith means non-duality. It is not an action of our ego or of our understanding. The posture of zazen itself is Buddha. To believe in that is the secret of Zen.

If we abandon the ego, we can believe that the posture of zazen itself is Buddha, that the practice here and now is the satori. When the law exists, the Way is actualized. This is the true practice in the dojo and the true satori without any stains.

**Tuesday February 3<sup>rd</sup> 1987**  
**7 O'clock**

*Ju Undo Shiki*, the rules of the new dojo:

Article 1 says:

*No monk can be admitted in this dojo unless he searches sincerely the Way and if he does not have the strong determination to reject the honors and the profit. No one can enter this dojo if he has the goal of obtaining the satori. If you realize that your presence here is a mistake, you have to leave. But when bodai shin, the spirit of the*

*Way appears, then your desire deeply rooted, your desire of fame, of profit, disappears in an instant. In the entire world, there are, I dare to say, only very few people able to transmit the dharma. By the construction of this new dojo of Kosho-ji, I have the intention to build the foundations of the Zen practice in our country, because I feel some compassion for the people in this period of spiritual degeneration and because I attach more importance to what is happening in the present than to what happened in the past.*

In total there are twenty articles, twenty rules for the practice of the Way in the dojo.

When we read the *Shobogenzo* or other texts of the Zen, the koans, it is difficult to grab, to understand. On the contrary, the rules are very simple. "Do not do this, do not do that. If you are mistaken, you should be punished. Go away!" But even these rules cannot be understood through logic. If you do not grasp the original signification, you will be obliged to leave, you will be tired, exhausted, you will only lose your time. If you understand only by your reasoning, it is not sufficient.

One day a blind man grabbed in his arms the leg of an elephant. He thought; "It is a lukewarm tree." From his point of view, it is not a mistake; it is logical. He was missing a dimension, the dimension of the sight.

The true essence of the rules of the dojo is to look inside oneself, to look to one's own karma, to understand oneself.

Zazen is intended for oneself, not for the others; it is neither to be shown nor to be spread over. All of you know the rules of this dojo: enter in it with the left foot, turn at a right angle, do not pass in front of the altar, concentrate on the zazen posture, pull back your chin. Afterwards there is the ceremony, *sampai*, the *Hannya Shingyo*.

People always ask this question: "Why are there rules? Zazen is enough, the posture is sufficient." Of course, it is true. It is like the blind man who thinks he is dealing with a lukewarm tree.

In this dojo, we should also follow another action, another karma than our personal karma, follow another existence than our personal existence. Ordinarily, everyone follows his own opinions, his own bonnos and his own categories. We think: "This is the truth, that is right." But at the end what is right, what is exact, what is true? For a dog, dog dirt is more precious than a diamond.

You cannot enter the dojo if you do not have the sincere desire to practice the Way, a strong determination to abandon fame and profit. If you are not *mushotoku*, you cannot enter. It is not that someone forbids you to enter; it is not a question of morale.

Someone was coming here and practiced from a long time, at the end he left. He said: "I do not believe in it anymore."

If your practice is only based on your personal opinion, even as high as the desire of being awakened or a sincere belief, at the end you will be exhausted. Surely you can understand this contradiction. "Why do we enter

from the left foot? Why should not we pass in front of the altar? Why to do *sampai*? It is formalism; it is ridiculous. The godo says: The rules are important. Ah!" But deep in our mind we resist. Some religions break totally such a resistance. Then life runs away exactly and the religious people become robots. It is a very important problem.

Master Keizan said: "I beg you, study with exactitude *u*, the existence, and deeply understand *mu*, the non-existence." Becoming Buddha is very difficult. During *zazen*, sometimes it is *mu*: no, nothing. No rules, no mind, no complications. But there is also *u*, the existence. How to follow the Way with this body given by our parents, with my complicated mind? Which action, which karma this body can create? Even if we have the desire of the highest ideal, the deepest philosophy, we still have to enter in the dojo with one foot, the right or the left one. Here, this is the left one. To believe means becoming unity, it is not an effort of your own decision. To follow is to actualize such unity, such non-duality. Then the correct posture should be maintained, the true rule should be observed. So you will not feel anymore the need to observe yourselves. Unconsciously, naturally, automatically, you will get the satori.

When *bodai shin*, the spirit of the Way, appears, all desires are forgotten. No need to make efforts, no need to judge oneself: " I have *bodai shin*, I do not have *bodai shin*..." If you follow the right rule, every complication disappears in one instant. Master Eno said: "The true secret is on your side, not on mine." It is your own consciousness, which should understand. My words are not enough. Even if we forget our understanding, we can follow the action, follow the rule; we can also fall in a low dimension. So, even if you understand this *kusen*, it is only the half. I *shin den shin* is necessary, from my soul to your soul.

**Tuesday February 24<sup>th</sup> 1987**

**7 O'clock**

Rule No 2:

*All the monks of this dojo must try to live in harmony with each other, like the milk mixes itself up with the water, and with the others, they must try to open their eyes to the highest wisdom. Your position of disciple now will become later the one of master, namely similar to the Buddha and to the patriarchs. For this reason, one says that here you are in position to meet a friend who would be usually difficult to meet and to do things which would be usually very difficult to do. Always try to have only a single goal; you will then be similar to the Buddha and to the patriarchs, linked in unity with their mind and their body. You are already separated from your home and from the other human livings. You stay with the clouds and the white-water, and you take care of yourselves on the practice of the Way. For all that, you have a great debt of gratitude toward the other monks, even more uplifted than the one you should grant your parents. Parents belong to the*

*world of impermanence, while the other monks will be your eternal companions for the practice of the Way.*

Master Deshimaru used this second article for the rules of the dojo of Paris. He always insisted on these points, from the beginning of his mission to his death. Zazen is not to be practiced alone. If one practices alone, isolated, for oneself, zazen is not effective, is not good to anything. We should practice and follow the Way with the others. We should never forget why we came in this dojo, why we came to practice zazen. To find a companion, some work, an income? ... Why have we received the ordination of monk?

If we had practiced zazen, with any doubt, we would not have met each other's; there is very little chance. So the most important link is the practice of the Way. Of course, we like to criticize, to compare: this one is stupid, he is a hooligan, is dirty, noisy ...

But if we practice the Way, none of that is important. We should try to open our eyes to the highest wisdom, together with the others. We should throw our opinions, our categories. If we do not do this ourselves, how come the others could do it? It is like a mirror: if you make a face, the mirror makes a face, if you smile, the mirror smiles.

During zazen, you can see yourselves, look inside of yourself and see your illusions. The purer zazen becomes, transparent, the easier it is for you to see your illusions. Zazen is like a house made of glass; it is not like a castle nor like a cheap rent, not even like a Japanese house. Zazen is completely transparent. And, this practice of zazen shines in all directions, north, south, top, down, and also in the future, the past, the present.

It means that if your practice here and now is exact, our entire life becomes sound; not only ourselves, but also the ones who have fed us, raised, follow the cosmic order too. If our attitude is wrong, everything is erroneous. So Master Dogen says: "Your position of disciple becomes the one of a master, similar to the one of Buddha and of the patriarchs. It is for this reason that you can meet friends usually difficult to meet and practice things which are usually difficult to practice."

Similarly when we are born, we have a debt of gratitude toward our parents, when we practice in the dojo, we have a debt of gratitude toward the Buddha. For the parents it is simple, even if sometimes it is complicated. Becoming Buddha we is difficult to understand. "I want to become an engineer." Work requires time. "I want to become a minister. I want to become a writer. I want to be rich." Time is very short. To become Buddha is to throw the time. Here and now is completely transparent. And this body itself is the one of Buddha. So Dogen says: "Separated from your home and from any human lodging, from any place, from any idea, you stay with the clouds and the white-water."

The rule of the dojo is not something like following or not following a law, to have a behavior like this or like that, or to practice now what we were not

practicing before, to think differently than we were used to think. It is to actualize the eternal teaching, to meet the true dharma, the real truth and to practice zazen in throwing all other relations. But it is not easy.

After zazen there will be a ceremony for Marie-C. Spiers. She died at the beginning of January. She got the bodhisattva ordination from Sensei. She always wanted to receive the nun ordination. Each time, it was not possible. For this ceremony, I gave her a name of nun. Through zazen everything is possible; everything becomes transparent. And this ceremony will be dedicated to her eternal happiness.

## **Tuesday February 24<sup>th</sup> 1987**

### **7 O'clock**

Rule No 3, Dogen says:

*You should not go wandering in the external world, but if it is inevitable you can do it once a month. Some people in the past have heard saying: "Live in the mountains, or in the remote forests, away from any worldly affairs as well as away from all human complications." You should well understand that they were following the Way without being attached to it. Now is the best time to save your head from the fire that burns on top of it. What sorrow it is to see that even in these times of urgency you can only be concerned by the worldly affairs. Everything is too impermanent, transitory, to be able to lean on it. It is impossible to predict when this life will end. Do not read any book here, not even books on Zen. Continue the practice of the Way with a deep determination. Practice zazen. Reflect on yourselves by following the teachings of the ancient Buddha and patriarchs as if you would be looking in an old mirror. Study the way with all your being, without loosing a single instant. The moment of the practice of the Way is always now.*

If we think to the worldly life, to our personal affairs, it is always before, after, later. But in the moment of now, only the Way exists, only the truth exists.

