



PICTURE 2 – SEEING THE TRACES

**PREFACE:**

With the aid of the sutras, you gain understanding; through study of the teachings, you find traces. You see clearly the many vessels are all one metal, and the ten thousand things are all yourself. But if you do not distinguish correct from incorrect, how will you recognize true from false? Since you have yet to pass through that gate, only tentatively have you seen the traces.

**VERSE:**

By the water and under the trees, tracks thick and fast.  
In the sweet grasses thick with growth, did you see it or did you not?  
But even in the depths of the deepest mountains,  
How could it hide from others, its snout turned to the sky?

[Daido Looi Verse:

Along the river, deep within the forest, you find traces;  
Leaving behind the fragrant grasses, you study the subtle signs.  
The tracks, suddenly as clear as the distant sky, lead you into the endless mountains.  
There is no place to hide.

**WAKA:**

Determination deep  
In the mountains  
Your efforts bear fruit.  
Tracks!  
How gratifying to see a sign.

## PICTURE 2 – GUIDING QUESTIONS

What kinds of traces have you come across that led you to practice?

What sutras or lines of texts were important to you in your formation that Buddha Nature is worth affirming?

How has Shakyamuni and the Great Ancestors, meeting a teacher, meeting a Sangha, encouraged you to practice?

Give an example of a wrong understanding that you held that has been corrected through study and experience.

Precisely, how is Zen to be practiced?

How do you decide what to practice? What is appropriate practice for you? How have you sorted through your confusion about how to practice?

What is the best method to search for enlightenment?

How has your experience of practice convinced you that you need to keep on going with it?

What is the relationship between the Ox and Ox Herder at this point in the journey?

What are the signs for continuing a collective practice at this point in the journey?

## ASSIGNMENT

1. Give an example of a wrong understanding that you held that has now been corrected by study and practice experience? Share with the eGroup.
2. Throughout the course, draw your own Oxherding pictures.