

# 普源一滴水

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**From Shodo Harada Roshi, Abbot of Sogenji, Okayama, Japan**

For this year of 2000, a Happy New Year.

For everyone to whom this reaches, those who have had experience training at Sogenji, and all of the various One Drop Zendo's members who are doing training and continuing their practice, I am sure that you are all continuing your zazen with a new and fresh mind in this new year.

Last year, at the end of the year in the Rohatsu sesshin, people came from all over the world to join their motivation and their vow to do a Rohatsu sesshin together. The Swiss One Drop Zendo had a sesshin during the crossing over of the year I have also heard. In this way, each person digs more and more deeply into his or her true mind, and this is really powerful. This year, 2000, the Y2K problem was not a big dilemma and that we came through clearly without anything so significantly difficult is very fortunate also.

1999 - three nines lined up: 999. They suddenly became three zeros lined up: 000. A phenomena that only happens once in 1000 years: the mysteriousness of these numbers! The 1999 era was also considered the millennial end - and instead of welcoming this with great joy as a whole new millennium, it could be felt that insecurity and fear was somehow greater than ever. Why was this? Why was it that this is the way people felt most; why is that?

Y2K was considered something that would make computers fail and cause so many problems. This is the by-product of human technology and a scientifically produced culture. As pay back for the convenience, humans made it and it made our life convenient and as it gets enlarged one step further, it seems that it should make us ever happier, but instead we feel insecure. This might seem amusing, but is, in fact, a very serious problem. The era changes from 999-000-but our mind is not at all 000. Humans' many thoughts are not resolved and if they don't get resolved, we cannot say that we have welcomed any new era; our mind is not at all in a new era.

We are developing materially thanks to scientific and technological progress. We switch something on and we can hear information from all over the world. We are not living in an isolated locality but are connected

by information from all over and living in the very middle of the world. We are not ignored by anyone anywhere. Yet we stay even more insecure and impoverished in mind. This is so unfortunate.

In earlier eras, we lived with gratitude for nature within the blessings of nature. We did physical work, taking fish from the ocean and making rice fields, growing our own vegetables and taking nuts from the woods. The sun's warmth that helped us bring winter's cold into spring's warmth and bring the buds to the trees and bring forth new life: we were able to feel these and know with our eyes and body and ears, not through information coming into our heads. We were wrapped in grace with our whole body and lived in that grace.

It had true security and rest and comfort and a deep texture of feeling. It made us thankful for the food we receive each day and the sun's warmth that day and the deliciousness of the air and the stars' huge expansiveness. There was a romance to that, as we directly perceived the blessings of nature with our own bodies. Procuring everything with our own hands, growing our food and receiving everything from nature, we really could feel that we were being given to and it was all free - the air, the water, the sunshine. All the fertilizers and tools we created we paid for but vegetables themselves were free. Rice and wheat we could grow ourselves with the grace of nature; that was free as well. However, as the society developed and progressed we began to use things grown by others and no longer touched the process. Everything is brought to us from far away. We never see things growing, only being brought by transport system to where we are.

Food, and all the various things that are so convenient these days, requires money. Those things, which we receive as offerings, although they are free, use the transport system to carry them and others work for this and that all needs money. That which we receive from nature and the information we receive from things in nature is all free. Knowing what flower is blooming, the joy of spring's arrival, the warmth of the wind, the spring smell of the earth, all the announcements of spring's arrival, is free. These days the news from the world by computer needs money paid to receive it. By holding so precious

the news we pay for, we ignore the news that we get from nature. This is truly strange and weird.

In the olden times, peoples' greatest source of good fortune was also economical, but today people get so insecure from dips in economics and it puts people under more and more pressure. When we live directly connected to nature, no matter what happens to the economic situation we are less affected by its influence. Today all information sources and media are influenced by the various economic movements. In accordance with this, money becomes more and more necessary and we gather so many things we believe are essential. Because of this, we are pressured by the economic situation and our minds are heavy from that.

Today more people exhale more carbon dioxide, the natural world is being poisoned more and more and natural resources are being depleted. Peoples' minds as well as their external environment are hanging in the balance by a fine thread. It is no longer about having gratitude for nature at all! Our ego is ever more attached to our own opinion and we give birth to an increasing distrust of others. Society is very full of that to which humans have given birth to, all sorts of thoughts and clutter and its affects. A century has ended, we have a brand new era and yet we are insecure, dark and heavy, and I believe that this fullness is the reason for that.

