

One experiences emptiness, brightness and purity. Inwardly, one's mind is delighted. One feels tranquil and blissful. There are no situations wherein one is covered over by the hindrances. The mind of goodness comes forth and manifests. One's faith and reverence increase and grow. One's mirror of wisdom becomes clear and bright. The body and mind become supple and pliant. One experiences a subtle and marvelous emptiness and quiescence. One develops a revulsion for and abhorrence of the world. There is nothing which one feels needs to be done and one remains free of desires. One remains sovereignly independent in one's ability to emerge from and enter into

Zhiyi

Zhiyi. *Essentials for Practicing Calming-and-Insight and Dhyana Meditation*. Translated by B. Dharmamitra. Seattle, WA: Kalavinka Press, 2008.

Within this human life,
what is the deepest state of mind?
Sitting meditation will help your thoughts clear.
By settling your mind, you begin to grasp it.
One by one images will appear
and if you can practice long
you will come into your true self
and learn how not to live a lie.

Ryokan

Ryokan. *The Kanshi Poems of Taigu Ryokan*. Translated by Larry Smith and Mei Hui Liu Huang. Bottom Dog Press, 2009.

Sona, when you were alone in seclusion, didn't the following course of thought arise in your mind? "I am one of the Blessed One's most energetic disciples, yet my mind has not been liberated from the taints by non-clinging. Now there is wealth in my family and it is possible for me to enjoy my wealth and do meritorious deeds. Let me then give up the training and return to the lower life, so that I can enjoy my wealth and do meritorious deeds."

Yes, Bhante [Lord].

Tell me, Sona, in the past, when you lived at home, weren't you skilled at the lute?

Yes, Bhante.

What do you think, Sona? When its strings were too tight, was your lute well tuned and easy to play?

No, Bhante.

When its strings were too loose, was your lute well tuned and easy to play?

No, Bhante.

But, Sona, when its strings were neither too tight nor too loose but adjusted to a balanced pitch, was your lute well tuned and easy to play?

Yes, Bhante.

So too, Sona, if energy is aroused too forcefully this leads to restlessness, and if energy is too lax this leads to laziness. Therefore, Sona, resolve on a balance of energy, achieve evenness of the spiritual faculties, and take up the object there.

Anuttara Nikaya

Numerical Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Anuttara Nikaya. Translated by Bikkhu Bodhi. Somerville, MA: Wisdom Publications, 2012.

...Turn around the light to shine within, then just return.

The vast inconceivable source can't be faced or turned away from.

Meet the ancestral teachers, be familiar with their instruction,

Bind grasses to build a hut, and don't give up.

Let go of hundreds of years and relax completely.

Open your hands and walk, innocent.

Thousands of words, myriad interpretations,

Are only to free you from obstructions.

If you want to know the undying person in the hut,

Don't separate from this skin bag here and now.

Shitou

Tannahashi. Essential Zen

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Tannahashi. *Essential Zen*

You should realize that the practice you cultivate doesn't exist apart from your mind.

Bodhidharma

Bodhidharma. *Zen Teaching of Bodhidharma*. Translated by R. Pine. New York: Weatherhill, 1987.

Buddhas of past and future only talk about seeing your nature. All practices are impermanent.

Bodhidharma

Bodhidharma. *Zen Teaching of Bodhidharma*. Translated by R. Pine. New York: Weatherhill, 1987.

Maintain the same state of mind in every moment of thought, in every phase of mental activity. Do not enjoy the present while planting the seeds of future suffering – by doing so you only deceive yourself and others and cannot escape from the realm of birth and death. Make effort! Make effort! Although it may seem futile now, your present efforts constitute the causes for your future enlightenment. Do not let time pass in vain while only wasting energy.

Treatise on the Essentials of
Cultivating the Mind

In McRae, J. R. *Northern School and the Formation of Early Ch'an Buddhism* (Studies in East Asian Buddhism 3 ed.). Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1986.

Walking is Chan, sitting is Chan.
Speaking or silent, moving or still, the essence is undisturbed.
Remain composed even if facing a sharp weapon.
Be at ease if given poison.

Song of Enlightenment

Hongzhi Zhengjue. *Silent Illumination*. In Sheng Yen, *The Poetry of Enlightenment: Poems of Ancient Ch'an Masters*. Elmhurst, NY: Dharm Drum Publications, 1987.

In the stillness by the empty window
I sit in formal meditation wearing my monk's surplice. Navel and nose in alignment,
Ears parallel with the shoulders.
Moonlight floods the room;
The rain stops but the eaves drip and drip.
Perfect this moment –
In the vast emptiness my understanding deepens.