So Dogen says: "You should practice as for extinguishing a fire which would burn on your head."

Do not loose a single instant to take the exact posture. Do not dream. Push the sky with your head and push the ground with your knees. It is the way here and now to extinguish this fire.

There is no need to go elsewhere, to think about something else, especially during zazen. To chew his souvenirs, to think about the good passed times, to make plans for the future. Do not wander in the external world. Concentrate yourself with all your being without loosing a single moment. Some people in the old times lived in the mountains, in the woods; they were living as hermits away from the worldly affairs, away from the complicated affairs of men.

It does not mean that we should go in caverns, do only zazen. Dogen says: “ You should realize that they were following the way without being attached to it.”

We should even not be attached to the Way. Moreover, we should not to be attached to the affairs of men, to the worldly affairs.

In our life, we always wish to contemplate our ego with our ego: “ I succeeded, I became big, rich. I practice the Way. My posture of zazen is the best.”

The authentic practice, the true religion, is not like that.

You should realize *mujo*, the impermanence. Nothing, nothing last so long. Our success does not last a long time. Our position does not last a long time.

If we understand *mujo*, the impermanence, then immediately our personal lies disappear.

When these personal lies disappear, the religion, or the truth, appears.

For that, even books are of no use. Even if you take pains to read books on zen, in fact, you learn only idiocies.

Dogen says: “ Pursue the truth of the Buddhism, pursue the Way by a strong practice, by zazen.”

Look at the wall; it is better than looking at books.

The people value a lot the ones who read. The more one read, the more we are valued.

To read does not create wisdom, only knowledge. If we study only for ourselves, it is not at all the Way. If it is for oneself alone, it is not the Way. When we abandon this “self”, the Way appears.

To practice zazen, to practice in the dojo, to follow the rules of the dojo, means not to live by oneself. Not to follow his ego, not to be manipulated by his ego.

So the rules, the manners should be very exact. The pillar should be sitting in the place of the pillar. The *kyosakumen* should come five, ten minutes before the zazen.

The zazen should start exactly on time. In the dojo, we should be directed by the Way, not by the others, not by our ego. It is so, Dogen says, that we can see ourselves, using the teachings of the Buddha and the patriarchs. As if we would be looking at ourselves in an old mirror.

“*Kokyo*”. It is a full chapter of the *Shobogenzo*. The old mirror, the antique mirror, ancient. To study yourself, do not look at yourselves in another mirror, in the mirror of your ego. “Ah! I am good. I am bad”, in the mirror of the psychology, of the psychoanalysis, in the social mirror, in the middle-class mirror, religious, Zen.

*Kokyo* is the mirror of the Buddha and of the patriarchs. It is zazen.

Follow the truth, which exists from one million of years, a billion of years. Follow the Way of all your being, with your body and your mind, without losing a single moment.

*Kokyo*, the ancient mirror, has no imperfections, neither any impurity.

To use one's own body, his mind, his energy and his life for this practice, for zazen, is the highest behavior, the highest action that we may accomplish. Nothing else can be compared to that.

Do not look in another mirror. Your sight firmly directed to one meter in front of you. Do not become larks.

**Tuesday February 24<sup>th</sup> 1987**

**7 O'clock**

The rules are strict; one cannot do what one wants.

Rule No 4

*At each time, the responsible of the dojo, the shusso, must be informed of your comings and goings. Do not spoil your time in vain. Follow the rules that all monks follow in this place. Who can predict that your actual body is not the last one that you will ever have? And in the future, what would not be your sorrow if you had lived needlessly?*

Last week I finished my kusen by talking about *kokyo*, the old mirror. We should look at ourselves in the mirror of the Buddha and of the patriarchs, not in the mirror of our ego or of our categories.

*Kokyo*, this old mirror, is zazen, is Buddha; it is the mind which has the satori, the abandoned ego, unconsciously, naturally, automatically, without using our will, our personal consciousness. So do not hide anything in the bottom of your mind. People like very much to have secrets, ideas behind their head. "I am going to do some Zen, surely I will be able to resolve my intimate problem, my secret. I will become intimate with the master and then, I will explain to him my intimate problem."

At the time of Sensei, many people were acting this way. They were going to see him and said: "Sensei I am impotent. What can I do?" "I am gay, it is a problem for me. Above all, do not say it to anyone." The next day in the kusen, Sensei explained everything in front of the whole assembly, openly.

Our secret, it is the illusion. The truth is without limits. Some people say: "My private life should be respected." But this life is not at all respectable. When the Buddha Shakyamuni was about to die, he said: "In my teaching, I said everything, I revealed everything." Dogen says: "Nothing is hidden in the universe." So, at each moment, the responsible of the dojo must be informed of your comings and goings. Do not spoil your time in vain. On the wood of this dojo, it is written: "Time does not wait for man." The truth does not wait for our personal consciousness. Our authentic life is the biggest value of the universe. Not our private life. So, here and now, we should grab at the bottom of our mind the decision to practice zazen, to see completely *kokyo*, to see the brightness of

the old mirror, and we should not be content with other mirrors: the mirror of the knowledge, of our decision, the mirror of our categories.

Follow the rules that all the masters follow in this place. In the dojo, the monks follow only the cosmic life. Some people say: "The dojo is a bit austere. The ambiance is not warm enough." Sensei said once: "If you want more heat, go and take a bath!" Only the noblest people can understand the dimension of zazen. It is not elitism, but we should understand ourselves, look at the bottom of our mind, at the bottom of our intestines.

Kodo Sawaki was saying: " To find life, it is without goings and without comings, without apparition and without disappearance. To discover this point, and press on it, is the practice of the Way."

That is our practice of human beings. It is totally useless to be born human if we do not awaken to that: to be a man without goings and without comings. People like to talk: "I will be sincere, I will tell you what I think." And the thoughts are idiotic. "I will ask you a question. Answer it otherwise I will commit suicide." Your life is not important. It is better to die.

Follow the cosmic order. Be in continuity with the universe. And understand his comings and goings. Not hide his secrets. Because we have secrets, we believe it is important. Everything in a safe is not necessarily a treasure.

Dogen said in the *Tenzo Kyokun*: "Do not be shackled by the sounds of the spring, do not be sorrow by the colors of the autumn."

In the dojo we should use our body for the practice of the Way. This body is not our personal belonging. A sutra says: "This body is not my belonging. Life is transforming itself in shadow and light, and nothing stays, even not an instant. Where is our little rose face heading to?"

*"At each time, the responsible of the dojo should be informed of your comings and goings. Do not spoil your time in vain. Follow the rules that all monks follow in this place. Who can predict that your actual body is not the last one that you will ever have? And in the future, what would not be your sorrow if you had lived needlessly."*

**Tuesday April 8<sup>th</sup> 1987**  
**7 O'clock**

Rule No 5, Master Dogen writes:

*Do not criticize. Do not search for a mistake within the others. The ancients were saying: "If you do not criticize, and if you have no pride, no arrogance for your own merits, you can naturally be respectful toward your eldest and in harmony with your youngest ones. Do not imitate others mistakes but rather try to develop your good characteristics. The Buddha never taught you to hate the others for their mistakes. At the contrary, he warned us against our own faults."*

Not to criticize the others is a precept, a rule of conduct of the traditional morale, like not to kill, not to steal. It is not particular to zen. Of course, in the sangha, we should not criticize, not agitate the mind of others. Sensei was often saying that we should not make any agitation. But in the dojo, during zazen, we can actualize all precepts. During zazen it is impossible to criticize. Without thinking about what is good or bad, you follow the cosmic order unconsciously. The practice in the dojo, in the temple, is to look at oneself. In a mirror we can see our face. During zazen we can see ourselves like in a mirror. Chewing shows more our ego than zazen. The deeper and purer zazen is, the more we can understand our illusions. In the daily life, the critic is very common. We admire what we like; we criticize what we dislike. We criticize the others to promote one's own ego. Everyone has a karma, which directs his life. Not to criticize is to attain our true nature of Buddha. In our mind, we always criticize from our own categories, from our narrow mind and our limited wisdom. So our consciousness is limited, blocked, bound like at a dead end.

To enter the dojo is to stop being limited by his karma or by the karma of others, get back to the normal conditions, and touch our non-limited mind. In this way, even *naraka* becomes paradise.

Yoka Daishi says in the *Shodoka*: "The numbers are not the numbers, the times are not the times."

If we criticize, we compare, "this one is good, that one is bad, I am jealous, I envy him." But for our true nature, there are no numbers, no times. So there is nothing to praise, nothing to brag, and nothing to criticize. Who would have the idea to criticize a flea because she is small, or to make fun of an elephant because he is big? They are as they are.

The true good action beyond the praise and the critic is to make our nature of Buddha to grow and to decrease our karma.

The *Kegon* sutra says: "The world of Buddha, the world of the human beings and the world of the daemons are mixed together. No one can see them together and they do not disturb each other."

Bodhidharma was saying: "Our own nature, our true ego, our authentic mind is mysteriously subtle." We should grab this mind directly, unconsciously and automatically. Without words, without thoughts, from my soul to your soul, from mind to mind, *I shin den shin*. If we want to see, we see only one part. If we want to understand, we only grab a tip. However, together, they do not disturb each other, they do not criticize each other. During zazen criticism and praise do not exist, absolutely. You simply use this ordinary body to do zazen with Buddha, with the patriarchs, Bodhidharma, Dogen, Sensei, to do zazen with the mountains, the rivers, everything.

