

*Series 7 Talk 11*  
*Questions for Reflection*

Here are some ideas for reflection during the week:

- 1) First: Katagiri advises wisely that it only takes transcending desire to turn despair at being cornered into real silence, Buddha silence, the "total manifestation of our whole personality." Have you ever experienced this? The next time you feel despair at being cornered, try transcending your desire. ("Why do I want this so much?") It might turn some of your deepest suffering into realization.
- 2) Second: "We can help in many ways. Using toilet paper carefully is helping others." Do you agree? What would be the logic behind this somewhat radical statement?
- 3) Third: "My parents put me right in the middle of a religious mood so I accepted my vocation with my whole body--through my pores." This is part of the rationale for monastic life. Like total immersion for language learning. How might this statement be useful to you in particular?
- 4) Fourth: I was very impressed by monastic life because it was not changed by the war. He means this in a kind of procedural way, e.g., they did the same thing every day before the war and after the war they still did the same thing every day. What do you feel about this very positive picture of life in a monastery? Can you use it for your own life, making everything you do into a practice?
- 5) Fifth: "But I hated it because I was always looking for something exciting. I was always greedy. But my teacher didn't care. He just lived. He just let me be alive every day." I cannot help but admire the depth of Katagiri's self knowing and honesty. Even so it wasn't contained. Do you have any similar uncomfortable traits that could ruin things for you if you really looked at them?