2500 years ago in India on the 8th day of December, Shakyamuni Buddha realized the original nature of all humans and said, "How wondrous, how wondrous, all beings, without exception, are endowed with this clear bright mind to which I have just awakened." In this way, all people without any favoritism or prejudice are endowed with the same wisdom of the Buddha. Humans are all dignified and magnificent.

He then said, "We are unable to awaken to this mind only because of our extraneous thoughts and deep attachments to self-centered opinions." When he let go of all of these and awakened to this true mind, he was able to see clearly and realize this directly. But the Buddha as well wondered why, if we have this clear original nature, why do we have such suffering and prejudice? Because we have mozo (extra thinking) and attachments. Because of these, we cannot know this place of perfect equality and magnificent existence and cannot recognize that in each and every person. If we did, we would see beyond the foolishness that brings us all such misery and conflict. This is what the Buddha said.

1100 years ago, in the Tang Dynasty in China, Zen was most flourishing. Yet, in that period as well, humans' poisonous affects of greed and anger and opinion and extraneous thoughts and attachments were also poisoning that era. At that very time, Master Joshu came forth. Master Joshu was asked by a

monk, "Does a dog have Buddha Nature?" Master Joshu answered, "Mu!" What the monk wanted to know was this; can someone who has a greedy, miserable character like a dog full of desires, with no awakening or understanding, can someone like that actually have a Buddha Nature? One who only ever thinks of himself and is never thankful for nature, is there even a clear Buddha Nature in someone like that? And Joshu answered, "MU!" Next the monk asked, "Even the smallest of insects have minds, so they have the potential to become Buddhas. So why don't dogs have this?" Joshu answered, "Because of their nature of the kharma of the five senses."

The very deep kharmic attachments, each person's deep attachments follow him and linger in all directions. This deep kharmic attachment comes from past lives and manifests and that brings us to a birth in a poor home, as a person with low intelligence, or as a person with various dissatisfactions with how they are born. All this comes from a past life. This is Joshu's kindness.

From the people who can read character in the lines of faces in that method popular in the oriental culture, they say that according to their kharma a person has a particular kind of face. Receiving the parent's hereditary qualities, the face's shape is determined by this. Of course, this is kharma so it is not only something that is manifested in form, and also there is bad kharma and there is good kharma. It affects our palm's lines also and if even if we have an ugly looking facial quality we may have a good place in our brain. Each person has his or her own individual character. And as they say in European thinking, each has what only they are born with and that which they receive is what becomes our eyes and ears and nose and body's form. Therefore, we are each different and individual. So you cannot really know just with someone's face. No matter what bad or good kharma we may have, we received it from our past life. It is that which has gathered from then, and it is only a kimono that we are each wearing and nothing more.

Another monk asked Joshu, "Does a dog have Buddha Nature?" This time Joshu said, "U" (Does have).

The monk then asked, "If you say that we do all have Buddha Nature, then why are there some short and some tall, and women and men and some are blind and some deaf and some unable to use their hands or feet, or some have bad organs from birth or are healthy, why are there so many differences then?" Then Joshu answered, "Knowingly, it is like that. Because it is like that, it is like that."

There are some who are born men and some women, some sick and some healthy, some short and some tall, and these forms are all only varieties of kimono. Do not be deceived by these kimonos! This is what Joshu is saying! "Does a dog have Buddha Nature?" Joshu said "MU!" But Joshu said Mu not because of either of these answers: "Because of the kharmic nature of the five senses," or, "Knowingly, it is like that." Those are only the

external forms and not that "MU!" which is beyond understanding with mental function and explanation. We have to tear off that kimono and know directly that place where there is no good, no bad! This is not about lines of face, hands and feet, nor karma of past lives. Rather, to touch directly that pure source, the original nature. If not that direct encounter we just get caught by the various kimonos and feel good or feel bad all the time. There is no true human character there! True human character is where all that has been taken away. Then see what is there!

If we don't see the true origin, the kimonos always fool us. This is what he was saying. To put it a different way, whether we say Buddha or unenlightened one-cat or dog, where is there a difference? These are all beings that eat with their mouths, have teeth and chew and have saliva. The things they eat then go into the stomach, from there using what they need and getting rid of what they don't need. "The Buddha is great and dogs and cats are lower beings"; that kind of prejudice is a delusion. The Buddha Nature is where that is all let go of, ripped away completely. People always say that the Buddha has a perfect state of mind and ignorant folks are so full of attachments and mozo and make that clear distinction, like saying that mountains are mountains and rivers are rivers and they are all something separate and different. Saying that subject and object are different and separate, that I see you and you see me, and that these are separate; why do we only see like that? That is true only for the kimonos-only the surface. With kimonos, there are good and bad, like, dislike, win, lose, live and die-but those are all only kimonos. We look at that superficial kimono and live dualistically according to that view, and that is delusion. We need to take that kimono off and look at it all from the bare naked point of view.

