

Apr 21st, 2024
Esho's shuso talk #1: Way-seeking Mind

Talk overview

In this talk, we explore self/Self by examining how "way-seeking mind" is leading us to the path of realization, how suffering can prompt way-seeking mind, and how understanding suffering can guide us in the way.

Supplemental reading: [The four noble truths](#) - by Ajahn Sumedho (The first truth: "There is suffering" P.1 - P.28)

Practices & reflections

1) Establish or renew an every day Zazen practice - cultivate awareness and a receptive and spacious mind

If you are new to practice or to Sanshin, check out the [New to Sanshin?](#) webpage, and sign up for a *Getting Started in Zen Practice* session. Start sitting Zazen for five minutes and increase over time.

If you are an experienced practitioner, I encourage you to commit to daily zazen practice in person or online with us for this three month practice period.

2) Bringing Zazen mind to daily life - studying self and suffering

- ***Be aware and recognize when you are suffering*** - big or small, extreme or mild - irritation, annoyance, anger, boredom, depression, excitement, rigidity, tightness, etc.
- ***Allow and accept the way you are to be as you are*** - Feel the body, It is OK to be whatever you are - be compassionate to your suffering.
- ***Investigate if there is any thought you are holding onto that is creating suffering*** - wanting, not wanting, should, should not, grasping, clinging, or pushing away, etc. Reflect and Contemplate on these sufferings - made up of conditions that are impermanent, unsatisfactory, and non-self. Practice seeing them as they are.
- ***Opening the hand of thought*** - See if you can open the hand of thought, let go of your thought, or let the thought be held in spacious awareness, and see how it feels.

Apr 21st, 2024
Esho's shuso talk #1: Way-seeking Mind

3. Reflect on how “Way-seeking Mind” is leading you to and on the path - How are you guided by “Way-seeking Mind”?

What were the insights or turning points that made you interested in or brought you more to the spiritual path? When was it? How did it happen? Was it suffering or inspiration from a friend, family, or a book? How do you see interconnectedness through your experience of way seeking mind?

4. If you are called to, find a dharma buddy/ partner to practice for this practice period together. Once a week, find time together in person or online and share your experience of practice. Practice deep listening when your partner is sharing about their practice, without giving your advice, opinion, or thoughts to your partner. Be receptive and spacious to hold whatever your partner is offering. Only offer your reflection on the partner's sharing when you are asked. Avoid giving advice.

5. If you are called to, you can write about your experience of practice and send them to me. Probably, I will not be able to respond by writing, but if you indicate that you allow me to share your experience in my future talks, please do so.

6. Prayer and Poem for your inspiration

Below is a prayer of Saint Francis of Assisi and a poem by Thich Nhat Hanh for your contemplation on peace

Peace Prayer of Saint Francis of Assisi

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace:
where there is hatred, let me sow love;
where there is injury, pardon;
where there is doubt, faith;
where there is despair, hope;

Apr 21st, 2024
Esho's shuso talk #1: Way-seeking Mind

where there is darkness, light;
where there is sadness, joy.

O divine Master,
grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console,
to be understood as to understand,
to be loved as to love.
For it is in giving that we receive,
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

*Please Call Me by My True Names by **Thich Nhat Hanh***

Do not say that I'll depart tomorrow
because even today I still arrive.
Look deeply: I arrive in every second
to be a bud on a spring branch,
to be a tiny bird, with wings still fragile,
learning to sing in my new nest,
to be a caterpillar in the heart of a flower,
to be a jewel hiding itself in a stone.
I still arrive, in order to laugh and to cry,
in order to fear and to hope.
The rhythm of my heart is the birth and
death of all that are alive.
I am the mayfly metamorphosing on the surface of the river,
and I am the bird which, when spring comes, arrives in time
to eat the mayfly.
I am the frog swimming happily in the clear pond,
and I am also the grass-snake who, approaching in silence,
feeds itself on the frog.
I am the child in Uganda, all skin and bones,
my legs as thin as bamboo sticks,
and I am the arms merchant, selling deadly weapons to Uganda.

Apr 21st, 2024
Esho's shuso talk #1: Way-seeking Mind

I am the twelve-year-old girl, refugee on a small boat,
who throws herself into the ocean after being raped by a sea pirate,
and I am the pirate, my heart not yet capable of seeing and loving.
I am a member of the politburo, with plenty of power in my hands,
and I am the man who has to pay his "debt of blood" to my people,
dying slowly in a forced labor camp.
My joy is like spring, so warm it makes flowers bloom in all walks of life.
My pain is like a river of tears, so full it fills the four oceans.
Please call me by my true names,
so I can hear all my cries and laughs at once,
so I can see that my joy and pain are one.

Please call me by my true names,
so I can wake up,
and so the door of my heart can be left open,
the door of compassion.