

Aspects of Buddhist Psychology

Lecture 46: Zen and the Psycho-Therapeutic Process

Mr Chairman, Venerable Sir and Friends.

Today we come to the last lecture in the present series on "Aspects of Buddhist Psychology". And as those of you who have been coming along week by week know, in the course of the last few weeks we have been able to cover a considerable amount of ground. We started off with "The Analytical Psychology of the Abhidharma", which some of you found rather a tough nut to crack; then to the "Psychology of spiritual development", tracing the spiritual evolution of humanity up the stages of the spiral to Nirvana. We then explored "The Depth Psychology of the Yogacara" and after that we investigated the "Archetypal Symbolism in the Biography of the Buddha". We came on next to the "Psycho-Spiritual Symbols of the Tibetan Book of the Dead", which seemed to arouse a quite extraordinary interest in people's minds, and then last week we had "The Mandala, the Tantric Symbol of Integration."

Those of you who have been coming along week by week will have noticed what in fact I have already pointed out; will have noticed a sort of shift as the course progressed from the conceptual to the non-conceptual type of approach. And as the course went on, we began to appreciate, I hope, the importance of myths and symbols and legends and the poetic imagist element generally in the religious and spiritual life, especially in Buddhism. And as we went on week by week - not every week, but on at least three occasions, three weeks - our progress was very much enlivened and made easier by the very excellent charts which were prepared for us by Mike Ricketts. So I hope that having come so far, I hope that those who have attended the whole course will have been able to appreciate something at least of the richness of the psychological side of Buddhism. We very often hear it said that Buddhism is very rich, very explicit, very profound, on the psychological side, but very often that statement is lacking in content, we don't actually see it in detail. So I hope that in the course of the last few weeks, it has been possible for us at least to begin to see that in detail.

Now today, there is, as it were, a new departure. Today our subject is Zen and psychotherapy. And here, I may say, I have a sort of confession to make. As you probably appreciate, the course of lectures was decided upon quite some time ago, and the actual titles were settled nearly three months ago. And when the course was drawn up and when the titles of the lectures were decided upon, I may say that I had a fairly clear idea of what the contents of each lecture would be - at least the first six. But I may say that when I put down the title of "Zen and Psychotherapy", I had no idea at all what I was going to say on this subject, under this heading. Some of you might think, well, that is only too appropriate in the case of Zen - one shouldn't perhaps know in advance too much what one is going to say - if one does, well, it isn't Zen, and you shouldn't know three months in advance what you're going to say on the subject of Zen.

So the question may arise, "Well, why was Zen included at all? How did it, as it were, gain entry into the course?" Well, Zen was included for two reasons. First of all, simply for the sake of completeness. After all, you can't leave Zen out: someone would object if you did! or if you tried to do.

In the course of one of the lectures, I remember I referred to the three major forms of Buddhism representing the three principal phases of its development in India, the land of its birth. These three phases are, of course, the Hinayana, the Mahayana and the Vajrayana. I'm not going to explain at this stage what these are, most of you know what these are. But the first two lectures in this course covered more or less the same ground as the Hinayana. The second two covered, more or less, the Mahayana and the fifth and sixth lectures were concerned with the Vajrayana, or the Tantra, especially in its Tibetan forms.

Now Zen as I'm sure most of you will agree, is too important to be included under any of these headings, either Hinayana, Mahayana or Vajrayana, so for this reason, I decided that there should be a separate lecture on Zen, even though I didn't know what I would be saying when the time came. So in this way, we cover the whole field of Buddhism - all the principal forms.

Secondly, I decided to include a talk on Zen simply because so many people nowadays are interested in Zen. If you talk to them about Buddhism, well, there's a response, but it's not so striking. But if you talk about Zen, even though you say exactly the same thing, at once interest is aroused, people start waking up, they start perking up, and looking around, and they say "Zen, yes!" - they're stimulated at once. It's the name, which has a sort of magic about it, the name at least, we may say, is quite well known. Sometimes, of course people are interested in Zen, or what they think is Zen, entirely for the wrong reasons. There are misunderstandings about Buddhism, certainly, but we may say the misunderstandings about Buddhism are nothing compared with the misunderstandings about Zen. So I hope that this evening, at least incidentally, I shall be able to clear up at least a few of these misunderstandings.