Ryokan

John Stevens. *Zen Masters: A Maverick, a Master of Masters and a Wandering Poet*. Kodansha International, 1999.

Great is the matter of birth and death.
Life slips quickly by.
Time waits for no one.
Wake up! Wake up!
Don't waste a minute.

Hakuin

...[Y]ou should just wholeheartedly sit, and thus drop body and mind....This being so, the zazen of even one person at one moment imperceptibly accords with all things and fully resonates through all time. Thus in the past, future, and present of the limitless universe this zazen carries on the buddha's teaching endlessly. Each moment of zazen is equally wholeness of practice, equally wholeness of realization.

Dogen

Dogen. *Moon in a Dewdrop: Writings of Zen Master Dogen*. Translated by K. Tanahashi. New York: North Point Press, 1985.

Were you to attain but a little progress in meditation practice, at the moment of death you would not be dragged under by the force of negative karma, even if you have not attained enlightenment in this lifetime.

The Mirror of Zen

Joeng, B. *Mirror of Zen: The Classic Guide to Buddhist Practice by Zen Master So Sahn*. Translated by H. Gak. Boston, MA: Shambhala, 2006.

Not thinking about anything is zen. Once you know this, walking, standing, sitting, or lying down, everything you do is zen.

Bodhidharma

Bodhidharma. *Zen Teaching of Bodhidharma*. Translated by R. Pine. New York: Weatherhill, 1987.

First, I redirected my hearing inward in order to enter the current of the sages. Then external sounds disappeared. With the direction of my hearing reversed and with sounds stilled, both sounds and silence cease to arise. So it was that, as I gradually progressed, what I heard and my awareness of what I heard came to an end. Even when that state of mind in which everything had come to an end disappeared I did not rest. My awareness and the objects of my awareness were emptied and when that process of emptying my awareness was wholly complete then even that emptying and what had been emptied vanished. Coming into being and ceasing to be themselves ceased to be. Then the ultimate stillness was revealed. All of a sudden I transcended the worlds of ordinary beings and I also transcended the worlds of beings who have transcended the ordinary worlds.

Śuraṅgama Sutra

Śuraṅgama Sutra with Excerpts from the Commentary by the Venerable Master Hsüan Hua. Translated by Śuraṅgama Sutra Translation Committee. Ukiah, CA: Buddhist Text Translation Society, 2009.

There are masters who say that, if one simply establishes the mind in calming at the site of the disorder, one will immediately be able to cure the disorder.

Next, there are masters who say that one inch below the navel is a location known as the udana. This refers to what we know [in Chinese culture] as the dantian. If one is able to bring the mind to a halt and preserve its point of focus at this location such that it does not become scattered, then after one has done this for a long time, in most cases, there will be that which is remedied.

There are other masters who say that if one constantly anchors the mind's point of attention beneath the feet without regard to whether one is walking, standing, or lying down to sleep, one will be able to cure disorders. Why is this? This is because it is on account of non-regulation of the four great elements that most illnesses occur. This is brought about by the mind's consciousness becoming anchored in a higher position, thus causing the four great elements to become unregulated. If one anchors the mind below, then the four great elements will naturally become appropriately adjusted and the various disorders will be gotten rid of.

There are masters who state that one need only realize that all dharmas are empty and that nothing whatsoever exists. If one refrains from seizing upon the symptoms of illness while quiescently abiding in calming, then a cure will be brought about in most cases. Why is this? This is because the mind's reflective intellection pumps up the four great elements and instigates the arising of disorders. If one puts the mind to rest in harmony and happiness, the various disorders will then be cured.

Zhiyi

Zhiyi. Essentials for Practicing Calming-and-Insight and Dhyana Meditation. Translated by B. Dharmamitra. Seattle, WA: Kalavinka Press, 2008.

Now I travel throughout all ten directions with nothing to impede me. My spiritual powers were revealed and are now esteemed as unsurpassed....[buddhas] praise me for the perfect clarity, purity, ease and fearlessness with which I exercise my spiritual powers....I used the method of returning the mind-consciousness to its pure source so that the light of my mind shone forth and revealed the turbid flux within. That flux gradually subsided until it became brilliantly clear.

Śuraṅgama Sutra

Śurangama Sutra with Excerpts from the Commentary by the Venerable Master Hsüan Hua. Translated by Śurangama Sutra Translation Committee. Ukiah, CA: Buddhist Text Translation Society, 2009.

