

Inka Speech

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Inka Speech by George Hazlbauer JDPSN, March 20 2016, Wu Bong Sa

[Raises the Zen stick over his head, then hits the table with the stick.]

A good situation is a bad situation, a bad situation is a good situation.

[Raises the Zen stick over his head, then hits the table with the stick.]

No good, no bad, then what?

[Raises the Zen stick over his head, then hits the table with the stick.]

A good situation is a good situation, a bad situation is a bad situation.

KATZ!

Many people in a warm room on a cold spring day.

I would first of all like to thank all of my teachers, especially to Dae Kwang Sunim for all of his patience with me through the years. To Jo, who really pushed me in the last few years with my homework. And to all of my dharma brothers and sisters, which the biggest one of them is my wife, Tam.

It's a strange feeling to be here. One which I did not expect. As I just said with a good situation being bad and a bad situation being good, I was thinking of the life I lived that brought me to the misfortunes which shaped my life which actually were more important than what you would call the success, and I would like to share that with you. Because we often think things only need to go good in order for life to be good but actually when we really look at it, we need both good and bad to have a really full and happy life.

So for one, I never wanted to be a carpenter. I wanted to be a mathematician but my government told me that I have no future for the country, so they didn't allow me to go to the school. So then I went to the carpentry and thought I'm going to do something else afterwards. Then I start doing Zen a few years later and I found out that all these Zen centers are built of wood! And that there are carpenters needed. So it opened the doors to Zen centers all around the globe. So bad, good... ?

When I finished carpentry school I switched jobs really fast. Within two months I had a third job, lost that one, too and the father of my friend offered

me a job in his construction company. It was more of a pity rather than that he needed anybody. He said, "Just come to the office, we have a talk and we sort it out." I went to the office, he was not there, it was some other guy, I talked to him, got the job, started working. Then I met the owner of the company and he's like, "Why didn't you ever come for the interview?" I said, "what do you mean, I went for the interview, I got the job." He said, "well, not in my company!" I got a job in a fresh start up company which just became a really important company and due to the things which were happening, in two months I was in the top management in that company and my life completely changed.

So, again, good, bad, things just happen.

I met incredible people in that company which helped me really to look into life, asking the questions, why we really live. They were like, "Yeah, we're doing this job but we really need to find out what life is about." I was like, "What do you mean, 'what life is about'? We work, we go home, we sleep, go back to work." [They said] "No! Something more!"

So those were the people really helped me to start questioning life and that question became so big that I actually left the business, started traveling, and went to Israel in search of a spiritual teacher. I was on the way to Asia. I didn't speak any language really at that time, and the bus driver I guess didn't really understand me, what I was trying to do, so he let me out in the middle of the desert, saying "This is the address you are looking for." I was like, "No!" And he said, "Yeah!" I got out and there was really nobody, we found a few bedouins, and they really liked us and let us stay with them. I spent three months living with the bedouins and had an incredible amount of time to sort out my thoughts.

I was really desperate to figure out what this life is about. I literally left my company and just wanted to find the guru and I was trying all the possible techniques. I was going nuts. I remember I was trying to stop my thinking, because that's what I read, so hard that I could not form a thought any more. I ended up banging my head on a rock just to stop the pain. That was the first time in my life I actually saw the blue sky. I also had with me a few books which I had found. One of them was *Dropping Ashes on the Buddha*. Since I had plenty of time, and the bedouins were an incredible people, helping me to survive, I finally turned the last page. I read really, really, really slowly. So I got to the last page and there was an address of a place in Prague which practiced Zen. So I turned around and went to Prague and started practicing with you guys.

Good, bad, who knows?

We never know what is the outcome of our actions. And we will never have control over it. That is the beauty of life: the unknown which is always in front of us. So I just wish for all of us that we can embrace that and live with that don't know as the beauty that it is, in our teachings, and in our lives.

[Raises the Zen stick over his head, then hits the table with the stick.]

Open mouth already a mistake. Don't say a word, you're already dead.

[Raises the Zen stick over his head, then hits the table with the stick.]

No silence, no words. What can you do?

[Raises the Zen stick over his head, then hits the table with the stick.]

Silence is silence. Talk is just talk.

KATZ!

Many smiling faces in the room, cookies coming soon.

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