To begin with, of course, Zen is a form of Buddhism. Now this plain and simple statement may appear to some people as quite obvious - that Zen is a form of Buddhism. But many students of Zen, or Zen devotees, or Zen fanatics, or "Zenists", as they sometimes call themselves, don't seem to realise this, don't seem to realise that Zen is a form of Buddhism, a form, in a sense, of Mahayana Buddhism. And they treat it, or try to treat it, as something standing quite independently, on its own, with no roots in Buddhism, with its roots in the sky, as it were.

Now, Buddhism itself, of which Zen is one form, is a religion. I hope I don't have to emphasise this, but many people don't realise this. They don't realise that Buddhism is a religion. They think, very often, that it's something very cold, very abstract, very scientific and purely rational. That's the sort of impression which many people have about Buddhism, that Buddhism is the sort of North Pole among the religions of the world, a sort of beautiful, glittering icicle - very beautiful, yes - very attractive - but cold. This is their impression about Buddhism, much of the time. Of course, we may say, that Buddhism isn't a religion in the theistic sense - there's no Supreme Being, there's no personal God. But it is a religion - a non-theistic religion - all the same.

Now I propose, this evening, to deal with this subject of Zen and psychotherapy in three progressive stages. First of all, we shall consider briefly, religion and psychotherapy (or psychotherapy and religion); then we shall consider Buddhism and psychotherapy; and lastly, we shall consider Zen and psychotherapy. And while so doing, I shall try to share with you some of the thoughts which have suggested themselves to me, contemplating these subjects in the course of the last couple of days.

So first of all, Psychotherapy and Religion

What is psychotherapy? For a brief, but very compendious definition, let us turn to Carl Jaspers. In his "General Psychopathology", he says: "*Psychotherapy is the name given to all those methods of treatment that affect both psyche and body by measures which proceed via the psyche. The co-operation of the patient is always required. Psychotherapy has application to those who suffer from many types of personality disorder, psychopathies, also to the mildly psychotic patient, to all people who feel ill and suffer from their psychic state and almost without exception to physical illnesses which so often are overlaid with neurotic symptoms and with which the personality must inwardly come to terms.*"

So this is Jaspers', as I said, brief but compendious description of psychotherapy. He then goes on to describe the various means of influencing the psyche which psychotherapy has at its disposal. He classifies them under various headings. He enumerates, for instance, methods of suggestion such as hypnosis; then cathartic methods and here he includes all forms of psychoanalysis; then methods involving practice and training, and it's interesting that here, though the book was written a long time ago, that he mentions various kinds of breathing exercises; then methods of re-education; and finally, methods that address themselves to personality.

Now we're not going into all these methods this evening. For the present we're concerned with only two of the points made by Jaspers. First, his basic definition of psychotherapy, when he says "*All those methods of treatment that affect both psyche and body by methods which proceed via the psyche.*" And here, we may say, to this extent, religion and psychotherapy stand on common ground - they both proceed via the psyche - both proceed via the mind, or if you don't object to the term, via the soul. In other words, both psychotherapy and religion address themselves to the deeper part of man, not to the surface, not to the superficial layers of human nature, but to the deepest part, which we call the psyche, the mind, the heart or even the soul.

Secondly, Jaspers says that psychotherapy is applicable to all people who feel ill and suffer from their psychic state. Now this is extremely important. To begin with, what is meant by "*feeling ill*"? What is meant by "*suffering from one's psychic state*"? Jaspers, it seems to me, is deliberately being very general here, not to say, even vague.

According to one's conception of what illness is, so will be one's conception of health. According to one's conception of health, so will be one's conception of therapy, or cure. If one is superficial, the other will be superficial, too. If one is profound and far-reaching, the other will be profound and far-reaching as well. So broadly speaking, we may say that there are two kinds of psychotherapy, corresponding to two different conceptions of illness.

The first we may describe as *adjustment therapy* (this is the usual term), and the second as *character therapy*. Character therapy isn't a very satisfactory term but we hope the meaning will emerge a little more clearly as we proceed.

Now what is meant by adjustment therapy? Adjustment therapy is exactly what its name suggests: it's therapy which enables you to adjust. So the question arises, "Adjust to what?" Well, adjust to society, adjust to the business of living in the world, earning a livelihood and so on. Not only adjusting to the business of living in the world, but even of being very much of it.

