

## Zen Saying from Thoreau's Walden

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## Zen Sayings from Thoreau's *Walden*

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This piece follows my earlier collections:

100 Zen Sayings from *The Old Man and the Sea* (1983)

150 Zen Sayings from *The Grapes of Wrath* (1984)

Zen Sayings from Ralph Waldo Emerson (I) (1985)

150 Zen Sayings from Whitman's 'Song of Myself' (1986)

Here I have picked out 262 Zen expressions from Henry David Thoreau's *Walden; or Life in the Woods* (1854). The number put at the end of each quotation indicates that of page in the Norton Critical Edition (W. W. Norton & Co. : New York, 1966).

Each extract in this collection is, so to speak, an original Zen saying written in English. Thoreau, who was quite ignorant of Zen, did not mean it at all, but it is quite obvious that there are various Zen viewpoints—what I call “Universalism,” “Individualism,” “Vitalism,” “Radical Humanism,” and some other aspects of Zen—vividly expressed in his own “native” language without any mixture of exoticism nor imitation at all. The Zen eye could see in each extract in this collection—one or more than one aspects of Zen.

For detailed information regarding Zen viewpoints, Zen sayings and capping phrases, see my introductions to:

*A Zen Forest : Sayings of the Masters* (New York & Tokyo :  
Weatherhill, 1981)

*A Zen Harvest : Japanese Folk Zen Sayings—Haiku, Dodoitsu, &  
Waka* (San Francisco : North Point Press, 1988)

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