



Katharine Kozlowski: hi

Eliza Madrigal: Hi Everybody :)

Mitsu Ishii: hellooo

Dao Yheng: Hi Eliza

Dao Yheng: Did you see the reports that Mitsu and Katharine posted recently?

Zen Arado: Hi All :)

Eliza Madrigal: yes, read Mitsu's this morning, and just now Katharine's...

Dao Yheng: Hi Zen -- how do you manage to appear in your chair so easily?

Mitsu Ishii: eliza I always look forward to see what you're wearing

Eliza Madrigal: How nice to have so much to work with today

Zen Arado: don't know :)

Eliza Madrigal smiles, Thanks :)

Eliza Madrigal: That's true Zen... you have a talent...

Mitsu Ishii: I didn't write about the inner/outer witness one because I wasn't sure what the Tibetans meant by that technically. however, I looked up and found an article on it, not sure how authoritative it is.

Dao Yheng: What is their take on inner/outer witness?

Mitsu Ishii: gaya and tim can't make it today

Mitsu Ishii: oh he was saying the outer witness refers to other people's opinions of you which can be valuable but not as valuable as the inner witness which he was saying has to do with the inner teacher

Zen Arado: which one is 'right' though?

Dao Yheng: So we weren't too far off :)

Eliza Madrigal: makes sense... like following advice because someone else had a similar situation...

Mitsu Ishii: I was thinking we'd have Dao moderate today in the spirit of rotating moderators, and Eliza is feeling a little under the weather

Eliza Madrigal: Thanks so much Dao :)

Zen Arado: sorry to hear that Eliza

Eliza Madrigal: Its okay Zen, just a little weak :)

Eliza Madrigal: thanks

Mitsu Ishii: <http://lojongmindtraining.com/Commentary.aspx?Author=13&proverb=18>

Mitsu Ishii: from the lojong site, their take on the inner/outer witness thing

Dao Yheng: it seems like the inner witness angle can still go wrong if I take it to mean all my random chatter and self-judgements

Zen Arado: didn't think it had to do with opinions?

Mitsu Ishii: yeah, that's why I looked it up --- it doesn't just mean your ordinary mind, according to that article

Zen Arado: or judgements?

Mitsu Ishii: it refers more to the inner teacher

Eliza Madrigal nods... the line about pure motivation seems important

Mitsu Ishii: the funny thing is our kira notes come up as one of the hits for "lojong inner witness"

Mitsu Ishii: on google

Zen Arado: kind of like ignoring others opinions

Dao Yheng: ha ha -- already?

Eliza Madrigal: Hmm!

Dao Yheng: google is the new inner witness

Katharine Kozlowski: google's definitely an outer witness

Mitsu Ishii: yeah the ways of knowing wiki page

Dao Yheng: Katharine, I was also interested in your mention of "other"

Dao Yheng: more from a western philosophical approach, but still relevant, it seems

Dao Yheng: did you want to say more about that?

Katharine Kozlowski: well it seems like thinking of anything as other is a mistake somehow

Katharine Kozlowski: which is why i thought inner/outer was confusing

Dao Yheng: At the same time, I often do think in terms of other :)

Katharine Kozlowski: sure, me too

Zen Arado: seems to be about how much we listen to others

Eliza Madrigal: Thanks :)

Mitsu Ishii: I've always had this sense of a sort of inner teacher

Mitsu Ishii: when I was a very young child, I had this strong impression of what I used to think of as an "overmind" which was sort of observing me, who I imagined as "me" but very old

Zen Arado: it's as if things happen to teach us new things to me

Mitsu Ishii: occasionally I'd switch into that perspective, it was very different from my child mind

Mitsu Ishii: it was quiet

Mitsu Ishii: non-judgemental, but aware

Eliza Madrigal: :) I love that idea, and relate a bit... though 'overmind' doesn't sound very friendly to me... hm, but quiet overmind... how very interesting

Mitsu Ishii: well it had this feeling of being "above" things, like that was the direction in my mind, like it was sitting on a shelf above my normal mind

Mitsu Ishii: not in the sense of being an overlord or whatever

Eliza Madrigal nods.. wiser self?

Zen Arado: funny how we develop an idea that there are two of us

Dao Yheng: the silent aspect is interesting to me too -- maybe that's why I have such a hard time paying attention to it!

Eliza Madrigal: hehe

Mitsu Ishii: now though I have a different impression which is that I'm not split into two perspectives, but just one larger being

Eliza Madrigal: Oh! I can see Dao now [before a cloud] and looking cute) :))

Zen Arado: but you can see it when ppl say 'I don't like myself' etc

Dao Yheng: :)

Zen Arado: the go part is just imaginary after all?

Zen Arado: ego

Mitsu Ishii: (on a side note I notice Dao and Eliza both like to play with their appearance in second life, but not as much in real life. Dao doesn't really spend much time buying clothes or whatever in real life....)