Kodo Sawaki was saying: "Become a person with the sky and the earth. Have the same heart, seeing a mountain or a river, meeting a bird or an animal. Do not be jealous of the majesty of the swan and do not make fun of the attitude

of the goose. Understand yourself. The ego which surveys the ego, the two legs crossed.”

Zazen is to stop missing our body and to stop criticism, to put it in movement, to stop the action of the praise. At this time, our karma partner disappears. You become unity, like the famous zen story about the two muddy bulls, which disappear in the ocean. However, you should not think in an ordinary way or try to think in an absolute way. Do not move, do not criticize, and do not praise yourselves. The three worlds of Buddha do not disturb each other. Nobody can see them together.

**Tuesday April 28<sup>th</sup> 1987**  
**7 O'clock**

*Do* is the hall, the place of practice, not only the dojo of zazen. For example, here, that would be the whole building: shop, kitchen, everything. It is the place where the monks practice the Way, where they actualize the highest truth. Never mind if they sell incense, work in the kitchen, practice zazen. In any way, they actualize the life of Buddha, unconsciously.

Rule No 6:

*Always do what is asked from you, whether it is important or insignificant. Take care of always informing the responsible of the dojo of each of your moves. If you do not act like that, you should be expelled from the dojo. If the marks of courtesy in between those who occupy superior positions and the ones who occupy inferior ones are not respected, it is impossible to distinguish the truth from the fake.*

Dogen does not teach only the Buddhism, the philosophy, the consciousness during zazen, the posture of zazen. In any case, this posture is to be rejected, abandoned, *datsu raku*. How to wash his face, go to the toilets, is also zazen.

Zazen is not a category, a practice. Entering in the dojo is entering in the highest dimension, in the home of Buddha.

Master Dogen says: “You should follow the three treasures like a child rushes in the arms of his father, without thinking, without calculation, without using the strength of his ego.” It is, Sensei said, the fundamental cosmic power.

Dogen says: “Forget your body and your mind and rush into the highest dimension. Your life should be changed from this highest dimension. Then, do not lean on your categories, on your physical or mental capacities. At that time, you will be able to find the true freedom. Do not let yourself be submerged by the conflicts of your emotions, of your consciousness. Avoid to do harm. Do not be attached to life or death. Have compassion toward all sensitive beings. Respect the ones who are superior and be sympathetic with the ones who are inferior to

you. Do not have any avidity toward whatever. That is what is called Buddha. Do not look for Buddha anywhere else.”

When we say: “ Have sympathy for the inferiors, have respect for the superiors, otherwise you should be expelled”, we think that it is morale. Dogen is a Middle-Age aristocrat. Noble people, ministers should be respected, and have merci for the miserable.

If you act this way, you think: what is good, what is bad? The morale is a good standard to decide. But morale is also changing. For an Eskimo, it is not the same thing as for an Occidental.

How to decide what to follow? What is true, what is wrong? If we practice zazen, we understand *mujo*, the impermanence.

Often, in a mondo, people ask how to help the ones who suffer. How can I understand? During zazen also, lots of thoughts appear. In each of us it is different. One thinks about his business, about his family, the other one maybe about Buddha. The brain creates lots of categories. What is superior or inferior? Who can decide?

From these thoughts, these secretions of our brain, we decide with the strength of our ego. “That is right, it is profound.” The imagination appears. For example: “ This godo is profound” or “He is an idiot”. It is imagination. Or: “This beginner is profound”. In the daily life, it is the same. Then Dogen says: “Do not let you be submerged by the struggles, by the oppositions or the contradictions of your existence.” From your thoughts, from your contradictions, suffering appears.

Where is the truth? Where shall I drive my body and my mind: politics, business, religion or philosophy? It is a very important point.

Dogen says: “Throw your life in the home of Buddha”. It is not a shelter, a place, nor a particular posture. *Datsu raku*.

If you do not act this way, you will be expelled from the dojo. People are continuously expelled. Sensei said: “They are like ghosts, without feet, without roots, tossed about the smallest puff of wind”: just the contrary of *kin-hin*.

In the dojo, we should stop dialoguing with our ego, with our thoughts. We can understand the comedy of the life of the ego. Truth, the truth of the universe is beyond any preference or disgust.

Our true ego, me, is our highest dimension, the home of Buddha, *do*, the hall, the place, the dojo. We should not be expelled from this place by our illusions, our complications. If we practice zazen, our mind can become quite calm, free, not complicated.

Kodo Sawaki says: “We should only do what we should do and not do what we should not do. Talk about what is suitable and not say what is bad to say. The rules of things are clear and the Way is not different from Antiquity: head at the top, feet at the bottom. Nothing is easier to understand”. Zazen is practiced with this body of a human being, which has a top and a bottom. With that we create Buddha. If we look from the point of view of the categories, from

the top or from the bottom, from the point of view of the illusions, zazen is useless; it does not serve for anything. If we think this way, the thought does not stop and we are submerged by our emotions.

The true wisdom can be created in our life, without limits, without egoism. So Dogen says: "That is Buddha, the normal condition, do not look for it elsewhere."

**Tuesday May 19<sup>th</sup> 1987**  
**7 O'clock**

Rule No 7:

*In the dojo, or in its surroundings, do not discuss loudly or in groups. If that should happen, it is the duty of the person in charge to warn you.*

Only the fundamental behaviors are taught in the dojo: how to sit, to walk, how to move, how to breathe and how to talk. During zazen, it is forbidden to discuss. We should only concentrate on the posture, on the breathing, let the thoughts pass. If we do not let the thoughts pass, if we chew a thought, then this thought excites our body, our mouth, our muscles, our lips. At that time, we want to speak and we forget the aspect of our mind.

Sensei was often saying: "Do gassho, sampai, zazen is sufficient. If you cannot come to the dojo, do gassho at home, only for yourself, for your true deep mind". No need to talk all the time, to discuss. If we talk, our consciousness becomes empty. We compete with the others.

Gassho, sampai, zazen, practice in the dojo, is to look inside oneself.

The responsible should show the correct attitude. If someone is mistaken, talk too loud, the person in charge should warn him.

The true attitude is not a moral; it is not a code, rules or a law. It is to live completely with the universe, to move following the cosmic order, breathe with the cosmos and speak in unity with the universe.

At the bottom of his consciousness, each human being looks for, wants and needs such a method, a life that would not be insignificant and an existence that could become eternal.

That is the practice in the dojo.

Not to talk, make no noise does not mean to stay silent. Of course, it is not logical. "It is sufficient for me to shut up to respect the rules". The true attitude does not depend of our decision, of the choice of our limited consciousness.

When Bodhidharma asked him a question, Eka did sampai, naturally.

If we abandon our egoism, our categories, if we abandon our thoughts, if we stop being plugged by rules, laws, we can follow the cosmic life, abruptly, and talk or not talk. Our whole daily life becomes the truth. No need to try neither to escape the world of phenomenon nor to run after *ku*, after God, after Buddha.

The world of Buddha and the phenomenon's are at the same place, in the same place. To talk or not to talk are in the same place.

If we read Dogen's rules from outside, they are pretty funny, but we should understand their essence at the bottom of our mind. The Buddhism or the truth are never destroyed from outside. This truth should become the true method of our life, our true behavior, and our original thought. One often says: beyond the categories. It is the truth which continues from Antiquity until today and which realizes itself through our body.

Master Kodo Sawaki was saying: "Outside zazen, I have no hobby. I do not play go, I do not write poems, I do not cultivate any field of rice, I do not land money, I do not have any hobby-horse. I only do zazen and I say what I want to say. And there, I can play freely. This is in fact the highest happiness."

In the dojo, you can possess nothing, have nothing, let everything pass and find in the bottom of your mind the highest happiness. Do not discuss. Do not discuss with your thoughts, with your ideas. Do not talk. If some complicated thoughts appear, do not become their partner.

Zazen in the dojo is to stop being a partner. During one hour the morning, we dress ourselves with the kesa, the kolomo, and we are the disciples of the authentic transmission of Buddha, of the truth or of God. We should understand the true religion.

To continue zazen, we should have a strong inner decision. If we do not have such a decision, then we discuss, we loose our mind and we stop zazen, we forget about the truth. So we should always come back to that decision.

Sensei said: "Do not forget your beginner's mind." If we loose this mind, we discuss, we talk and we chat. The true freedom is inside this decision. We cannot talk about it with the others; we cannot show it. It is zazen, sampai, and gassho. It is the true religion.

**Tuesday May 12<sup>th</sup> 1987**

**7 O'clock**

Rule No 8:

*Do not drag yourself; do not wander in the dojo.*

It is very short. In the rules of the dojo in Paris, Sensei had written: "Do not wander after zazen, do not stay discussing, talking, making groups. Remove your kesa, put it away and leave." Go out of the dojo in following the rules. The behavior of our body is very important. How to walk? We should not walk with dangling arms, but with hands flat on the abdomen, or the hands like in kin-hin but flat. How to turn? Always with a right angle and restarting by the right foot. Do not drag your feet and do not walk with heavy steps.