Become naked and return to the basics. In Nature, we are all One, the heavens and earth are all One, the ten thousand beings and I are all One; realizing this is our true training. We do zazen and it is this experience that is most important. To just sit zazen is not the point. As the 6th Patriarch has said, if we don't make this clear then what are we suffering and struggling for? To just have our feet hurt and struggle, there is no meaning in that. It has to make the way clear, to clarify this way we have to sit in order to realize this. Don't sit in a decorated way; throw away everything you hold on to and all those kimonos you wear. If you throw away all of it you can see how the heavens and earth are One and we are the same as all the myriad things. There is not a tiniest twist in that. The truth is the mountain is me, and I am the mountain, the river is me, and I am the river. The Buddha realized this actual truth. The Buddha saw the morning star and said, "I am shining!!!" Hakuin heard the morning bell and said, "I am ringing!!!" He realized this directly. All the ten thousand things that I realize, there is not even a slight

space between us. I am the world I see because there is a world that I see. There is no separation between object and subject, not the slightest seam.

Breathing the universe of air and drinking its water, we all wear that, we are not separated from the universe and we couldn't be or we wouldn't exist. When we die we all melt into the universe, there is no separation between the universe and us. To know this truth directly is the essence of zazen.

It is not about some truth to be thankful to, designing that in our head and making that a picture in our being. That is not the point. To let go of all of that kind of decoration and become a naked human, this is the truth of our zazen. Joshu said MU! to express just that. A long time after Joshu came to Goso Hoen Zenji. He said about Joshu's MU that it was like a glistening, bared sword pointing into the sky. He said about this MU! of Joshu that it has no discrimination and can cut through all kimonos. There is great function in that MU!. In the freezing winter, when there is only the bright shining of the moon, there is not the slightest differentiation at all, and if we add any judgment or thought or hesitation there it will be cut in two immediately!

With this mu, we cut all of our mental understanding, all extraneous thinking and attachments at the root! But since we don't have such courage and definite determination, we hesitate and say, "I haven't done anything so bad, and I can't do anything that difficult." Then we go to this person who says this wonderful thing, and then over there to that person who says that remarkable thing and are moved around by all of it. We say this truth is REALLY it, and that book is saying the ACTUAL truth, or that religion is teaching the REAL thing, or maybe that one is actually BETTER. We compare all those kimonos, and that has no meaning whatsoever. If we have not got that sharpness of the sword, we will get caught on the skin and the flesh and not get down to the root, and ZAP! cut it all away. So we are tossed and turned around.

What is important is that we rip it all away and open that true seeing eye which is revealed when we become completely naked, the truly seeing eye of truth. But everybody gets caught on the bones and skin and flesh, sticking to this, caught on that and pretending to understand and examining words in a big excitement. That will only be a comparison of kimonos and there is no truth in that at all.

Joshu's Mu is the first case in the koan collection of the Mumonkan and Mumon Ekai Zenji himself, who compiled the Mumonkan, chose it for the first case. Ekai Zenji himself experienced a deep enlightenment with it. We all do zazen for this Gate of the Patriarchs. We have to realize this truth of Joshu, this naked truth. One who hasn't realized this can't be said to have done zazen. We have to encounter directly that place from where our awareness comes forth. This is the source of all of those

thoughts. Using that MU MU MU!!! to cut it all away; not thinking "it is not this and it isn't that and this isn't it, maybe that is it --is it this or maybe that??" That root, from which all of that mozo comes forth, cut it through with that MU!

We are drunk by and live stuck in our dualistic thoughts. We think we cannot live without them, yet these are the source of all delusion. What are these thoughts and ideas and opinions? They are only things we have taken on and learned since birth. They are only such a tiny bit of experience and knowledge. We just learned these things since our birth and we are depending on them and leaving out our Minds' true source, putting it aside for this short bit of learning and knowledge. How foolish this is!

What has to be done is to become this MU! with our whole being. To become it until it reaches every hair pore and cell and can cut away every bit of dualistic thinking all the way to where we can experience that Great Death. That path of the endlessly running along mind has to be cut, and because we don't cut it completely the extraneous thinking and attachments that are always springing forth keep us caught and tugged by what we see hear and read. Then we are pushed and pulled around by everything we see and hear. If we cut that root once, then all of our senses and true awareness is reborn and all of those tools become our friends to be used and not to be used by. Until we realize that rebirth, they are all sources of delusion and confusion. To be able to realize this requires that we throw all our 360 smallest joints and 84,000 hair cells into it completely, using every bit of ourselves from the top of our head to the bottoms of our feet we give everything we are to it.