Zen Arado: at the risk of being sexist.....

Eliza Madrigal: :) uh oh...

Dao Yheng: it's true that the ego part can feel so "real" until it suddenly vanishes

Zen Arado: :)

Zen Arado: won't say it then :)

Eliza Madrigal: no worries...

Eliza Madrigal: but to your point re ego Zen... layers of ego = layers of outer witness?

Zen Arado: or maybe how we react to others by creating a false self?

Zen Arado: we build ego both from our own impressions and the impressions of others?

Dao Yheng: it's a weirdly strong impulse --

Eliza Madrigal: constructions... distancing tools...

Zen Arado: or from how we reacted to others in the past?

Dao Yheng: a hall of mirrors -- we define ourselves and each other, and then react to those definitions, etc

Zen Arado: mmmhmmmm

Eliza Madrigal: ahhh, nods nods

Dao Yheng: I don't know why it seems to require so much courage to just stop that for a moment

Zen Arado: so the inner witness is the most accurate?

Zen Arado: agree Dao

Dao Yheng: If the inner witness is that place which is quiet, empty, accepting -- that certainly seems like a trustworthy witness

Zen Arado: if it is from our direct experience in the present moment

Zen Arado: otherwise thoughts distort it

Eliza Madrigal: yes, direct, still, quiet....

Zen Arado: ?

Dao Yheng: yes -- just the willingness to be directly with it

Eliza Madrigal: and I know it can be a loaded term, but as in that reference earlier... somehow the word 'pure' fits...

Dao Yheng: stainless is another word that sometimes comes to mind

Mitsu Ishii: so how about the other aphorism, before you were born

Dao Yheng: :) was just going to ask...

Dao Yheng: I am very curious about how people felt about working with that one (obviously I got myself a bit twisted up in it :)

Zen Arado: I thought it was a zen koan :)

Eliza Madrigal: I loved working with this one... in the very way I love unwrapping onion layers til we get to no-thoughts stainlessness....

Eliza Madrigal: difficult to talk about though?

Dao Yheng: Yes -- I think I still get stuck on getting an answer out of it :)

Dao Yheng: basically took me a whole week to say, OK, it really isn't something to understand

Dao Yheng: but then find myself slipping back in the next hour!

Dao Yheng: I went to see Shutter Island last night, so that may be influencing the flavor of my report ...

Eliza Madrigal: Oh?

Dao Yheng: just the sense of having built a large edifice of ideas and explanations, allowing it to subside, then finding myself in the thick of it again...

Zen Arado: it's like getting back to our basic awareness before we started identifying with a concept of ourselves

Zen Arado: before we were 2 years old

Eliza Madrigal: ... before 'we'

Zen Arado: I think we develop a concept of self at around 18 months

Zen Arado: i.e. recognise ourselves in a mirror

Mitsu Ishii: well, the Zen formulation of this is, your original face before your parents (or grandparents) were born

Zen Arado: before that we are just a field of awareness

Mitsu Ishii: which I believe is meant to catapult us to an even more radical notion, before even the causes of your own birth have been born

Eliza Madrigal: ... so impossible to conceptualize really... before birth, timeless ...

Zen Arado: yes - your true self without the overlays of thought

Mitsu Ishii: so we're talking about a notion that is beyond even, say, a baby's awareness, but really, what is beyond your ordinary life in every sense

Dao Yheng: I guess it depends on what you mean by thought, though

Zen Arado: awareness had to start somewhere though ?

Eliza Madrigal: :)

Eliza Madrigal: that's why its so difficult to discuss in one's own words...

Zen Arado: or maybe we are part of a huge sea of awareness and become separated at birth?

Zen Arado: like waves/sea analogy?

Mitsu Ishii: it's pointing at: our fundamental nature, beyond even this life, or our parents or even grandparents

Zen Arado: our oneness with everything

Eliza Madrigal: beyond everything even.... or ideas about everything / anything? one/many

Mitsu Ishii: there's an aspect of reality, our participation in it, which goes beyond space and time, in a basic sense (not a speculative sense, but a basic, sense)

Zen Arado: which we start to lose through socialization process?

Mitsu Ishii: I think Zen master seung sahn's way of putting it

Mitsu Ishii: "Everyone believes that time and space exist. Ha ha ha ha! That's very funny! Your thinking makes time, and your thinking makes space. But no one really understands this. So these lines state that time and space are the same, and they are one. They are also not one."

Zen Arado: all constructions

Mitsu Ishii: (he's referring to some Korean zen teachings)

Eliza Madrigal: :)) I can hear the Ha Ha Ha!

Dao Yheng: :)

Zen Arado: so go straight - have don't know mind - or you get 30 whacks :)

Dao Yheng: I think that part of the difficulty is that we're using words like awareness, consciousness, etc for something that doesn't have to do with our minds at all

Zen Arado: yes - who knows what awareness is anyway?

