

Let Yourself Be the Light

by Takamatsu Bunzo

Though I never met him, it was Macrobiotics founder George Ohsawa who led me to Oriental Medicine. When I was 19, I went to a fasting center to do 15 days of fasting and I encountered his books there. A book can have a big influence on people. The effect sometimes is as strong as encountering a person, if not more so. When I came to the US, all I had in my bag were 20 books by Ohsawa. He taught me the way to look at the world in terms of yin and yang. I'm beginning to understand that the true purpose of Macrobiotics is to synthesize yin and yang, and transcend the dichotomy. In his later life, he was trying to bring world peace through Macrobiotics. He knew that world peace is attainable only when each individual is liberated, and that Macrobiotics is one of the most effective ways to enlighten people. In his books, he often mentions "eternal happiness," "ultimate freedom," "absolute justice." These are the goals of Macrobiotics. In other words, he considered Macrobiotics to be the way to personal liberation, and the world would be more peaceful with more enlightened people.

Surely, we are what we eat and by controlling the diet we may become enlightened. Physiology and psychology are one, therefore, by mastering the way we eat we may be enlightened. However, the numbers who became enlightened through a Macrobiotic way of living are probably limited. On the contrary, quite a few Macrobiotic people tend to be judgmental. It is, in a sense, a pitfall of Macrobiotics. The yin-yang dialectic is a very convenient way of looking at life and its applications are vast. However, people often mistakenly add their own value judgments to it. For example, "Vegetarianism is good, but eating meat is bad." Many people can't eat sweets without having a certain sense of guilt. For nearly 40 years I have seen many people in the clinic, and I have met some unhappy vegetarians, and some happy meat eaters as well. While some people got sick because of the way they ate, some stayed healthy no matter what they ate. While some got better by changing their diet, some lost their spiritual freedom by becoming too dogmatic about Macrobiotics. Diet IS important, but it is not the only important thing. At one time I was a very strict vegetarian and when I got married to a woman who was not, our different eating style created a tension between us. Finally, I gave in and decided to eat whatever she cooked. It may sound like an excuse of someone who cannot stick to the principle, but

I became happier. No matter what we eat, whether it is vegetables or meat, we are taking lives. We should be conscious about this fact and be grateful to those who sacrificed their lives. I think this is the key point of any diet.

I always thought eating and thinking were two essential aspects of man's liberation. When I was younger, I thought eating was more important, but lately the proportion has shifted. Thinking is more important. If we want to change ourselves, we need to change our eating and thinking. Thinking, however, is not as easy to change as eating because thinking has no substance in the way food does. At first, I was drawn to Ohsawa's ideas, such as eternal happiness or ultimate freedom. These ideas are beyond oneself, or beyond ego. This reminds me of a qigong workshop I took several years ago in Japan. The instructor said, "When is man happiest?" and immediately answered himself, "When he loses his ego." Ever since, this incident became my ultimate question and answer, and somehow I thought Ohsawa was aiming at the same thing: conquering the ego.

What does "losing ego" mean? Is ego what makes us us? Then losing ego means to die? We become the happiest when we die? Is it possible to lose ego while we are alive? I thought about getting in touch with the instructor and asking him to elaborate on what he said. But I didn't because I realized this was my koan. Solving this koan would liberate me. I myself have to find the answer. This is not an intellectual problem. This is beyond intellect. But I was getting nowhere. Then Osho appeared.

Western medicine is only concerned with life before death. It is not interested in death itself. This is one of the biggest differences in Oriental medicine. In Oriental medicine, death is just as important a part of life as birth is. If we avoid looking at death and try not to face it, we can never be freed from the fear of death. Our lives shine more when we truly understand the meaning of death. When I was thinking about the meaning of death, I ran into one of Osho's videos entitled *Is it possible to die consciously?* And I was transfixed. I ordered his books and ever since then I have been reading only his books. Reading a page of *The Book of Secrets - 112 Meditations to Discover the Mystery Within* is worth one hour of meditation. I listen to his lectures in my car. He is, in one word, a "loquacious Lao Tzu." Lao Tzu said, "Tao expressed in words is not Tao" and "Those who know don't speak. Those who speak don't know." He knew that the truth cannot be expressed in words. That's why he left only one tiny text which can be read in 30 minutes. On the contrary, Osho left over 600 books. He was constantly talking. As an enlightened person like

Lao Tzu, he knew more than anyone else the futility of talking of the truth, but he could not help it. I think that was his compassion for the human race. I became one of many who got inspired by him and started meditating seriously. Throughout my whole life I attempted meditation of one form or another many times and gave up after a few years or months. This time I feel slightly different. I was not exactly aware of what I was doing before, but this time I am more aware of what I am doing. Meditation is not mind control. It is impossible to control our mind. It moves around all the time. Our task is to watch that wild mind. Observe it. The one who is observing is the true self. If we are afraid of something, that is ego. If we are angry about something, that is our ego. If we feel anxiety for no reason, it is our ego. True self knows no fear, no anger. If we awaken our true self, we are enlightened. Ever since I was little, I wanted to become enlightened. At almost 62, I feel like I am standing at the gate that leads to the peak called enlightenment. My goal is enlightenment, and I want to attain it without becoming a monk, without retiring on a mountain, without getting divorced. I should be able to because I understand Buddha's last words: "Let the dharma be the light. Let yourself be the light." I have the dharma that my two mentors, George Ohsawa and Osho, left to show me the way. All I have to do now is to keep on walking. When it gets dark, I have my own light. I need not get bothered by noises outside. I can always find the answers in myself. It all depends on my awareness.

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