

## NATURALNESS

*It is dangerous to undertake something on purpose in order to train yourself.*



Once when I was traveling alone in northern Japan, I met a man accompanied by a dog on a great chain. We were on a boat going to a small island. The first thing he said to me was, "Be careful, the dog is dangerous!"

We became good friends. He told me that if it was my business to save all common people, then I should know what their life is like. He told me that I had to experience what they experienced. For instance, he had relationships with many women and drank *sake*, and he thought that I should practice the same in order to understand him.

If the occasion comes to drink, it may be all right. If you have to do something—if it is inevitable—then there is the possibility for it to be real training for you. But if I drank *sake* in order to train myself, then I would not be doing it in the same way as him, so it would not work. It is dangerous to undertake something on purpose in order to train yourself.

You must be very careful of your motivation when you do something on purpose. For example, we monks go to Eihei-ji monastery for training, but it is not always successful. If you go of your own will, often there is a wrong motivation. You expect to get something once you have completed it; you expect to gain enlightenment, or improve your character or something. If we have the wrong motivation when we enter the monastery, then when we come out of the monastery, we are arrogant, with spiritual pride in what we have done. That is very dangerous.

If you walk through the fog, your clothes will become wet; without you making any effort or being conscious of it, they quite naturally become wet.