Let's take a rather simple, uncomplicated example. Take the example say, of a young man of about 23 or 24, who is going to work, getting on quite well, everything seems all right - but suddenly it happens one day, that he is attacked by feelings of intense nausea, not just once, but a number of times every day. And eventually it becomes almost continuous. It becomes so bad that he cannot continue working: he has to stop working. So then what does he do? He goes to see a psychotherapist, or a psychoanalyst. He is treated for a few weeks or a few months, as the case may be, the cause of the trouble is located: it may be some childhood experience and so on - anyway, it's resolved - the symptom, that is to say, the nausea, disappears, and the young man goes back to work, and presumably, he lives happily ever afterwards. So the therapy has enabled him to adjust, to adjust to society, to adjust to the business of earning a living.

But there's no question - the question is never raised - as to whether what he has been enabled to adjust to, to go back to, is intrinsically, in itself, good or bad. He's been enabled to adjust to society, but the society in which he is living, in which he is working, may be a thoroughly immoral one. He may in fact be following, and enabled to continue following, a thoroughly immoral occupation. He may be, for example, a stockbroker or he may be an income tax consultant, or he may be a tobacconist. But it doesn't matter - one has just got to adjust to the existing social order, the existing state of affairs, the world as it is. And psychotherapy helps one to adjust, just as in the old days, some forms of religion, too, helped you to adjust, helped you to accept the status quo.

Now some psychotherapists - the more earnest, the more intelligent, the more sincere, even one may say, the more spiritually-minded psychotherapists - are becoming increasingly critical of this sort of situation: increasingly dissatisfied with this state of affairs. And many of them, especially I believe in the United States where things are in a pretty bad way at present, many psychotherapists feel that they are in effect prostituting themselves to an immoral social order. It's as bad as that. But there's very little that they can do about it, because after all, they too have to earn a living. So this brings us from adjustment therapy to character therapy.

Character therapy goes far beyond the concept of adjustment. Let's take another example. Say, take the example of a man of 45. I must apologise for taking examples only from the male sex (I don't mean to leave the ladies out in this way, but it just happens to go like that). A man of 45. He has a successful, or moderately successful, career behind him, a comfortable sort of domestic life, you know - moderately happy, moderately faithful, and the rest of it; the children are doing quite well at school, at college, in employment; and of course he plays golf every Sunday. And he has no particular symptoms. He doesn't feel any nausea or anything like that, but at the same time, he feels ill. Deep down in himself, he feels ill, and in Jaspers' language, he suffers from his psychic state.

Now this is not an illness in the ordinary sense: it's a sort of spiritual malaise, we may say. And it expresses itself in various ways. He may be overwhelmed by a feeling of intense boredom: he may feel an utter weariness, an absolute emptiness and a sense of complete futility. He may feel that nothing which he is doing has any significance or any value or any meaning. And he may therefore ask himself the question, "Well, what is the use of it all? What is the meaning of it all? Why am I here? Why shouldn't I just *not* be here?" In the old days, of course, a person in this sort of predicament would have turned to religion. He would have gone and consulted his priest. But for many western people this is now impossible. So he doesn't go to church, he doesn't go to the priest, he goes to the psychotherapist. But nowadays we find the priest himself having to go to the psychotherapist!

So what is the psychotherapist to do? There's no question of helping this sort of patient to adjust to society, because he's done that already - he's perfectly well adjusted already: he's quite good at his job and so on. So the psychotherapist has to go deeper than that. And he has to point out to the patient that he's ill. That he is sick because he is not being fully himself. And to point out that he's got all sorts of deeper potentialities which had been overlaid by the business of so-called living. and that these deeper potentialities have not been realised, not been actualised. The patient has related successfully to society - but that's comparatively superficial; that's only one level, one aspect but now he has to relate to life itself: has to relate, in other words, to Reality. And this requires a great change: this requires a change of character. A change of attitude, a change of outlook, a change of vision, if you like. And therefore this sort of psychotherapy is called character therapy.

Not only is it just a matter of change, however radical - one may say it has to be a sort of conversion, has to be a sort of spiritual rebirth before this sort of patient can be healed, can be brought to terms with himself, and with Reality, and can be cured.