Master Dogen says: "All our actions are the authentic reality of the Way. Entering, going out, moving reluctantly is very much away from the authentic practice. Practice completely, body and mind unified, is to look at the essence of the Way."

People who have doubts, who hesitate, it is very difficult for them not to drag on in the dojo. Of course, the beginners should concentrate consciously. At the beginning the action of the body is clumsy, a bit like a machine. The ancients are often too accustomed. They enter the dojo with nonchalance, following the rule by the letter. For the beginners it is difficult with their body, for the ancients with their mind. Not to wander is the body and the mind which become unity, which become one with the Way. The ones who have doubts, who criticize in the bottom of their mind, their body as well is erroneous. We can see it in their behavior, in their posture of zazen.

Sensei was saying: "I can understand your state of mind solely by looking at your back during zazen." It is not at all a magic power. With the practice, all our senses become sharp. We can hear, see what we could not before. Our senses become deep, delicate, and if they do not, it is because we are blocked, squeezed by our ego, by our desire of money, of social position, by our personal thoughts. We think: "I am right and the others are wrong. In the sangha, they are all idiots."

Even if your life is precious, even if you are intelligent, you should not practice reluctantly.

Master Kodo Sawaki was saying: "As much as precious a life could be, she should never be given reluctantly for the dharma. There is nothing special to abandon for a country. There is nothing special to abandon for his family. Even dying for his country in most cases is just egoism."

Do not drag on; do not wander, don't be attached by your personal consciousness, by your categories.

Dogen says: "No link under our feet and clouds appear." Bodhidharma had a mondo with Shusho, and Shusho lost the debate. Then clouds have appeared under the feet of Bodhidharma and took him away. No link should tie up your feet.

A disciple asks a master, just before his death: "What is your last teaching, your last word?" The master answers: "Look at your feet."

Master Seppo asked his disciple Gensha: "Why you do not continue visiting other masters, wandering from left to right, from monastery to monastery?" Gensha answered: "Bodhidharma did not come to China, Eka (the second patriarch) did not go to India." On the Way, China and India do not exist. The east, the west, does not exist. There are only human fabrications. Within the practice, there is no place for them. There is no place for the comings and goings of our personal consciousness, for our complications, our doubts, our hesitations and our neurosis. Bodhidharma never came to China. Historically it is wrong of course, like saying: Master Deshimaru never came to Europe. It is wrong. But our mind should be beyond the categories, grab in one sight the infinite cosmos,

without east, without west, without north and without south. In the universe where exist the east and the west, is there a top and a bottom?

Not dragging on is to move freely in this infinite world. Master Dogen says: "The bird flies freely in the sky, so he is a bird, so he becomes the real bird. The fish swims freely in the water, so he is the real fish." In which place man becomes the real man? When he is moving on the authentic Way. When his whole life, each of his actions becomes the authentic reality of the Way.

Dogen says: "If we do not go beyond the world of the four oceans and of the five lakes (namely the world of our coagulations), we follow an erroneous way".

**Tuesday May 26<sup>th</sup> 1987**

**7 O'clock**

Rule No 9:

*Never bring any rosary in the dojo. Do not enter it or leave it with your arms dangling.*

Rule No 10:

*In the dojo, do not sing and do not read any sutra, unless a lay supporter asked you to do so.*

It is one of the most important rules of behavior: bringing nothing in the dojo. To do zazen, one should remove all of his jewels, and not enter with a purse; one has to remove the necklaces, if one has diamond rings, one should remove them. Everything that holds some value in the social world does not have any in the dojo. Do not bring rosary, no sutra. Zazen means to remove all decoration and look at oneself. Stop making up the face that you want to show to the others and creating a personality that you want to show to the outside.

Even the sutras should not be sung, neither read, in the dojo, except at the appropriate time. Nevertheless it is the word, the teaching of Buddha.

Master Nyojo said: "In the dojo, to prostrate oneself, to sing sutras is not allowed. We only practice zazen and we abandon, we remove the body and the mind."

Few people understand this point. When we are attached to what we read, to the letter of the sutras, we become attached to sutras. We cannot expect anything repeating words, neither by keeping quiet. Speak fast, say rapidly and understand it. An old master said: "Read the sutras with the eye of the sutra."

Hannyatara, the master of Bodhidharma, was invited to eat by the king who asked him: "Everyone sings all sorts of sutras except you, why?"

Hannyatara said: "Excuse this awkward explanation, but when I breathe in, my breathing is completely free, and when I breathe out, that resides

nowhere. I sing without any interruption the sutra of what it is. It contains millions and millions of books, and not only one or two.”

In the dojo, everything is free, not only your mind, but also all phenomenon's. The teaching of Buddha, the dharma is such.

There are many kinds of sutras. Traditionally, there are eighty four thousand of them. One could never even hope understanding the totality of the sutras. The real truth, the teaching of Buddha exists in every place. Its aspects are countless, but one cannot understand it fully.

Breathing in, breathing out, it is to sing the sutras. To move, walk, sit down, is to discover the place where the sutras are situated. The sutras are not only books with printed characters. It is not only your mind or your understanding. The sutras are the plants, the trees, the stones, the mountains and the rivers.

Master Dogen said: “When I teach that the mind is only the plants and the trees, you do not believe me. When I speak about Buddha, you think that it must be an aura and favorable signs. If I say that he is only tiles or stones, it scares your ears. It is simply that you believe tacitly from a very long time what the rumor says. If I say that mind is only trees, plants, consider them as mind. If I say that Buddha is only tiles and small stones, believe that these are Buddha's. If you start changing your original convictions, at that time you will find the Way.”

One day, Master Ungo finds a monk who reads a sutra. He asks him:

- Which sutra are you reading?
- The Vimalakirti sutra.
- I did not ask you for the title. Which sutra are you reading?

At this time, the monk did gassho. Which truth are you expressing? It is not possible in any way to explain.

Hatatsu was a monk who continuously sung the sutras. Eno told him: “If the mind is disturbed, the sutra moves us deeply. If the mind is awakened, we move the sutra deeply. Hishiryō is true, the personal thought is wrong. Abandon your categories and follow the Way of Buddha.”

Then Hotatsu answered: “ Until today the only thing I have done is to sing the sutras. A sentence from Eno and I forgot everything. If we do not understand the appearance of Buddha in this world, we will never be able to awaken. Who can understand that this burning house is the realm of the original truth, of the dharma?”

Afterwards, Hotatsu remained known as the name of the monk who had memorized all sutras.

Understand the appearance of Buddha in this world – in Christian terms one could say: understand that God embodied himself – is to become intimate with the truth, to become unity with everything. Understand that this burning house – our body, our mind – is the original truth, is the son of the man.

Master Sawaki says: “Everything is unity. Nothing can escape that. Then a single of my moves fills out the entire universe. A single of my movements is the

great infinite work that we practice an each moment. So, in terms of time, an instant is the eternity. To breathe out is to breathe out the entire universe. To breathe in is to breathe in the entire universe. For all the organs of the senses, it is the same. For the eyes, the ears, the nose, the skin, the tongue, for the illuminated world of our consciousness." To breathe, to move, act, is the living sutra.

Master Dogen says: "Even before that my parents were born, even before that the universe was created, mountains, rivers, the earth recite the sutra. Sun, moon, stars, rivers recite the sutra. The sutras are our ego before the original ego, before the ego of our body and of our mind. A speck of dust smashes itself and reveals everything. The dharma, the truth explodes, brakes out, and the universe exists."

If someone asks to recite sutras, it is possible. After zazen, it is possible to sing the sutras. Dogen describes very deeply how to do when a supporter ask the monks to sing sutras. It is very funny. The name of the sutra should be written on a slab, and brought to the dojo. One should turn to the north, to the south and do sampai. It is very complicated.

Without making any category, we can realize unconsciously, naturally and automatically what is the sutra.

**Tuesday June 2nd 1987**

**7 O'clock**

Rule No 11:

*Do not blow your nose and do not spit heavily in the dojo. Realize that time is too short for the practice of a single life, that the fish will not be able to live long in his puddle. Regret not to have yet understood, not realized the complete awakening.*

*Ju Undo Shiki*, the rules in the dojo of Master Dogen. The rules: the law of practice. The law: the truth of the practice. *Ho sho zan mai*.

*Zan mai*, it is Samadhi, concentration. Understand the truth of the practice, is *zan mai*, understand deeply from the bottom of our mind or from the bottom of our bones. Understand what?

*Ho shi*: the absolute nature of our life, of each phenomenon.

"Do not blow your nose, do not spit in the dojo." At the time of Dogen, surely there was no handkerchief.

"Time is too short." We are in our life like the fish in his puddle, when the sea retires at low tide, there are puddles that stay, and sometimes fishes are prisoners in them. They are happy, they ignore that this puddle will soon disappear.

Rules are not morale. Of course, one should not blow his nose, neither spit in the dojo. It is not philosophy; time is short. Time is short, so I should practice.

It is zazen, the dojo; enter into the world of *ho sho zan mai*. Understand the real nature of our existence from the bottom of our marrow, of our bones, of our consciousness.

Concentrate well on your posture.

Sometimes zazen is long, sometimes it is short; we understand it long, we understand it short. It is like a dream. When we dream, we think that a lot of time has passed; when we wake up, time was very short. Our consciousness gets longer; sometimes it shrinks. One says that when we die in one second, we see all our life, all the phenomenon's of our life in one single instant, in one single instant of consciousness, in a single understanding.

