



tip: read the source drop before this article:

Drop #3 – Nansen, Joshu and the “Sack of rice meditation” – aquawareness

□ **Don’t Be a Sack of Rice: Zen Wisdom in the Water**

There’s a beautiful Zen koan that popped up on aquawareness.net, and it’s too good not to share. In it, Master Nansen gently teases his student Joshu by calling him “a sack of rice” because he was just sitting and meditating instead of doing

something. It's affectionate, but sharp — classic Zen.

The point? Meditation isn't meant to be a passive escape. It's not about zoning out or becoming a statue. It's a tool — something that helps us show up more fully in whatever we're doing. Whether it's cooking, swimming, working, or just breathing, mental presence is what makes the difference.

☐♂ **Meditation Is a Means, Not the End**

The koan's commentary makes this crystal clear: the goal isn't to become "good at meditating." The goal is to use meditation — that sharpened awareness — to become better at life. It's like honing a blade, not admiring the whetstone.

☐ **Aquawareness = Meditation in Motion**

This is where Aquawareness comes in. It's not a passive therapy. It's active, embodied mindfulness. Water is the perfect training ground for this kind of presence — it doesn't let you drift off. If your mind wanders, your body loses alignment, your breath gets shaky... and suddenly, you're back in the moment whether you like it or not.

You can't be a "sack of rice" floating around. You have to engage. You have to move with intention. You have to feel.

☐ **From Relaxation to Empowerment**

Aquawareness shifts the focus from relaxation for its own sake to something deeper: the ability to act with clarity, calm, and skill. It's about being fully alive in the water — and by extension, in life.

This little Zen story reminds us that true practice is never about escaping the world. It's about meeting it head-on, with presence and grace. And that's a timeless kind of wisdom.

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