Now, adjustment therapy has very little in common with any sort of religion, except superficial, popular sorts of consolatory religion. In fact adjustment therapy may even be profoundly anti-religious. But character therapy is different. Character therapy in its concept of illness, its concept of health, of therapy, seems to come quite close to religion, if not almost to approximate to religion. Now if psychotherapy is religious, or if it has a religious aspect or at least a religious bearing, religion, also we may say, in the true sense, also is therapeutic. And this certainly is the case, this is so with Buddhism.

This brings us to the second stage of our discussion: brings us to Buddhism and psychotherapy. Now before pursuing this question of Buddhism as a therapy, I'd like to compare Buddhism and psychotherapy in somewhat more general terms.

Buddhism and psychotherapy are both humanistic. Both are concerned with man - man in his totality, man in his heights and in his depths; in all aspects of his being and character. Both are concerned just with man. They're not concerned, either of them, with God.

Now Erich Fromm, whose name I'm sure many of you know, distinguishes in several of his writings between what he calls humanistic religion and what he calls authoritarian religion. And he claims that psychoanalysis (which is one form of psychotherapy) and humanistic religion have much in common. He elaborates this in great detail, and it's no doubt true that psychoanalysis and humanistic religion have much in common. But he also goes on to say that the distinction between humanistic religion and authoritarian religion cuts across the distinction between the theistic and the non-theistic religious systems. In other words he says that both the theistic and the non-theistic religions can be either humanistic or authoritarian. But here, I'm afraid, I can't quite agree with him. It seems to me that all the theistic systems, almost inevitably, tend to be authoritarian, especially in their strict monotheistic forms.

For instance, just one or two quotations: St Augustine says, in one place, "God's thundering commands are to be obeyed." Not questioned. And then to come to more modern times, Cardinal Manning says "I don't think - The Pope does my thinking for me." This is authoritarianism, in a sense with a vengeance. So it seems that theistic systems, especially monotheistic systems, inevitably tend to be authoritarian. Their nature is such.

But the non-theistic systems tend to be humanistic: Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism: all non-theistic, and all very definitely humanistic. And above all, perhaps, because it's the most fully articulated, above all perhaps Buddhism itself. We may say that an authoritarian Buddhism is a contradiction in terms. You can't imagine it! A Buddhism which says "You must do this," or "You must do that," that doesn't sound like Buddhism at all.

So we may say that psychotherapy has more in common with Buddhism than it has with any other religion because both are concerned unambiguously, explicitly, with man. And both are concerned with man as ill, man as sick. And in the case of Buddhism and character therapy, both are concerned with man as a psychically and spiritually sick being.

It is often said that the essentials of Buddhism are contained in what are known as the Four Noble Truths: -

- * first, the truth of suffering;
- * second, the truth of the cause of suffering (which is blind craving);
- * third, the truth of the cessation of suffering, or the supremely blissful state of Nirvana; and
- * fourth, the Way leading to the cessation of suffering, or the Noble Eightfold Path.

Now according to some scholars, this doctrinal formula of the Four Noble Truths is based on an ancient pre-Buddhistic Indian medical formula consisting of: -

- (1) disease;
- (2) the cause of the disease;
- (3) the cessation of the disease, or state of perfect health; and
- (4) the therapy.

The Buddha himself also is known as the Great Physician, and is often referred to as such in the Scriptures. And in the Mahayana form of Buddhism there is a special Buddha who is known as the *Vaishadya Raja*, which

means King of Healing and there's a sutra devoted to him in the Mahayana Canon. In Tibetan Buddhism there's a set of seven *Mendhars*, or so-called Medicine Buddhas, which are, not unnaturally, in a country like Tibet, very popular indeed.

But even more interesting in this connection, is a passage from one of the greatest, one of the most famous Mahayana sutras, the *Vimalakirti Nirveda Sutra* or the sutra of the instruction of Vimalakirti, and as I've said, it is one of the most famous, also one of the most beautiful of all the Mahayana Sutras and very extensively illustrated in classical Chinese art.