It is very important not to make any categories. Like for example the one who blows his nose in the dojo: "It is good", or "It is no good." On the state of the fish in his puddle: "He is right to be happy, he takes advantage of his life while he is alive" or, "What unconsciousness, in an hour he will be dead."

*Ho sho zan mai*, an instant of consciousness that becomes eternity.

Master Basso said: "From the beginning of all times, the human beings never left *ho sho zan mai*, whatever they do, whether they put their clothes, eat rice, welcome their friends, all their actions are *ho sho*."

Everyone possesses *ho sho*. It is not worth looking for it, running after it, to practice zazen during twenty years, thirty years, to get it, or to shut up oneself in a monastery. This is a completely wrong view.

The authentic practice of our life, or *ho sho*, is beyond any separation, beyond any difference, any conception, any past, present or future.

If one thinks wrongly, if one makes categories concerning the rules, on the morale, on the understanding, on the truth, one thinks that there is no spot, neither any gob of spit in the world of the dharma. The whole truth cannot be embedded in our life, like the fish that does not realize that his life is in a puddle.

To understand the rules of Dogen, we should understand beyond these rules. To practice in the dojo is to practice beyond a single limited place. *Zan mai*, understand deeply, is to understand beyond a single ego.

Zen is completely vast, total; it is not separated from the infinite cosmos.

In the dojo, to follow the rule means also that in this place, nothing can be taught, neither existence nor non-existence, neither visible world nor invisible, neither true behavior nor wrong behavior; your practice in this place cannot be measured neither by your own common sense neither by the one of the others.

*Ho sho* is the absolute nature of each phenomenon, live our life from instant of consciousness to instant of consciousness, from moment to moment. At each instant, the clock stops. It is the best way to live eternally, although we do not know if we will live tomorrow, and that we ignore what we did yesterday. We practice the truth today, here and now. This truth, *ho sho*. *Ho sho* penetrates our body, our bones, and our thought.

**Tuesday June 16th 1987**

**7 O'clock**

The rules in the dojo that are *ho*: the law, the absolute law. It cannot be changed, modified. It is like the day that follows the night. Men decide, make categories and create divisions of time, hours, but *ho* continues. The day and the night continue.

Rule No 12:

*In the dojo only wear black clothes. The ones who look for the Way of Buddha have always acted this way until today.*

The clothes of odd color are forbidden in the dojo: the bright reds, the fantasy clothes. The clothes in the dojo, it is the black dress and the plain kesa. If you continue zazen, automatically you follow this rule. When Sensei came to France, people were practicing zazen in all the outfits, even in bath suits. He never taught: you should be dressed like this or like that, but automatically the kimonos appeared, the kesa. Now also, when the beginners enter the dojo, we do not force them to buy a kimono. But unconsciously, their clothes become blacks. When one practice zazen, unconsciously our consciousness transforms itself, directs itself toward the Way.

Dogen one day asked his master Nyojo: " You never wear any richly colored kesa from the time you are the chief of this temple. Why?" "From the time I have the responsibility of this temple I never wore such kesa. It is simply to be simple, I believe, and also because the Buddha and his disciples were wearing only patched robes and simple bowls."

To dress with the kesa and the black clothes means to stop following the fashion, to stop the desire to show oneself, to exhibit his ego. Go back to simplicity, to the normal condition, stop the sufferings of our karma, of our passions and of our bonnos.

*Dai sai geddapu ku: dai sai, big, marvelous, magnificent, geddapu ku, true freedom, the clothes of the authentic freedom.*

How to put the kesa? How to sew the kesa? What is the kesa? It is the symbol of the clothes of Buddha. Of what is in us the lowest and becomes the highest thing. Or the kesa is like the large rice field of happiness. The kesa, it is the mind, the life of all great Buddhas, of all the patriarchs. The kesa is made of silk, of cotton. The kesa is infinite. It is *shin jin jitsu nintai*, the authentic body of man. The trees, the sky, the earth are the authentic kesa that surrounds our body. The kesa is neither linen, nor cotton, nor silk.

There are lots of interpretations and many view points, many explanations. The kesa, the robe in the dojo, is to respect something that does not belong to us. The kesa is transmitted from Buddha to Buddha; oneself does not

create it. The genuine truth of our life is not created by our ego. It is not something that, after many efforts, appears in a corner of our brain.

To follow the cosmic order, it is not to follow oneself. Through hishiryō, another wisdom appears, not a personal wisdom. If we are too attached to ourselves, it is not possible to understand. If we continue zazen, if we follow the Way of Buddha, the teaching of Buddha, naturally our clothes transform themselves in kesa. Automatically, unconsciously, our consciousness turns itself to the Way.

The true satori does not exist inside of our ego, it comes from outside.

When our mind is awakened, we can really know the entirety the phenomenon's. To understand the phenomenon's, we should use *hannya*, the supreme wisdom.

Dogen says: "In the dojo wear only plain kesa. " The true kesa appears only in the dojo. The kesa is only transmitted from Buddha to Buddha. It is *ho*, the absolute law. It is not limited by the human categories: appearance, disappearance; gain, losses; old, new.

Master Dogen says: "The kesa appears where the clouds and the water gather together but it is not limited by them."

The kesa is worn by a monk or by a nun. It is made of linen, of cotton. During zazen, hishiryō appears, the highest consciousness. But one cannot explain it. One cannot entirely understand.

It is impossible to change the form of the kesa, to sew it according to one's own ideas. The truth, *ho*, cannot be changed. We should follow *geddapu ku*, the true freedom.

If you follow *ho*, the absolute law, the dharma, the teaching of Buddha, you will be able to understand *dai sai geddapu ku*, the highest happiness, and the most complete freedom: to abandon the ego. If you follow this Way, every place will be a happy place. Wherever you may go, wherever you may be, there will not be anymore any unhappy place, no more unhappy moment.

The most important thing in our life is not to lose what is common to Buddha and to all human beings. It is the practice in the dojo and the absolute law in this place.

**Tuesday June 23rd 1987**

**7 O'clock**

Rule No 13:

*Never enter in the dojo when you are drunk. If, by mistake, you do it, you should prostrate yourself in front of the statue of Manjusri.*

Never bring any alcohol in the dojo. If you make a mistake, you must do *sampai* in the dojo. In the traditional dojos, it is the statue of Manjusri.

Master Dogen does not exclude the ones who drink alcohol.

When you are drunk, it is not possible to enter in the dojo. In Buddhism, the fifth precept is *futo shukai*: do not drink alcohol. This precept has changed a lot with time; sometimes it is: do not sell alcohol, sometimes do not make any, or not to be drunk, or not to say ridiculous words.

Sometimes the alcohol becomes *hannya to*, *hannya* like *maka hannya, to*, the water, the water of wisdom.

When Master Deshimaru was alive, some people criticized him because he was drinking alcohol, whisky.

Precepts say that one should not drink alcohol.

Once I asked him: "Why are drinking whisky?" He answered: "Complicate finish", the complications disappear.

He was saying: "You should understand the *kai* (the precepts) from an elevated dimension. Of course, do not drink too much; but the important point is not to intoxicate your mind."

For the ones who practice *zazen*, who look for the Way, you should not intoxicate yourselves, not be in ecstasy and not become esoteric religious persons.

*Zazen* is to come back to the normal conditions.

A real religious person should not sell esoteric alcohol, mysterious; for example: the *satori*, the paradise and the ecstasy.

If we drink whisky it is not good. Our head is turning, we talk too much and the next morning, we become again normal.

If one is intoxicated by religion, by some superstition, by an erroneous philosophy, one cannot wake up again. It is drunkenness, an eternal intoxication and eternal reincarnation. If you are like that you will not be able to enter in the dojo.

The dojo is to look into our mind, understand our karma through *zazen*. The ones who are making mistakes on this point must do *sampai* in front of Buddha.

The more we practice *zazen*, the more we can understand ourselves, the more we can understand that we are not so good, that we are not so pure; the more we can realize that our mind is intoxicated, drunk. Nothing shows more our ego than *zazen*. The more we want to cut this karma, the more we become drunk. It is a very important point.

The disciples of Buddha were continuously practicing *zazen*; their minds were completely pure.

To understand myself, understand my karma, forget about my body and my mind. But that also is drunkenness. Sensei said: "Zazen must be realized in the daily life." To understand oneself, do *sampai* in front of the statue of Buddha, is to invite the truth in our daily life, invite the true nirvana in our daily life, in the middle of our doubts and our drunkenness.

Maser Dogen says: “When one practice zazen, the interdependence between us and Buddha cannot be measured. When one prostrate in front of Buddha, we can see him face to face.”

The transmission of this truth is like a vineyard, *kato kato*, as Dogen says, like intermixed vine shoots, like ivy, totally entangled plants.

Buddha’s nature, our drunkenness, bonnos, the truth, Buddha, God, everything is like a vineyard, ivy, without end.

Do sampai in front of the Buddha with our mind drunk is the seal, the mark of the Buddha in the heart of the disciple.

When Shakyamuni, making a sermon, made the flower turn in between his fingers, Mahakashyapa smiled. And Buddha said: “I own the eye of the dharma and I transmit it to Mahakashyapa.”

Eka also did sampai in front of Bodhidharma who said: “You possess my marrow.”

