

INCLUDING EVERYTHING

When you become you yourself, at that moment your practice includes everything.

Our way of sitting is for you to become yourself. Katagiri Roshi always says, “to settle oneself on oneself.” To be yourself.

When you become you yourself, at that moment your practice includes everything. Whatever there is, it is a part of you. You practice with everyone in the future and in the past. That is our practice. But when you do not become yourself, it doesn't happen in that way.

When you sit, you are sitting with everything, including animate and inanimate beings. The Soto Zen founder Dogen Zenji said that if your practice doesn't include everything, it is not real practice.

You may think that after practicing for a long time you will attain enlightenment, and that then your practice will include everything and everyone. But actually your practice already includes everything. If you think that in two or three years, after your practice improves, then your practice will be perfect enough to include everything, that is a mistake. Something is missing in that understanding. The sincerity is missing.

When you practice forgetting yourself, forgetting where you are and how long you have been here, then your practice includes everything. When you say, “I practice zazen at Zen Center,” “I” and “Zen Center” are extra. You are limiting your practice by the idea of “Zen Center” or “my practice.” When you say “my practice,” the practice is very small. When you say “Zen Center,” the

practice is very limited. When you forget all about those kinds of ideas and just practice, then at that time your practice is perfect and includes everything, past, present, and future. That is the point of practice.