Vimalakirti was a great householder Bodhisattva, not a monk, but a householder Bodhisattva, of Vaisali (in present day Bihar) in the days of the Buddha. Vimalakirti was famous for his wisdom, his profound, far-reaching wisdom. But one day he fell sick and news of his sickness reached the ears of the Buddha. So the Buddha wanted to send someone to Vimalakirti to enquire how he was getting on. But among all the disciples, among all the great Bodhisattvas and Arahants and monks, no-one was willing to go, because they were so afraid of Vimalakirti's wisdom - he'd caught them out, every one of them, on more than one occasion in the past, so no-one was willing to go. But eventually there was one volunteer, and this was no less a person than Manjusri who was the Bodhisattva of Wisdom, that is to say Wisdom incarnate; Wisdom itself. He dared to go. So he went with a great train of disciples and followers and a very famous dialogue ensued between Vimalakirti on the one hand and Manjusri on the other. But this evening we are concerned only with the beginning of this dialogue.

So when Manjusri entered the house, entered Vimalakirti's room, sat down by the side of his bed, he asked on behalf of the Buddha, "What is the cause of your sickness?" In ancient Indian medicine they had a theory of the four humours, you know, the bile, the blood and so on; so if one of these gets out of order, well then you fall sick. So Manjusri probably had something of that sort in the back of his mind. And he asked "What is the cause of your sickness?"

So Vimalakirti replied "I am sick because beings are sick." And this is one of the profoundest, one of the most significant statements in the whole of Buddhist literature: "*I am sick because beings are sick.*"

And the significance of this statement is twofold. First of all it reveals the great compassion of Vimalakirti. Wisdom and Compassion are basically the same thing: no Wisdom without Compassion; no Compassion without Wisdom. So Vimalakirti had this Wisdom, he had also this compassion, so he identified himself with all living beings, and therefore he said "I am sick because beings are sick." Not just physically sick, but spiritually sick. So this is a thought for us to ponder, Vimalakirti's thought that all beings are sick: psychically sick; spiritually sick. All beings, without exception.

But the Buddha himself goes even further than this. There's an even more remarkable statement attributed to the Buddha himself in the Pali Canon where the Buddha says "All *prthagjanas* are mad."

According to Buddhism, there are two kinds of people, two kinds of beings, what are called *aryas* and what are called *prthagjanas*. The *aryas* are the holy ones and the *prthagjanas* are the worldlings. The holy ones are the Buddhas, the Bodhisattvas, the Arahants, the Non-returners, Once-returners and Stream Entrants: all those who've reached the higher stages of the spiritual path. Everybody else is called *prthagjana* or worldling, even beings in higher heavenly realms.

So what is the Buddha saying? He is saying that all worldlings are mad. Anyone who's not a Buddha, anyone who's not an Arahant, anyone who is not at least a Stream Entrant is quite literally mad.

This is the Buddha's statement. Everybody who is not spiritually enlightened or very near to it is mad. And the Buddha isn't exaggerating. If we look around we see that we are living in the midst of a vast hospital, because everybody is sick. Living in the midst of a vast lunatic asylum, because everybody is mad. And everything, we may say, that everybody does, in this world, is the action of a madman or a mad woman. And we see only here and there some gleams, some glimpses, of sanity. This is the Buddha's vision of ordinary people; all mad. Of course, people like to think that they're sane; like to think that they're normal, like to think that they're healthy; but it isn't really so. Their so-called health is sickness and their so-called sanity is insanity.

Not long ago I was looking into the writings of Solovieff, that great Russian thinker and mystic and poet. And Solovieff gives a very good example of this sort of thing; how we think that we are so sane when really we are more insane. And Solovieff is discussing the question of sexual perversion. And he takes the example especially of fetishism, that is to say the fixation of erotic interest on a particular part of the body or an article

of clothing and so on, instead of on the complete body. So in what does the perversion consist? Solovieff says that the perversion consists not in the sexual feeling itself: the perversion consists in the fixation of the sexual feeling on a part instead of on the whole. But having said this, Solovieff raises an interesting question. He says, "Is the whole body itself really the whole, or is it part of a whole?" He says it's part of a person. The person is body, soul, spirit - he is of course, using the Christian terms - so he says to love or to be erotically interested in the body only, is a perversion. And sexual perversions, he says, are forms of insanity. But of course the world doesn't see it like that. If sexual interest is confined to say, a woman's hand, or foot, or shoe, then you're a fetishist, or you're a sexual pervert. But, Solovieff says, if it's directed only to her body, ignoring her mind, ignoring her soul, then you're a normal, healthy male. And of course Solovieff says, you're perfectly sane. So this is the sort of example which he gives of the way in which we think we're so sane, when it would be much more true to say that we are mad.