When you enter in the dojo, you do gassho. As soon as you enter in this place, you can be beyond your bones and your marrow and prostrate yourself in front of the Buddha.

If we practice so, we can become quite happy and understand our true normal condition.

Dogen says: “In May 1225, I encountered my master Nyojo, I offered him incense and did sampai in front of him. He looked at me and said: “This is the reality of the law of the Buddhas and of the patriarchs. It is like Mahakashyapa, like Eka receiving the marrow of Bodhidharma, it is the authentic actualization of the *shobogenzo*, of the eye and the treasure of the true law. I alone possess this law. For the others it is only a dream.”

We should understand our own life; for the others our life is only a dream. Our practice, for the others, is only an illusion.

During zazen, you can observe your life, your karma, your mistakes and your important problems. At the end, one can understand that nothing is really important; nothing lasts so long.

Coming back to the normal condition is to prostrate us in front of Buddha, in front of God. At that time, unconsciously you can throw all your sins, all your complications and find the Way.

Master Dogen says: “Buddha is the entire universe, the practice in the past, in the present and in the future. Its spirit is marked through the whole history. The truth is freely offered without avarice, without categories.”

We wish to practice even if we are full of thoughts and illusions. We can get the merits of the practice and of the awakening. The dojo is the place of the Way.

Our body, our mind, is the place of what?

It is like in a mirror, like *hokyo zan mai*, the mirror-treasure.

In the mirror you can see your drunkenness. In the mirror itself, there is nothing.

**Tuesday June 30th 1987**

**7 O'clock**

Rule No 14:

Concerning the disputes, the quarrels and the angers.

Master Dogen writes:

*Do not quarrel in between you, and if despite everything you do it, you should be expelled both of you as you prevent the others as much as yourselves to practice the Way. The one who witnesses a dispute without intervening must also be punished.*

Not to quarrel, not to become angered, is one of the most important precepts, of course not only in zen.

A sutra says: "The mind is horrendous. More than snakes which swarm around, more than beats or than an intense fire." Anger is still worse than that.

If our mind is moved, turned toward anger, it is turned toward misfortune. Anger creates waves that destroy the harmony between friends, in a family, in a country, in the sangha, among the ones who practice the Way. The karma of the anger is only madness and destruction.

In a sutra, there is the following story: the stepmother, jealous of her stepdaughter, gets angry. The stepdaughter does not pay any attention to the stepmother. The old woman who was cooking gets a burning piece of wood and throws it on the stepdaughter. She misses her. The burning piece of wood lands on a sheep that takes fire and run away, putting fire to a haystack. The wind blows. The fire extends itself to the whole village. The elephants are scared, run away and break everything in the neighboring country. The people of both countries start to hate each other. The war starts during ten years.

Anger or dispute appears from our mind that floats, that wanders, from our dreams, our illusions.

In the sutras, one finds this sentence: "The body is a stinking bag of skin with holes that ooze in all directions, excrements, urine." Why are we quarrelling? Because this body and this mind, we consider them as our possession. If we put that in doubt, we get angry. "Who do you think I am? My opinion is correct. Whom do you believe you are dealing with? – To a big bag of stinking skin.

It is the way we should reflect on ourselves. The rule of the dojo is a subjective problem. No need then to go treat the others of bags of stinking skin. Exactly, they would get angry. We should understand ourselves. To look at oneself, is zazen.

Do not dispute, do not quarrel in the dojo, for the practice of the Way, must be perfect, without any effort of our personal decision, without ego. If the ego exists, automatically he hates the other. It is why in all sutras one reads: "All the dharma's, all the phenomenon's are such as they are, are perfects and look at each other like the face of the Buddha."

When that exists, one can grab what life and death are. So, in one side, we should understand what is this stinking bag of skin, and at the same time understand that we are very important.

If one abandons the ego, nothing in the universe is separated from oneself. Nothing exists outside myself.

In Zen, the anger is uniquely used for the Way. For example: the kyosaku, the rensaku. The zen masters got angry against their disciples. Obaku was continuously poking Rinzai. Nyojo was beating the disciple sitting on the side of Dogen crying: "You must reject the body and the mind."

Dogen was so scared that he forgot his mind and his body. The disciple must have an absolute confidence in his master.

Buddha too got angry to educate his disciples. After he had the satori under the tree Bo, Shakyamuni decided to teach, to preach. In history, one says that he preached to his ascetic old companions in Benares. Just before he met a monk, Upaka. This monk, seeing him coming, told him: "You look pure. What was your practice? With whom did you practice?"

- I am the Buddha and I defeated all things, annihilated all desires, I am detached from everything. I had the satori and in this world, I have no equal.
- It is very good", said Upaka and he ran away.

Upaka stayed well known to have missed the occasion of being the first one to listen to the teaching of Buddha.

Later, Buddha would get angry, for the Way, not for his ego.

Kodo Sawaki said: "If one does not get angry for the Way, nothing can be resolved."

Not to quarrel, not to get angry means not to separate oneself from the nature of Buddha. At the end, all precepts mean zazen. All precepts actualize themselves, become real in zazen.

In the dojo, automatically your mind can become quiet, you can forget about your complicated mind, angry, unconsciously, naturally, automatically. All our bonnos, our passions are transformed in wisdom. If one wants to resist, at that time zazen becomes very difficult. One judge: "Zazen is long, I have enough." Everyone knows. And one is expelled from the dojo.

Not to dispute, not to quarrel, is to put the Way before the ego. Ordinarily people always complain: "This is not me. It is not my fault. It is cold. It is warm. It is close." They create their limits, and because of these, they do not stop crying and getting angry.

The rule of the dojo, it is this same man or this same woman who dares to clear his ego. Such a person accomplishes the highest thing. If people do not do it, it is because they are squeezed by their prejudices, their position and their desires. They cannot grab the true paradise just on the side of themselves.

The not angry, soft mind. Sensei said: not fanatic, soft.

One day, Dogen asked his master Nyojo: "What means the softness of mind?"

- The desire of Buddha and of the patriarchs to abandon the body and the mind is the softness of the mind. It is the printed seal in the heart of all Buddhas and of all patriarchs.

**Tuesday July 1st 1987**

**7 O'clock**

Rule No 15:

There are twenty rules in total. It is the beginning of the conclusion.

Dogen writes:

*The one not scrupulously following the rules of the dojo must be expelled by the others monks. The one who stays indifferent to the bad behavior of the others should as well.*

During zazen, you should not follow your thoughts, develop or chew an idea. Master Dogen always says: *hishiryō*, to think beyond the thought, to think from the bottom of the non-thinking. For the rules in this dojo, it is the same thing.

If you understand them with your personal categories, with the social morale, with your opinions, you will not be able to accept them.

The one who does not scrupulously follow the rules of this dojo must be expelled by the others monks. If your consciousness stagnates, automatically, you are expelled. You cannot understand the true dimension of zazen. Everyone has his own opinions, his thoughts. So life becomes difficult. Duality, opposition appears.

I must make efforts, so to become good. I must follow the rules of the dojo. One can continue like that during one year, two years, at the end one gets tired and one stops. That, Master Dogen says it: it is to be expelled from the dojo.

Abandon or let go the thoughts, forget about the body and the mind means truly enter in the dojo. Stop being expelled from his home. Sensei was always saying "like at home". Do as in your home.

The essence of Zen, is not to stay on his own mind. At that time, egoism disappears.

The Way, the rule becomes unity. It is the dojo here and now. Our life at that time conforms to the law. So *ho*, the dharma, Buddha or the cosmic system can direct our life, not the egoism. If in between the Way and the Law, you want to slip a little of your ego, even if you practice twenty, thirty years, at the end you will be expelled.

Zazen means to stop the fabrications ourselves. Our fabrications are for example philosophy, religion and civilization.

By removing all that at that time one can become intimate with our desire of practice, our desire for the Way.

During zazen, do not try anything, do not try to cut your thoughts and do not try to follow the Way. You can understand yourselves and see your life like on a stage. The prince Sodoku, who introduced Buddhism in Japan, was saying: The world is wrong, what is wrong is what one calls the world. The Buddha is true. Zazen is to become intimate with that authentic truth. Oneself become Buddha naturally, unconsciously.

The one not following the rules of the dojo must be expelled by the monks. If one says this sentence with the common sense it is only a narrow moralism.

If we live our life only with our common sense: metro, work, dodo, birth, coffin, sex, money, it is not so interesting: to be intelligent, to be a political person.

What is the sense, the signification of our life, how to resolve the problems of our existence?

It is not possible to deny the rules. In the dojo, you cannot do what you want, in your life also. It is not possible to always escape. Dogen says: "The Way and the Law are unity."

One gropes about, one wants to jostle, one grumbles, in the dojo itself and in the dharma itself. Straight up well your back.

At the end, only us can understand the highest value of your life.

To understand this point, it is zazen, to make it real, living in your existence. It is neither for oneself, nor for the others. It is for both of them at the same time.

A sutra says: "The true self has the same roots as the sky and the earth." At that time, it is impossible to slip outside of the universe, the cosmos, or to be expelled from the dojo.

**Tuesday September 15th 1987**

**7 O'clock**

Master Dogen had written these rules for his new dojo of Kosho-ji. I had started to translate them and to comment them this winter until right before the summer camp. There are twenty points, twenty rules in total. When Master Deshimaru wrote the rule of the dojo of Paris, he followed the rules of Dogen. His teaching followed exactly the mind of Dogen, the mind of Buddha.