Were you now to practice keeping your minds motionless at all times – whether walking, standing, sitting or lying; concentrating entirely upon the goal of no thought-creation, no duality, no reliance on others and no attachments; just allowing all things to take their course the whole day long, as though you were too ill to bother; unknown to the world; innocent of any urge to be known or unknown to others; with your minds like blocks of stone that mend no holes – then all the dharmas [laws of existence] would penetrate your understanding through and through. In a little while you would find yourselves firmly unattached. Thus for the first time in your lives you would discover your reactions to phenomena decreasing and, ultimately, you would pass beyond the Triple World; and people would say that a Buddha had appeared in the world. Pure and passionless knowledge [enlightenment] implies putting an end to the ceaseless flow of thoughts and images, for in that way you stop creating the karma that leads to rebirth – whether as gods or men or as sufferers in hell.

Huangbo

Huangbo. The Zen Teaching of Huang Po: On the Transmission of Mind. Translated by John Blofeld. New York: Grove Press, 1958.

Stay in a quiet place and sit erect in an even temper. Focus your attention neither on breathing nor on any form or colour, nor on empty space, earth, water, fire, wind, nor even on what has been seen, heard, remembered, or conceived. All thoughts, as soon as they are conjured up, are to be discarded, and even the thought of discarding them is to be put away. For all things are essentially in the state of transcending thoughts, and are not to be created from moment to moment nor to be extinguished from moment to moment. Thus conform to the essential nature of Reality through this practice of cessation. It is not that you should first meditate on the objects of the senses in the external world and then negate them with your mind, the mind that has meditated on them. If the mind wanders away, it should be brought back and fixed in "correct thought." It should be understood that this "correct thought" is the thought that whatever is, is mind only and that there is no external world of objects as conceived. Even this mind is devoid of any marks of its own which would indicate its substantiality and therefore is not substantially conceivable as such at any moment.

Awakening of Faith in the Mahayana

Yoshito S. Hakeda, ed. The Awakening of Faith: Attributed to Asvagosha. New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1967.

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Yoshito S. Hakeda, ed. *The Awakening of Faith: Attributed to Asvagosha*. New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1967.

Cultivating the bliss and absorption of samadhi and the bliss of whatever is present, this is what is called good and undefiled by the wise.

Lankavatara Sutra

Lankavatara Sutra. Translated by R. Pine. Berkeley, CA: Counterpoint, 2012.

Whether walking, standing, sitting, lying or rising, the practitioner should practice both cessation and insight side by side.

Seek the correct faith with courage and strength.

Awakening of Faith in the
Mahayana

Yoshito S. Hakeda, ed. *The Awakening of Faith: Attributed to Asvagosha*. New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1967.

When the mind tries to run away, bring it back quickly. Just as a line is tied to the foot of a bird to retrieve it if it tries to fly, you should view that thing all day long, without cease. The mind will then become completely settled.

Essential Teaching of the
Expedient Means of
Pacifying the Mind and
Entering the Path

McRae, J. R. *Northern School and the Formation of Early Ch'an Buddhism* (Studies in East Asian Buddhism 3 ed.). Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1986.

First, I redirected my hearing inward in order to enter the current of the sages. Then external sounds disappeared. With the direction of my hearing reversed and with sounds stilled, both sounds and silence cease to arise. So it was that, as I gradually progressed, what I heard and my awareness of what I heard came to an end. Even when that state of mind in which everything had come to an end disappeared I did not rest. My awareness and the objects of my awareness were emptied and when that process of emptying my awareness was wholly complete then even that emptying and what had been emptied vanished. Coming into being and ceasing to be themselves ceased to be. Then the ultimate stillness was revealed. All of a sudden I transcended the worlds of ordinary beings and I also transcended the worlds of beings who have transcended the ordinary worlds.

Śūraṅgama Sutra

Śūraṅgama Sutra with Excerpts from the Commentary by the Venerable Master Hsüan Hua. Translated by Śūraṅgama Sutra Translation Committee. Ukiah, CA: Buddhist Text Translation Society, 2009.

A quiet fills my three-matted hut.
All day long, not a soul appears.
I sit at the window and meditate...
the sound of falling leaves.

Ryokan

Ryokan. *The Kanshi Poems of Taigu Ryokan*. Translated by Larry Smith and Mei Hui Liu Huang. Bottom Dog Press, 2009.

Calming then is the wholesome provision with which one kindly nurtures the mind and consciousness. Insight then is the marvelous technique which stimulates the development of spiritual understanding. Calming is the supreme cause for the manifestation of dhyāna absorption. Insight is the origin of wisdom. If a person perfects the two dharmas of meditative absorption and wisdom, then this amounts to the complete fulfillment of the dharma of benefiting both oneself and others.

Zhiyi

Zhiyi. Essentials for Practicing Calming-and-Insight and Dhyana Meditation. Translated by B. Dharmamitra. Seattle, WA: Kalavinka Press, 2008.

