

THE IMPORTANCE OF DEVELOPING "PROPER" SAMADHI

*-excerpt from a talk on the FIFTY SKANDHA DEMONS section of the
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Before we go into discussing the difference between proper and deviant samadhis and the tricks of current fake spiritual teachers, let's backtrack a little and investigate why America is so ripe for this kind of thing right now.

For decades psychoanalysis put people's minds into a dark perspective and that kind of view still prevails in the minds of many today. In the early 1900's Freud claimed that people had an id, libido, a subconscious, and a superconscious, and so forth, and that they were just bursting at the seams with passion. He contended that if people didn't find a way to release or sublimate all that passion, they would become psychologically unfit. From that notion, people got the idea that they could never really fathom the self-nature--it was hidden somewhere in that dark unknown--mysterious, occult, and too deep to ever reach. When I studied Freud in college, I found from his journals that he used cocaine regularly and that somewhat dampened my belief in the clarity of his arguments.

Later on in the 1930's and 40's, psychotherapy was influenced by "gestalt" theories and methods. Several therapists published a lot of material including clinical experimentation advocating the idea that people had to have release for all their pent-up resentments and anxieties or they would get sick. Sessions were conducted and documented where people would yell and scream and beat pillows and act out their frustrations on each other. Then came off-shoots like Primal Scream and Body-Contact Therapies that stressed sexual release. This just made things worse.

In the fifties, the beat generation emerged, followed in the sixties by the hippy and "flower children" movement. At that point, American culture really began to go downhill. This decline was led by some professors from top colleges in the country--Harvard being one that exerted major influence--who professed that "the way to enlightenment" was very easy. Their method was "turn on, tune in, and drop out."

Their vehicle was LSD and other hallucinogens. But no one really knew the physiological, biological, and psychological effects of ingesting such drugs. All that was known was that the drugs triggered a chemical reaction in the different lobes of the brain which resulted in hallucinations which took the form of seeing colored lights, hearing sounds, experiencing tactile sensations, and so forth. All the sense organs went awry. In fact, these changes were precipitated by the poison of the drugs working on the brain cells as it went about massively destroying those delicate tissues.

Uninformed, but greedy for such "highs," many people took all kinds of psychedelics and speed for numbers of years until they eventually just burned out and found that their bodies couldn't stand any more, not to mention their minds. That brings us to the current state of affairs: everyone is by now so jaded by all the stimulants and the sexual license

which accompanies their use, that they feel everything on a "normal plane of existence" to be flat, tasteless, depressing, and utterly boring. So what next? They want another kind of high, naturally, one equally as easy to come by which demands no changes in their liberal lifestyles. By now, here in America, the overwhelming majority wants to be on a perpetual high. They burn out on one thing and go on to the next. So now, after exhausting the drug trip, they want the same type of "enlightenment," but without the drugs. That's the threshold we now stand upon in this country.

In the sixties, a lot of Eastern "gurus" were imported for the "esoteric spiritual" market. For a while their strange methods of chanting and extreme methods of practice tickled people's fancy, but Americans have gotten tired of the "imports."

Demons always await their chances and now they are starting to really move in close to home. As the country's morale falls lower and lower, the demons get slicker and slicker and address themselves to those people who are ripe for their bait. Naturally, the thousands from the dope era are going to get sucked right in. Having touched the fire and gotten burned, they are stupid enough to go try it out again.

Let us hope that by exposing the demons' new disguise, we can help open a few eyes. Nowadays, many "spiritual teachers" are young, native Americans--the boy next door types. They assume the look of anything from a rock star to a campus prof--really slick, really cool. They're not imports, but one of us--so they have instant credibility and appeal. Their bags of tricks are varied, but among them hypnosis is prevalent. They zap people through "eye contact." They can do this on a mass scale as well by demanding eye contact with each person in a crowd of two to three hundred, either by insisting on eye contact with their own physical entity or by sending out astral bodies to perform this job. Each person in the room becomes mesmerised by this tactic.

Now we know that Buddhas and Bodhisattvas and sages emit light, but demons can also emit light. Whereas the light of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas is pure *yang* and 100% wholesome, demons can appear in the guise of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas and release demonic light with only a tell-tale sign to indicate the difference. The sign is that behind the light which a demon emits there is a black aura. But it takes a certain amount of discriminating wisdom to tell the true from the phony. One needs to have the Dharma Selecting Eye which is developed from constant exposure to proper knowledge and proper views to detect the difference between what is deviant and what is proper. Otherwise one will be completely taken in.

In the *Flower Adornment Sutra* there is an oftquoted analogy of a very skilled conjurer, a magician, who can make one second appear to be limitless aeons, and who can compress limitless aeons into one moment of time. This magician can pull objects out of space, move the sun, moon, and planets, and make the very earth shake and the seas dry up. That genre of illusionist is the predecessor of the current spiritual illusionists. These modernday versions can mesmerize people into seeing balls of fire emitting from the conjurer's hands, or cause his on-lookers to perceive other kinds of auras and rays. The followers of these tricksters may see them levitate or merge right into emptiness. Actually, this is done by hypnosis through eye contact, and brought

about through a series of very subtle suggestions and psychological manipulations. For the audience to be had, however, means that they first have to be greedy for this type

of experience. It takes the greed inside to attract a demonic teacher outside. Only then can the poison take effect. Unfortunately, this current brand of deviant teacher is "finding plenty of greedy followers to work his ways upon. What results is a tragic-comical farce with a cast of hundreds.

Often such "spiritual leaders" will take their followers on outings to the wilds. Prelude to such occasions are promises that far-out visions will be seen and also the use of reverse psychology, whereby newcomers are told they probably won't see much, and maybe won't see anything. Obviously for those greedy for quick highs and easy visions, that's enough to whet the appetite. Since the followers of this teacher are spiritually naive and lacking in any genuine proper knowledge and views, they are immensely receptive to such suggestions and on such outings, many do "see" things. Some may see the teacher levitate, or see him rise effortlessly to the mountain summit, or see him split into different bodies, or see him converse with spirits from other realms and so forth. All Of these kinds of visions occur without the use of drugs. However, this is just a case of the demons appearing in other forms--outside of drugs--but with the underlying greed for a fast high being the same on the part of their victims.

A lot of these people think that they have been "given" samadhi. We should be aware that even in the Buddha's time, he could not "give" samadhi. Sure, his disciples entered samadhis while listening to the Buddha lecture or when the Buddha manifested some awesome states, but we should understand that those were advanced cultivators who had worked hard for a long time and were therefore ready to receive the proper teachings and become enlightened by them. They did not enter deviant, "spaced-out" trances. If the Buddha himself could not "give" samadhi, then how can these fake teachers possibly do so?

The key antidote to all deviant views and poisons both internal and external: non-attachment and the development of proper samadhi. A section from the "Ten Conducts, Chapter 21 " of the *Flower Adornment Sutra* says:

He serves good and wise teachers, his mind apart from delusion and scatteredness...He awakens to demonic karma, his mind apart from delusion and scatteredness. He separates from demonic deeds, his mind apart from delusion and scatteredness.

-Fifth Conduct, Freedom from Delusion and Scatteredness.

The Bodhisattva maintains proper mindfulness at all times, his vows are firm and resolute, his mind is pure and vast. He would never be carried away by "flavorful Ch'an"--the pleasures of meditation, and forsake his compassionate resolve to save all living beings. Therefore he is able to discern the proper samadhis of all Buddhas from the deviant samadhis practiced by heavenly demons and those of external ways.