Rule No 16:

*Do never perturb the practice of the other monks by inviting people external to the temple, would they be lay people or religious ones. Never have the desire to receive gifts, offerings. Do not think that your longtime practice makes you dignified of any*

*gift what so ever. However know that the dojo is open to every practitioner, if he is sincere and if he looks for the Way, although the approval of the person in charge, of the shusso is always necessary.*

In the dojo, for the practice of the Way, the most important is not to disturb the others. Do not move during zazen, do not cough and do not breathe loudly. Take care of the others before yourself. The place where we practice the Way must be protected. To protect means to look at us, to understand our own bad points and not to disturb the others. It is useless to bring strangers in the temple. Only the persons who look for the Way have the right to enter in the dojo. In the past, this rule was very strict. When someone wanted to become a monk, he would go to the temple, prostrated himself and asked to enter. Immediately he was rejected. If he would stay the whole night doing zazen outside, the next morning, he was again rejected, three times in the row. The tradition was to reject three times the one who asked to enter before granting him the authorization. Now it is not at all the same.

Master Deshimaru said that he did not like the Japanese monks. They become monks from father to son, they do not have anymore to enter the temple, they are born inside. Afterwards, they go to study in Eihei-ji or in Soji-ji, they register in the office, they make the ceremony which consists in being rejected three times.

In the temples, in a dojo, people do not think anymore at the Way but only at their profit, their career and their interests. They are like cats or like domestic dogs. As soon as a visitor comes in the house, the dog comes to smell if he can get something, a sugar.

Dogen says: "You should become like tigers who enter in the mountain, like dragons which enter in the water, which come back in their true home. Come back to the true original condition of the human being. Not to have the desire of the external world: the money, the honors. Everything which trough the eyes, the ears, the taste, the touch, the sense of smell starts our thoughts, our personals calculations.

The mind that wants to direct itself to the Way, which desires to direct itself to the truth, to the awakening, to Buddha, is *Bodai shin*. But the world makes us rapidly forget about *bodai shin*. After the Gendronnière, rapidly one forgets. The work, the family and the money ... and one forget about the way to the dojo: "I will go tomorrow." The external world dazzles us, through our senses, through the consciousness: the bright world of the knowledge, the bright world of our desires. It is like a lamp that one points to our face in order for us to see everything. But we do not see anything at all.

Kodo Sawaki said: "Without dazzle, we can become intimate with our desire to practice the Way." Zazen, the Way shines by itself, without depending from the external world. Zazen does not need anything at all. Our long practice does not make us dignified of anything at all.

In the sutra *Kegon*, it is written: “The Buddha manifests himself to answer his own needs.” The ego answers the needs of the ego. So, during zazen, let the thoughts pass, do not grab anything. Do not say: “It is good”, or “It is bad.” Concentrate on your posture.

When Sensei came to France, he staid two, three years, then he returned to Japan. After, he went back every year and French disciples followed him on each trip. The first time, there is one who followed him; he stopped zazen from that time. He was tall, strong; he was always talking about Zen. In Japan, he followed Sensei everywhere and paid everything: taxis, restaurants. At the end, he did not have any more money. So he asked Master Deshimaru:

“Land me some money. The one that I brought, I spent it entirely for you. When we will get back to France, I will give it back to you.

- Out of question, no.
- If you do not give me some money, I will not be able to stay.
- Then leave! If you do not have money, I do not need a disciple like you. Ask your parents.
- They are poor.
- Your parents are poor and you want to become a Zen monk ... it is not possible.”

He was completely choked.

A long practice does not makes us dignified for anything. Our authentic life exists without money, without categories, without Zen, without anything. The rule of the dojo is to insist on this point, the point that cannot be perturbed. It is zazen.

The last thing that Sensei did before leaving for Japan, when he is dead: “Continue zazen” and “The shusso should let enter in the dojo only the people who have *bodai shin*. The others must reflect.”

**Tuesday September 22nd 1987**

**7 O'clock**

Rule No 17:

*Do zazen, as it is suitable to do it in this dojo and listen with attention the godo teaching the Way of Buddha.*

It is a quite simple and obvious rule, because anyway in the dojo, it is not possible to do anything else. It is not possible to take another posture than the posture of zazen. It is not possible to hear anything else except the teaching of the godo. However this law is the deepest. If you understand it completely, it is the true satori. If you do not follow it, with your body, with your mind, with each of your cells, here and now the Zen does not exist. If you discuss with yourself, it is not the teaching of the Way of Buddha. If you should follow a single rule of the

*Ju Undo Shiki*, it is this one that you should follow. It is the simplest and the most difficult too. Only the strong persons, the persons who come out of the common can accept the teaching of Buddha. The ones who accept these teachings can direct their mind and their body to the true Way, to the true freedom. Direct his life to this freedom is the highest happiness for a human being.

“Do zazen as it is suitable to do it in this dojo and listen with attention the godo teaching the Way of Buddha”, the Buddhism.

To understand, to realize or to grab the Way of the Buddha is the happiest thing that can arrive. Happier than win in the lotto, it is happier than anything else which we may attain from anywhere else.

Master Deshimaru said: “The Zen, zazen, is a true inner revolution.” Through zazen, our entire being, all our behaviors must change. Changing does not mean replace something that did not exist by something new.

Changing a lay life for a religious life. Changing his illusions for the truth. That is not the true inner revolution. Zazen means direct this body and this mind to the Way, to Buddha, to the highest dimension.

“Practice zazen as it is suitable to do it in this dojo.” Concentrate well on your posture. Always repeat the important points: back up your chin; during breathing out, press on the intestines; straight up your neck; the thumbs should be horizontal; the sight laid on one meter in front of you, tip over the pelvis forward, straight up your back.

The Way, *do*, *gakudo*, the study of the Way, is not abstract. It is not imagination, intellectualism or spiritualism.

Practice with one’s own body. With his body, become successor of the body of Buddha. With your mind do not imagine Buddha; do not imagine the truth. “That is right, that is wrong. With that I agree. With that I disagree. I do not know. I am sleeping.” Neither *kontin*: sleeping, nor *saran*: excitement.

Master Sekito says in the *Sandokai*: “The source of the mind is completely pure”, like the source of a river, the water is pure and fresh, but rapidly the water which flows is soiled, becomes dirty.

To follow the teaching of the Way of Buddha is to come back to the normal condition, to come back to the source completely pure. So, Master Dogen says: “When you sit in zazen, you are entirely and directly beyond the dust of the world. And you become unity with the source of the deepness of the Buddha and of the patriarchs.”

Do not follow your thoughts, your judgments. During zazen, you must let everything pass. If you stop the flow of the river, the water becomes dirty, stagnant. Let the thoughts pass, listen with attention the teaching of the godo, is to increase the dignity of Buddha and diminish the power of the ego.

Master Dogen says: “Three kinds of mistakes are to be avoided when we hear the teaching of the Way.” The first one is: “Do not bring back this teaching to your personal conceptions or to your knowledge previously acquired.”

If the teaching that I hear looks to me correct, then I take it for true. If it corresponds to my readings, to what people told me, then I take it for true. If it corresponds to what I know from the Buddhism, from the sutras, then it is correct. The Way, the Way of Buddha is neither in your reasoning, nor in your intelligence, nor in your preferences. It is beyond the limits of your ego.

So how, by which method to realize the Way, to forget about the ego, to hear the authentic teaching? Master Dogen says: "We must purify body and mind, calm our sight and our hearing, without mixing any thought in it."

"Do zazen as it is suitable to do it." It is the method to reject his mistakes. Some people always doubt. "Which godo must I follow? Etienne, Stéphane, Roland, others?" Some people told me: "I do not like your kusen, I don't understand anything." It is very good not to understand anything. The teaching of the Way of Buddha will never satisfy our ego. You must grab the essence of this teaching, the essence of the kusen, and express it again, beyond the godo, beyond your preferences, still progressing.

Then please, understand that Buddhism, the Way of Buddha, that the truth exist beyond your thought, beyond of *shiryo*. Beyond *shiryo*, it is to do zazen as it is suitable to do it: your posture, your body, your mind always new, always fresh, from instant to instant.

Do not limit *butsudo*, the Way of Buddha, with your personal idiocy. "Ok, I have understood, the posture, *hishiryo*, the satori. And then?"

Kodo Sawaki said: "It is like a plate. I always say that this plate should be perfectly cooked, and the idiots always ask: "What happens when it is perfectly cooked?" When it is perfectly cooked, it is perfectly cooked. Salt, pepper, heat are sufficient. If one of the three is missing, the plate is not perfect. The posture, the breathing and the attitude of mind, when they are together, it is what we call the perfection of existence." There is no more: "And then?" and "So what?" When we do zazen, as it is suitable to do, we can see ourselves. And our mind, our functioning appears like reflected in a clear mirror. From our own person, our life becomes infinite.

**Tuesday September 29th 1987**

**7 O'clock**

Rule No 18:

*If you let one of your bowls fall, during the *guen-mai* or during breakfast, as punishment you will have to let an oil lamp burn during twenty-four hours in front of the statue of Manjusri.*

Manjusri is the bodhisattva of wisdom. He is represented with a sabre in his hand, and this sabre cuts the illusions. This sabre is like zazen. And the statue

of Manjusri, in a traditional dojo, is situated in the zendo, the place where one practices zazen.