When a sentient being loses the real and embraces sense objects, we say that it is a state of distraction, and, when there is rejection of sense objects and fusion with the real, we say it is a state of dhyāna and [samadhi]....

Guifeng Zongmi

Broughton, J. L. Zongmi on Chan. New York: Columbia University, 2009.

Turn around the light to shine within, then just return.

Shitou Xiqian

Shitou Xiqian. Song of the Grass-Roof Hermitage. In B. Connelly, Inside the Grass Hut: Living Shitou's Classic Zen Poem. Translated by T. Leighton, & K. Tanahashi. Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2014.

All that you need to do is not allow your attention to be diverted....Next, extricate one [sense] faculty by detaching it from its objects, and redirect that faculty inward so that it can return to what is original and true. Then it will radiate the light of the original understanding. This brilliant light will shine forth and extricate the other five faculties until they are completely free.

Śurangama Sutra

Śurangama Sutra with Excerpts from the Commentary by the Venerable Master Hsüan Hua. Translated by Śurangama Sutra Translation Committee. Ukiah, CA: Buddhist Text Translation Society, 2009.

Sona, when you were alone in seclusion, didn't the following course of thought arise in your mind? "I am one of the Blessed One's most energetic disciples, yet my mind has not been liberated from the taints by non-clinging. Now there is wealth in my family and it is possible for me to enjoy my wealth and do meritorious deeds. Let me then give up the training and return to the lower life, so that I can enjoy my wealth and do meritorious deeds."

Yes, Bhante [Lord].

Tell me, Sona, in the past, when you lived at home, weren't you skilled at the lute?

Yes, Bhante.

What do you think, Sona? When its strings were too tight, was your lute well tuned and easy to play?

No, Bhante.

When its strings were too loose, was your lute well tuned and easy to play?

No, Bhante.

But, Sona, when its strings were neither too tight nor too loose but adjusted to a balanced pitch, was your lute well tuned and easy to play?

Yes, Bhante.

So too, Sona, if energy is aroused too forcefully this leads to restlessness, and if energy is too lax this leads to laziness. Therefore, Sona, resolve on a balance of energy, achieve evenness of the spiritual faculties, and take up the object there.

Anuttara Nikaya

Numerical Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Anuttara Nikaya. Translated by Bikkhu Bodhi. Somerville, MA: Wisdom Publications, 2012.

Even if you consume as many books
As the sands of the Ganges
It is not as good as really catching
One verse of Zen.
If you want the secret of Buddhism,
Here it is: everything is in the heart!

Ryokan

Ryokan. Dewdrops on a Lotus Leaf: Zen Poems of Ryokan. J. Stevens, trans. Boston and London: Shambhala, 2004

In the stillness by the empty window
I sit in formal meditation wearing my monk's surplice. Navel and nose in alignment,
Ears parallel with the shoulders.
Moonlight floods the room;
The rain stops but the eaves drip and drip.
Perfect this moment –
In the vast emptiness my understanding deepens.

Ryokan

John Stevens. Zen Masters: A Maverick, a Master of Masters and a Wandering Poet. Kodansha International, 1999.

Every day, whether walking, standing, sitting or lying down, and in all your speech, remain detached from everything within the sphere of phenomena. Whether you speak or merely blink an eye, let it be done with complete dispassion....most students of Zen cling to all sorts of sounds and forms. Why do they not copy me by letting each thought go as though it were nothing, or as though it were a piece of rotten wood, a stone, or the cold ashes of a dead fire? Or else, by just making whatever slight response is suited to each occasion?

Huangbo

Huangbo. *The Zen Teaching of Huang Po: On the Transmission of Mind*. Translated by John Blofeld. New York: Grove Press, 1958.

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Huangbo

Huangbo. *The Zen Teaching of Huang Po: On the Transmission of Mind*. Translated by John Blofeld. New York: Grove Press, 1958.

Hence, you should stop searching for phrases and chasing after words. Take the backward step and turn the light inward. Your body-mind of itself will drop off and your original face will appear....Let go of all involvements and let myriad things rest. Do not think good or bad. Do not judge right or wrong. Stop conscious endeavour and analytic introspection. Do not try to become a buddha. How could being a buddha be limited to sitting or not sitting?...Know that the true dharma [ultimate reality] emerges of itself, clearing away hindrances and distractions.

Dogen

Dogen. *Moon in a Dewdrop: Writings of Zen Master Dogen*. Translated by K. Tanahashi. New York: North Point Press, 1985.

Protect and maintain this space where you settle your body.

Dogen

Dogen. *Moon in a Dewdrop: Writings of Zen Master Dogen*. Translated by K. Tanahashi. New York: North Point Press, 1985.