Dao Yheng: i mean, it doesn't have to do with our minds any more than the rock, etc

Eliza Madrigal: Great point, Dao...

Dao Yheng: it's something that is our mind, is the rock, but not a rock or a mind :)

Zen Arado: trying to describe the indescribable

Zen Arado: but 'we have to say something' as another zen teacher said :)

Dao Yheng: :) yes, some part of me wonders why I even try :)

Dao Yheng: Hmm, interesting -- what does that mean, to have to say something?

Eliza Madrigal: That line in the Heart Sutra... "Therefore in emptiness there is no form, no sensation, thought, impulse, consciousness."

Zen Arado: that's why zen teachers use koans and you have to 'show ' them something - not words

Dao Yheng: ah, OK

Eliza Madrigal: I remember the first time I read 'consciousness' in there and thought "WHAT?!" I thought consciousness was be all/end all :)

Zen Arado: have to give a pointer Dao?

Mitsu Ishii: well, the answer can be words, but it's not just the words. the same words from different people in different circumstances can be accepted or not

Eliza Madrigal: such a good challenge... and now I hear "ha ha ha" again... think ha ha ha must be the answer ;-)

Eliza Madrigal: or maybe just my fever :)

Dao Yheng: :) :)

Zen Arado: words are all we have I guess

Eliza Madrigal: which maybe takes us back to the idea of inner teacher... if no words, then what....

Mitsu Ishii: that actually relates to thoughts I've had over the years

Zen Arado: direct experience

Eliza Madrigal: :)

Mitsu Ishii: the thing is --- it's not that we have a necessary dichotomy between words and something "direct"

Zen Arado: but if you want to convey that experience to to others.....

Mitsu Ishii: words themselves are embedded in the direct, in the ground of being as well

Zen Arado: but they aren't the thing itself

Eliza Madrigal: hmm... if one doesn't seem them as being something in themselves to lean on....

Mitsu Ishii: the problem isn't words or concepts per se, it's the idea that words and concepts cover the ground, or can be used in place of that larger reality

Zen Arado: which is our mistake often

Zen Arado: we don't look beyond the label

Mitsu Ishii: but actually I think what we think of as "true" or "more true" can be related to this "direct" participation in an analogous way to ethics arising from realization

Mitsu Ishii: but it is an ethics that is not simply a set of rules

Mitsu Ishii: that is, I think a lot of things that we see as truths or partial truths are just reduced or approximate versions of the unsayable, so there's a kind of relationship between concepts and the inconceivable

Dao Yheng: form is emptiness, emptiness is form

Dao Yheng: thing?

Eliza Madrigal: mmmm... nodding

Zen Arado: nods

Eliza Madrigal spies the time and wonders about homework.... heh

Dao Yheng: An ornament of the way?

Mitsu Ishii: yes, what should we do for homework this week

Eliza Madrigal: even with a fever I feel quite inspired by this session today... somehow... thanks everyone :)

Mitsu Ishii: :)

Dao Yheng: yes, thanks to everyone too!

Zen Arado: yes it was interesting

Mitsu Ishii: how about "When everything goes wrong, treat disaster as a way to wake up." as one of them

Zen Arado: sure

Dao Yheng: How about "Renew your commitment when you get up and before you go to sleep."

Eliza Madrigal: Didnt we do the disaster one?

Mitsu Ishii: did we?

Zen Arado: ha yes was thinking of that one myself Dao

Dao Yheng: this one looks attractive to me because it's something very practical to do

Eliza Madrigal: let me see...

Dao Yheng: that's funny zen!

Zen Arado: what about the jealousy one ?

Eliza Madrigal: Ah, yes #43

Mitsu Ishii: okay how about that one and "Practicing even when distracted is good training."

Zen Arado: ok

Eliza Madrigal: Okay :)

Dao Yheng: wait, which ones?

Eliza Madrigal: hehe

Eliza Madrigal: Renew commitment, definitely... practicing when distracted... and then do we want jealousy?

Eliza Madrigal: :)

Mitsu Ishii: Gaya requested more of a practice element, so perhaps we can try this as a practice: while in the middle of something distracting (work? worrying?) at least once a day, we do at least 15 seconds of practice

Zen Arado: ok drop the jealousy :)

Eliza Madrigal: Ah, good idea

Mitsu Ishii: as well as the renewing commitment when we go to sleep and wake up

Dao Yheng: sounds good

Eliza Madrigal: hehe... yes we'll drop jealousy for now, great

Eliza Madrigal: I better take a nap before I get loopier...

Dao Yheng: :) I love Eliza's feverish mind!

Eliza Madrigal: Bye everyone, will post session asap. Hahahah Dao!!! :))))

Mitsu Ishii: bye