Anyway it is perhaps time we got onto Zen and Psychotherapy proper. Some in fact may be thinking that we've already spent far too long on Buddhism and psychotherapy, but this isn't really so, because Zen, as I must again insist, is a branch of Buddhism. And whatever has been said about Buddhism and psychotherapy holds good also of Zen and psychotherapy.

But let us get on now to the third stage of our discussion, Zen and psychotherapy proper.

Zen means meditation. But the word is used in three different, though still related, senses:

First of all Zen in the sense of deep mental concentration, Zen in the sense of perfect one-pointedness of mind, as well as all those exercises, all those methods, all those techniques, which induce mental concentration or one-pointedness of mind.

Secondly, Zen in the sense of the realisation of the One Mind, the One Mind about which we spoke in the course of the lecture on the Depth Psychology of the Yogacara; Zen in the sense of realising, awakening to the One Mind, above and beyond and behind and identical with all phenomena. Zen in this sense, of course, is practically synonymous with Enlightenment.

And then thirdly, Zen in the sense of certain special techniques and unconventional methods used by later Masters to awaken disciples, to awaken them to the Truth. Methods such as shouts or even blows, or the *koan*, the *mondo*, and so on.

There's also, I should add, a fourth kind of Zen, and this is what the Masters call "Mouth Zen"; this is the Zen of people who only talk about Zen and never do any practice. This form of Zen has been and still is extremely popular in the West; it's a very well-organised sect here with several very eminent masters!

Zen, of course, began with the Buddha, sitting under the Bodhi Tree, looking at the morning star, according to Zen tradition, and it is important that we should realise this, that Zen began with the Buddha. Some people think that Zen started in Japan - a great mistake. We may even go so far as to say that Zen has got nothing whatever to do with Japan. It's got nothing whatever to do with India either, for that matter - nothing to do even with the East - or with the West. Zen, we may say, is like the lotus flower, like the lotus blossom. The lotus grows out of the mud but we must be careful not to try to define the lotus in terms of the mud, just because it happens to be growing out of the mud. Lotuses grow all over the world, and wherever they grow, they are still the same lotuses.

In speaking about Zen, there are two mistakes to be avoided; first of all, saying too little; secondly, saying too much.

By saying too little, I mean remaining completely silent. We hear of Masters going up onto their lecture platforms, going to give a lecture on Zen, and they just sit there: one hour, two hours, don't say anything: this is the lecture on Zen. Well, this is certainly very profound and very meaningful, but it wouldn't help the average person very much. It might help the advanced disciple, but not the average person. The average person, treated in this sort of way, would become bored and restless and even resentful.

By saying too much, one means saying so much about Zen that people start thinking they've actually understood Zen, which of course, is fatal, because if they think they've understood Zen, then they go away and forget all about it- or else they go and write a book about it!

So this evening we shall try to follow a middle path, and I'm going to speak I hope for not more than about ten minutes and I'm going to speak on four fundamental principles of Zen. Oh yes, I know that lots of you know them already, but never mind about that.

These four fundamental principles are embodied in a well-known verse which I hope at least some of you by this time know by heart. I'm also going to point out in between, some analogies, a few analogies, with psychotherapy, because we're also concerned with that. And eventually we're going to leave psychotherapy far behind us. But the verse describing Zen, summarising Zen - this is an ancient traditional T'ang Dynasty verse - says:

*"A special transmission outside the Scriptures;
No dependence on words and letters.
Direct pointing to the mind of man;
Seeing into one's own nature;
Realising Buddhahood."*

First of all, "*A special transmission outside the Scriptures.*" These words take us right back to the origin of Zen, right back to the birth of Zen. If it had any birth at all it was in India in the days of the Buddha, and Zen tradition tells us that the Buddha was one day sitting in a jungle clearing in the midst of a great concourse of his disciples. Great Bodhisattvas were there, great Arahants, Stream Entrants, monks, nuns, lay people, princes, ministers, pandits. They were all sitting there round the Buddha and all completely silent. This was apparently one of the features of the Buddha's ministry. There were lots of sutras, lots of discourses attributed to the Buddha, but often also he sat with all his disciples, the entire congregation, sometimes all evening, all night, far into the next day, silent, no-one saying anything, not even a single word. All plunged in silence, all perhaps, waiting for the Buddha to speak. This is the customary setting, by the way, for a Mahayana Sutra. This is the sort of atmosphere in the midst of which the Buddha begins to speak.