Again, Mumon Ekai continues. Telling us how we have to become one Great MU! from head to toe, one whole MU! with our whole body, to become that MU! in one solid layer. With our whole body and soul, we must concentrate and melt into that MU! by becoming it completely, sitting, standing or walking. We have to become that MU! in everything we do all day long, to where there is nothing other than MU! and nothing left behind. It has to be realized to that extent. It has to continue through all the 24 hours of the day, yet without falling into nihilistic or false views. From morning to night totally becoming a fool and only doing that MU! the whole time. We continue it in every moment until all of our awareness is only that MU! and that MU! becomes our every breath. Don't stop in the middle! Keep it going until the end! Everyone can do this!

It is just like holding a red-hot iron ball in our mouth that we cannot spit out and we cannot swallow down, that MU! continuing constantly and unceasingly. There is nothing whatsoever in your awareness but that MU! To do it all the way to this final point is most important. To put your whole concentration in one place is

samadhi, and without knowing that samadhi, all rational understanding you may have is useless. You will only be tossed and turned by your understanding and actually have understood nothing whatsoever. For example, even if it is the Buddha's name you are repeating, when you do it to the point of samadhi it is no longer the Buddha's name, it is the whole universe swallowed down into one great Truth. It is not about understanding it or not understanding it; with everything you are become that MUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUU!

In this one moment of becoming MU! totally, even if you don't realize it yet, you are not tossed around by extraneous thoughts and that is such a great feeling. That brings a state of mind that is wide open and abundant and expands throughout the heavens and earth without all kinds of thinking or wandering around inside your head. We become all cleaned out, very crisp and clear, a bright, new and fresh feeling. To experience this one or two or many times. To experience it and then we will not be caught on the bones, flesh, and skin. Yet if we do not do it to this point, we will stay caught on the flesh and the bones. Because we do it like this, we are able to keep it going in all 24 hours of the day and can let go of all of our conditioning. We can then realize the place where there is no difference anywhere between internal and external.

All of those things that we have learned since birth, all of that piled up conditioning is let go of and all that which clutters our pure awareness is swept away with that MU! Spit out all of it and with all of that gotten rid of, all the poison-filled gutters of our mind are cleaned completely.

EXHALE!! EXHALE!! EXHALE!!

Exhale until you yourself are all exhaled out and there is nothing left to exhale. Then for the first time since you have been born, just like a total fool, you become completely wide open and the pure original mind root is touched directly.

EXHALE!! EXHALE!! EXHALE!! EXHALE!!

EXHALE and then for the first time all the ideas about good and bad things are gone beyond completely and there is no longer even the slightest bit of ANY self-consciousness. There is not even a shadow of it left at all. When we look at the world from this state of mind we are wide open and then all of the dualistic and discursive people all look fuzzy and without their feet on the ground. They appear wobbly and ungrounded. A person may think they are sturdy and confident, but from our eyes they are lacking truth. They have not touched the root of the truth yet. Those who have not yet touched the truth yet look as if they are in great danger and we are able to see this clearly.

Realizing this state of mind is called in Zen the Mind of the Great Death and we have to realize that. It is our responsibility to do that. This is what our true clear pure mind is. We touch that and the whole universe is swallowed down by that state of mind; to realize this is our

responsibility. This whole world swallowed down completely. But this is still not everything.

That place where everything is swallowed down then brings forth everything once again. It has to be brought forth from our eyes, from our ears, from our mouth, from our body; it is all brought forth from our true awareness. It is all coming forth. The Buddha came forth at the seeing of the morning star. We each have to have this experience of becoming the master of the true world. We have to do it to this point. Joshu said "Mu!" We have to know we are not being swallowed down by this world but are swallowing it down. Because we don't know this, we get confused and get pushed around by conditions in the world, by being scared, or by servitude to things and production and technology. Because we get caught on these, we get so confused. To not be moved around in that way but to know this pure mind and from it swallow down everything. This is the essence of zazen. That which we have swallowed down, without fail, it will come surging forth, using our senses and giving them functioning. Bringing forth the morning star, the dawn bell coming forth, the sound of the tile hitting the bamboo coming forth, the endless mountains and rivers and moon and sunshine are born, flowers and birds are born and all the 10,000 things come forth.