The practice of Zen is also the teaching of the behavior, the teaching of the four postures: standing, sitting, lying and walking. Also how to eat, how to put the kesa, how to go to the toilets? To understand only with the brain is not sufficient. To practice is to grab what cannot be expressed by words. What cannot be expressed by language can only be practiced in the daily life. Of course, everybody eats, everybody goes to the toilets and everybody dresses up. It is not an extraordinary behavior. But it is in our daily life that we should make the Way or the truth real and alive. If one is mistaken, if one makes errors, one should come back to wisdom, to Manjusri. Maybe the translation by "punishment" is not very exact. Whatever it is, we should come back to zazen. It is like zazen. You think, you are concentrated on your thoughts: "This thing is good", you sleep, you don't hear so much the kusen: "The kusen disturbs me, it is monotonous." You should come back to the posture of zazen, whatever happens. Come back to Manjusri.

From the time of Buddha, the monks never possessed more than two things: the kesa and the bowl, *hatsu u*. When Eno received the marrow of his master, he received his kesa and his bowl. The kesa and the bowl are the authentic transmission of the Way of Buddha.

In the *Shobogenzo*, Master Dogen wrote about the kesa, the "Kesakudoku", and also about the bowl, "Hatsu u": "The one who follows the Way needs to have only what satisfies his fundamental needs. The clothes are the kesa. The food is the bowl."

Also the bowl covers symbolic significations. Master Dogen writes: "Sometimes it can be considered as being the body and the mind of Buddha, sometimes it can be considered as a simple rice bowl. Some people think that the bowl is the very precious life of the Buddha and the patriarchs. Some others say that it is *komyo*, the divine light. Others say that it is *shin jitsu nin tai*, the authentic body of man. Others assert that it is the *shogobenzo*, the eye and the treasure of the true Law. Others assert that it is *nehan myo shin*, the quiet spirit of nirvana."

So, there are many deep, high, points of view, and many categories.

One day, Master Nyajo told his disciples: "Here is an old koan. One day a monk asked Hyakujo: "In this world, what is the most extraordinary thing?" And Hyakujo answered: "To sit on this mountain, do zazen in this temple." Master Nyajo continues: "If someone would ask me this question, I would answer: "Nothing at all." Or: "Carry my bowl and eat the rice."

What is the most extraordinary thing in this world? Do zazen; eat rice? Manjusri must light up our life itself, each of the actions of our daily life. Studies, even sutras, words like *shin jitsu nin tai*, *komyo*, *shobogenzo*, *nehan myoshin* are not the extraordinary thing. Your questions are not the extraordinary thing. It is

in your hands, in your feet that this extraordinary thing acts. How to eat, how to swim, how to walk? It is in this way that this extraordinary thing walks, acts.

The bowl, *hatsu u*, is transmitted from master to disciple. Like life is transmitted from parents to kids. The truth is not something that one creates with his personal consciousness, with his own will. From generation to generation, this bowl is transmitted. The bowl is neither made of stone, nor of clay, nor of wood and not of steel – here, for the *guen-mai*, bowls are in Pyrex -, nor in Pyrex. But the bowl, *hatsu u*, appears where the stone, the clay, the wood, the steel and the Pyrex exist. The bowl is the cosmic truth. Each of you is different, each brain is different and each body is different. The history, the circumstances of everyone are different. But this truth, you must understand it, realize it in the daily life, in your own life, where stone, clay, wood and steel exist. Practice what cannot be expressed by words. Practice what is not visible. It is *zazen*; it is *hatsu u*, the bowl that the monks possess.

So do not let the bowls falling on the ground, concentrate at each instant. If, when you let your bowl falling, you do not hear it yell out of suffering, it is that you do not authentically look for the Way.

**Tuesday October 6th 1987**

**7 O'clock**

Rule No 19:

*Follow the rules of the Buddha and of the patriarchs and protect them in your mind and your heart.*

It is the last but one rule. There is only the rule No 20 left, and it is finished. The ones who do not like these rules will be happy. So a little more patience. Even the ones who do not like them are regularly coming to listen to these rules. The ones who like them do not come much.

Sometimes it is preferable not to like. These rules, I said so at the very beginning, are not like a law, a code. It is *ho*, the dharma, the cosmic life. A social law exists only if there is a sanction. For *ho*, for the practice in the dojo, it is not possible to imagine it, to think: "I like" or "I do not like."

From the point of view of Buddha, of the rule, of *ho*, of the dharma, of the cosmic life, everything, every action respects *ho*, respects the dharma. The sutras say: "When Buddha attained the satori, all the grasses, the trees, the earths, the countries also have attained the satori."

The human being, he, says: "I do not understand." He looks at this same world through his particular vision – Sensei said: through his colored glasses -, along his preferences, his choices, and his categories. He decides along his desires. To be able to abandon his desires, abandon this confusion, is the true salvation for humankind.

*Ho*, the rules, the dharma, are without object, without goal. Even if there are funny rules, you must understand the essence. Yourselves, everyone, are pretty funny, sort of strange.

How in the world of desires, in the fevered world, give birth to the desire of practicing the Way, to entering the dojo, to following the rules of the Buddha and of the patriarchs? That cannot come from the others. So the rule is not a law, an edict. It does not come from our own decision, so it is not a discipline. What is so protect it in your mind and in your heart.

Master Tozan says: "The masters of transmission did not talk about it, but you can obtain it in the instant. So, I beg you, protect it strongly."

What is to be protected and to be kept is your own possession. That is before the "I like" or the "I do not like". And that penetrates all the cells of our body. It is zazen.

If you stay in the world of the preferences, of the dualities, of the oppositions, of the "I like", of the "I do not like", of the riches or of the poor's, of the saved beings or of the damned ones, you will not understand the Way.

A sutra says: "The human being Shakyamuni has become Buddha. Although he became Buddha, he continues zazen, he continues to practice. Even if all the beings in all times and on all the worlds were saved, he will not abandon his practice." The ones who practice that are *nyorai zenshin*, the authentic body of Buddha.

**Tuesday October 20th 1987**

**7 O'clock**

Rule No 20:

Master Dogen says, in conclusion of the rules, at the end:

*During your entire life of practice, only desire the quietness and the freedom. The mentioned rules here are all the body and the mind of the ancient zen masters. It is why you should observe them.*

Master Deshimaru repeats also: "You should continue zazen until your death."

People always ask how much time one should practice zazen. "Will I have results after one year, two years, ten years?"

To desire a profit is not the true freedom. To desire to get the satori, magic powers, desire to become calm, free cannot be realized by the power of our will, by our personal desire. If one stops the duality, the oppositions of his own existence, at that time one can receive everything in his life, unconsciously, naturally, automatically.

Sensei was telling the following story: a person wants to recover his health and decides to practice zazen with the goal to becoming strong. Once

being back at home, abruptly he died, everything is finished. It is the true Zen. If one follows the rules of the dojo, one can forget one's complicated mind, forget during one moment to run after the profit, forget to promote his own ego, but at the contrary value the Way of Buddha. Not to become someone special, someone particular, but a simple monk who practices zazen.

To find his own nature, his true normal condition, is the satori. To stop to imagine this normal condition or the satori is to transform, to abandon his own mind. To follow with our body the law of this dojo is to abandon this body. Everyone has a lot of questions: "Why one enters from the left foot? Why does one do sampai? Why is there a kusen? Why abandoning my body and mind?"

To practice is to realize what cannot be explained with some "why". Here, the rules of the dojo are the body and the mind of the ancient Zen masters. Kodo Sawaki was saying: "The true monk should go calmly and freely on the deep earth."

To follow the rules of this place is to follow what cannot be fabricated. Even the rules of Dogen are not his own creation. For his freedom, man creates laws, codes and constitutions. But at the end, always, at the bottom of his mind, something is not satisfied. To satisfy this point is the true religion.

Satisfy that cannot be fabricated by man, what cannot be written, printed, talked about. But only transmitted *I shin den shin*, from my soul to your soul, or from my mind to your mind. At this point, there is no more criticism; there are no more praises. For example, one cannot admire someone who enters in the dojo: "How well you enter from the left foot! You are fantastic!" "How you really are mushotoku!" No, it is not possible. *Hannya haramita* is the secret wisdom transmitted directly, intimately. Not secret secret, but secret inexplicable.

The rule of the dojo is to always come back in this place, continue *dokan*, the ring of the Way. It is the normal way of Zen, the bottom of the Zen teaching. If one wants to shut it up in categories, it is not possible. It is hishiryo, to realize unconsciously, naturally, automatically, here and now, at each instant. In terms of existence, it is our practice in the dojo, here and now. In terms of time, it is the infinite wisdom, eternal. It is the body and the mind of the ancient Zen masters.

Master Dogen said: "It is at each instant to make a step beyond the pole of his foot." It is someone who is at the end of a pole and asks his master: "What is the practice? – Go forward by one more step. – I am going to die."

Kodo Sawaki says: "We should always go forward by one step beyond the pole of our foot. Go forward without stopping during life's, generations." I have faith in this practice, in this zazen.

This practice is to go forward even if one is scared, even if one is afraid, so our life can encounter even a little bit the teaching of Buddha, the teaching of the truth.