But on this occasion, the occasion with which we're concerned, the Buddha said nothing. He just sat there, the disciples just sat there: the Buddha was silent; the disciples were silent too. But eventually, in the midst of the silence, the Buddha lifted up a golden flower. All the disciples saw it, they all looked at it, but only one understood the meaning, and that was Mahakasyapa, one of the oldest and wisest and most experienced of all the disciples. He understood and he just smiled. So the Buddha then said, "O Mahakasyapa, I now transmit my Dharma, my doctrine, my truth, to you." And this, we are told, is the origin of Zen. This is how the special transmission started: it was a transmission from the Buddha to Mahakasyapa, from one heart to another: from the heart of the Master to the heart of the disciple, in silence. And this is how the transmission continues, even down to the present day.

But the question which arises in people's minds, the question which they inevitably ask, especially intelligent people, such as we have in the West, is "Well, what is transmitted?" After all, the Buddha didn't just give him a flower, the Buddha wasn't a flower child or anything of that sort, so what was transmitted? What is this Dharma, this truth, which is handed over by the Buddha to Mahakasyapa? Well, one can answer this question, one can reply, one can say, "Well, Zen itself: it was Zen which was handed over on the spot by the Buddha to Mahakasyapa, symbolised by the golden flower." But this doesn't help us very much, it doesn't carry us very far.

We may say, going a little further, going a little deeper, that what was transmitted by the Buddha to Mahakasyapa was the realisation that there is nothing to transmit. Nothing to transmit. Nothing to hand over. And when the Buddha held up the golden flower, it was this which Mahakasyapa understood: that there was nothing to transmit. Those who were looking for something, expecting something from the Buddha, all the others, they were all mistaken: there was nothing to transmit. And so Mahakasyapa, understanding this, smiled.

So there's nothing to transmit. There's nothing for the Buddha to transmit to us, nothing for us to receive from the Buddha. We usually think that we go to the Buddha to receive something: receive Enlightenment, receive instruction, but no, there's nothing to receive, nothing to be transmitted: the Buddha simply points. He points, he doesn't transmit anything, he just points and he says, as it were, "It's all there: no need to go for it to Buddhism, no need to go for it to Zen: you've got it with you all the time. Nothing to be transmitted: you have it. If you look for it, you'll lose it."

So in a sense, on a lower level, it's the same in psychotherapy: the patient has nothing to gain from the therapist: the therapist doesn't hand him health and sanity on a plate: the therapist simply helps the patient to mobilise his own dormant curative and creative powers. That's all that the therapist does - and it's a great deal. And all this,

all this process, so far as Buddhism is concerned, so far as Zen is concerned, takes place outside the Scriptures. Not that the Scriptures are useless - they're very useful indeed - but the Scriptures represent a sort of crystallisation of somebody else's experience. And this is no substitute for our own experience - our own experience of the fact of the truth that there is nothing to transmit: it is all with us, every bit of it, already.

Secondly, "*No dependence on words and letters.*" No dependence, that is to say, on second-hand experiences, no dependence on what somebody else says, what somebody else tells you - in a word, no dependence on authority, the second great principle of Zen.

Most people are quite afraid to stand on their own feet. So they want to believe in someone, place their faith in someone, cling to someone and so on. They don't want to carry themselves, the burden, as they feel it, of responsibility. They're afraid of freedom: they don't want to be free. They want someone to tell them to do what they want to do. One finds this very often in one's own experience. Sometimes people come, they talk, then it soon becomes quite clear what they really want to do. Well, why don't they go and do it? No, they come to you and they want you to tell them to go and do it. This is the position, the situation of many people. In this way they set up authorities. They create father figures. The most familiar father figure, is of course, that of God. But there are many others: there's the State, a father figure an authority; there's the Leader; there's the Party. Not only father figures, but also mother figures - you've got Mother Church. So people don't want to be independent, don't want to be free, they want to go back, as it were (those who want mother figures, at least) back to the womb, because it's all so nice and cosy there. They don't want freedom, they don't want the open air, they don't want responsibility.