But first, that true master from whom all comes forth has to be realized and clarified, and in that direct experience is our true living zazen. This experience can be limited by nothing, bound by nothing, not by calculated dualistic thoughts. Our true awareness is not caught by anything; even the question of life and death. Everything in this whole world changes and appears deluded. We have to break free from that delusion and in the doing of that, we become transparent and clear.

Like Rinzai said, "To be in hell and play around with all the devils, jumping into hell, and yet to be as if we are in a park with beautiful scenery. If we realize the state of a mind where there is no dualism every bit of ourselves body and being are all used up by becoming that MU!. But we have to realize it totally! If we proceed without any gap, we will without fail reach the very root of our mind and there is no way to do it but that. To do this, we become the person responsible for this whole world. Every person in the whole world has this responsibility to liberate everyone. To take this responsibility is which I wish for everyone.

Joshu's MU! is the heaven's command to pierce through our whole being and make us full and taut and give birth to our great wisdom limitlessly. If this realization is our zazen, if that is the goal of our zazen, then this is our actual essence; else it will not be useful. Zen dojos are putting everything into actualizing this. In December, all the practitioners of Zen put everything they are and can live into it through the morning of the eighth day. The seniors keep

prodding the juniors, not allowing them to retreat, and those who have experienced this are all spurring on the junior students. This is the kindness of those who have been senior in realizing this. Those who have experienced this are giving total support to those who are not yet ripened in the doing of it. That which we are always grabbing hold to, that ego which we are always clinging to for dear life, that has got to be let go of completely. We are using the ancients' wisdom and letting go of our usual indulgence, no matter how much we hate to have to do that. There the real thing comes to work, the real zazen gets going and this experience is possible. Once it is experienced, we finally have the celebration of the Winter Solstice Night where all of the mozo and delusions are swept away and we are clean and clear of every bit of clutter. In this state of mind, we celebrate that ultimate night of the yin and we honor the place of no delusion.

Dai e Zenji 's sixth disciple receiving transmission was Soseki Bonni Zenji, who wrote these famous words in the 12th century: "A whale has drunk up all the water in the ocean and at the bottom of the ocean what was found? Only a radiant branch of coral." In this same way, this world of truth is being sung about.

For realizing this, we also have to review our behavior. We have to repent and repent all of the mistakes we have made and all of our unskillful actions, to repent and review and repent again and again. And then when we sit we will not sit in a compromised way. We will not sit in a way moved around by the difficult karma of our five senses, as Joshu has said. To let go of all of this we truly have to put our life on the line and this practice of repenting and reviewing our behavior continually is what expresses this. MUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUU! Whether we are sitting, sleeping, walking, working, we work on that deepest repentance with everything we are in everything we do. Then, for the first time, no matter what problem we have or no matter what physical challenge we have, we will not be moved around by anything. This is Joshu's state of mind in this MU!

In this way, do not conceptualize the Buddha Nature but believe completely in our original nature and clarify it to the most final point. Realizing this essence for the first time, our deep faith is fulfilled and we have a firm base to welcome this 2000 year within this endless confusion and insecurity. We will be able to sweep it away with this essence, and with this truth, we can clarify it all.

To all the One Drop Zendo people, please do not let your zazen become compromised zazen. That is each person's responsibility. For that to be this New Year's promise and the source point for the new era we receive now. For our mind's source and origin point, we need to have ever more truth and passion in our practice. I believe that this deep faith of each person, this true faith of each of you, will solve the insecurity and solve the confusion in the world, bringing the deep root of peace.

## Sesshins 2000

January	6-10	Kosesshin	May	3-9	Kosesshin	September	2-8	Kosesshin
	15-21	Osesshin		14-20	Osesshin		14-20	Kosesshin
	25-29	Kosesshin		24-30	Kosesshin		24-30	Osesshin
February	2-6	Kosesshin	June	4-8	Kosesshin	October	5-11	Kosesshin
	10-16	Osesshin		12-18	Osesshin		16-22	Osesshin
	21-27	Kosesshin		23-20	Kosesshin		26-30	Kosesshin
March	2-8	Kosesshin	July	4-10	Kosesshin	November	7-11	Kosesshin
	12-18	Osesshin		15-21	Osesshin		15-21	Osesshin
	23-27	Kosesshin		26-30	Kosesshin		25-29	Kosesshin
April	5-11	Kosesshin	August	4-10	Kosesshin	December	4-10	Rohatsu
	16-22	Osesshin		17-21	Kosesshin		14-20	Osesshin
	25-29	Kosesshin		25-29	Kosesshin		24-28	Kosesshin

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