But one of the most dangerous authorities of all is the authority of the Book. Book with a capital 'B', and especially the Sacred Book. Capital 'S', capital 'B'. In other words, the Bible, the Koran, Das Kapital, the Little Red Book (or Hansard!), or the daily newspaper - some people, as you know, swear by '*The Times*', or '*The Financial Times*'; lots of you, I know, swear by '*The New Statesman*'! But the attitude is just the same: it's the same attitude of slavish dependence.

But the attitude of Zen is quite different. Japanese Zen paintings show the Sixth Patriarch, Hui Neng, tearing up the Scriptures, especially the Diamond Sutra - he seemed to have quite a thing about the Diamond Sutra - he was always tearing it up! At least according to Japanese art.

But it's just the same (again on its own level, in its own context) with psychotherapy. Psychotherapy tries to resolve at different levels, at different stages, this attitude of infantile dependence. It tries to help people to stand on their own feet, at least to stand up, to realise that they have a backbone.

Now thirdly, "*Direct pointing to the mind of man.*" Direct pointing to the mind of man. Not of course, other people's minds, but one's own mind. Most of us find it quite easy to look at other people's minds but very difficult to look at our own. But Zen says, "Look within." Just look within. Maybe you've never looked there before. Well, you may know the whole world, the whole universe, the whole cosmos, with all its suns, and stars and Milky Ways, galactic systems and so on - you may be able to measure that universe, you may be able to weigh the stars, but if you don't know your own mind, if you've never looked within, it's all useless.

And this isn't a question of just knowing the mind as an object, knowing it as something "out there", as the subject matter of psychology, not knowing in a scientific sort of way: what is meant by knowing the mind here is something quite different, is knowing the mind beyond the mind, not the lower mind again knowing the higher mind; not even the higher mind knowing the lower mind - but mind or the knowingness of mind, where there's no subject and no object, where they're both merged, as it were. But then again, there's no question of knowing this mind, which is neither subject nor object, *as* an object. If one wanted to be paradoxical, one could only say one can only know it by a sort of not knowing, or an un-knowing.

Psychotherapy, obviously, doesn't go so far as this. But psychotherapy, especially in the form of psychoanalysis, is very well aware of the importance, and of the difficulty, of knowing ourselves, even on the psychological level. Psychoanalysis, especially, knows, how much we repress, how much we keep down, how much we keep under, how much in ourselves we allow to remain undeveloped, unrealised, unrecognised - not only lower things, but so much which is higher, so much which is rich and meaningful and spiritual, and even transcendental within us.

And psychoanalysis also knows therefore how much we project from our own unconscious depths onto people and places and things around us. And all these repressions must be resolved; all these projections withdrawn. And therefore both Zen and psychotherapy, in their own ways, point to the mind and say, "Look there."

Then, fourthly and lastly, "*Seeing into one's own nature; Realising Buddhahood.*" And here, of course, a much more metaphysical, a much more transcendental dimension enters in or begins to be disclosed. Here one as it were penetrates into the depths, into the ultimate depths, of one's own true nature. And at the same time, one realises what Buddhism calls Buddhahood.

By penetrating to the depths of one's own nature, one's own being, into the ultimate depths, one emerges on the other side, emerges into Buddhahood, because Buddhism would say, and Zen would say most emphatically, in the depths of one's being, far beyond the mind, far beyond even the higher mind, in a new dimension altogether, one of which most of the time we're not even aware, but there, one is Buddha, was Buddha and always will be Buddha, not *in* time, but out of time altogether, and therefore one has nothing to gain. There's no Buddhahood to gain, it's there all the time. And one has never, really truly ever, lost anything. And when one realises this, when one wakes up to the fact that in the depths of one's being, in one's ultimate nature, one is Buddha, then naturally a tremendous creativity, a tremendous spontaneity, is released, because one is in touch with the sources of Reality, and Reality therefore flows through one and one is Reality. One has gone, of course, far beyond psychotherapy, far beyond Zen, and far beyond all the aspects of Buddhist Psychology.