

cloud-hidden friends letter ¹²¹

ISSUE #3

1983

OUR PAGES ARE YOUR LETTERS

Cloud-Hidden Friends
753 44th Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94121



The "Cloud-Hidden Friends" are a small non-sectarian religious correspondence group. We meet mostly by sharing our thoughts on the Dharma together in our "Letter".

Rather than giving some definition to the word "Dharma", we would rather emphasize the freedom of the individual to come to his own understanding about such. As a group we would aim more at a dialogue, and would emphasize the spirit and practice of the Dharma rather than some doctrinaire or sectarian formula.

In that spirit we look to Daisetz Teitaro Suzuki and Alan Watts as our "honorary founders". Although they are usually associated with Buddhism, and Zen in particular, their spirit was also a free and universal one, including Christianity, Hinduism, and Taoism etcetera. Their Dharma then seems to somehow belong equally to us all.

In a more universal spirit then we are a zen group. However we might also turn to someone like Thomas Merton to exemplify the kind of openness and dialogue we have in mind. In his later years, he commented that he could see no contradiction between Christianity and Buddhism, and that he had determined "to become as good a Buddhist as I can".

Since our pages are your letters, we ask as our "subscription fee" that you write us a letter now and then in the "spirit of the Dharma". Poems, songs, tales, drawings and such are all more than welcome. We will try to publish everything we receive, but this might not always be possible. Letters should be of a reasonable length, and if you so request, we will type them up for you. It is presumed we will forgive each other a few typing errors etcetera, since perfectionism could easily paralyze us.

It is hoped that our letters will somehow help us open our hearts to each other, and deepen our sense of the Dharma. Hopefully in this way too more than a few deep friendships might develop.

It is our intention to be as democratic in spirit as is possible. It does seem that we do at least need a "Clerk" of some sort to do the photocopying, coordinating, and mailing etcetera. This role might be thought of as similar to that of the "Clerk" in Quakerism, and it seems a good model for us to follow. Your comments on these matters would be appreciated.

Our phrase "Cloud-Hidden" is taken from the title of a book by Alan Watts. He in turn borrowed it from a ninth century poem by Chia Tao. Lin Yutang translates it as follows:

SEARCHING FOR THE HERMIT IN VAIN

I asked the boy beneath the pines.
He said, "The master's gone alone
Herb-picking somewhere on the mount,
Cloud-hidden, whereabouts unknown."

A.C.D., Clerk

122

Marian Mountain
Coastlands
Big Sur, CA 93920

Dear HoBo Friends,

In the second issue of the Cloud-Hidden Friends Letter Yellow Mouse quoted a passage from a commentary on a Buddhist scripture which helps shed light on the second of the Four Statements of Zen: "No dependence on words or letters." The commentary pointed out that "the meaning is far more important than the words, but the words could lead to the meaning...The essential thing is not to cling to words, and not to acquire fixed ideas about their meanings and definitions..." Words can lead to the meaning. Words can also lead to the wrong meaning. Take the word "Zen" for example. Last fall Ananda and I discussed the use of this word in an exchange of letters. Later he asked me if I'd share the highlights of that discussion with readers of the Cloud-Hidden Friends Letter. Ananda wrote:

"The word 'Zen' is a problem to me in at least one respect. In Japan it was crystal clear that it meant an institution with very specific forms, and not a philosophy. For example a student of Zen is someone studying with a Roshi, and a Roshi is someone approved by the head office and licensed by the government, and who claims a direct patriarchal transmission (literal) from the Buddha himself. Without this there is no 'Zen', and the priests are willing to agree on this point (to my surprise). I'm not a student of a Roshi now, so what does that make me? In the very literal eyes of Japanese Zen, I'm completely out of it. 'Zen' is their word not ours, so I feel obliged to respect its meaning."

Unlike Ananda I haven't studied Zen in Japan but I'm sure that he was representing the situation accurately. It was a disappointment to hear that most Japanese priests had formed a fixed idea about the meaning and definition of the word "Zen" and were clinging to it. By insisting that their students respect them, and at the same time by failing to practice what they preached (no dependence on words or letters) the Japanese priests put their students into a double bind. I wrote Ananda back:

"I don't have any problem acknowledging and respecting the institutionalized, Japanized meaning of the word 'Zen' but I don't accept the definition of those Japanese Zen priests as the only one. Zen began in India with the definition and form of dyanna, evolved and was redefined in China as ch'an, and again evolved and was redefined in Japan as Zen. Not to allow dyanna-ch'an-zen to evolve and be redefined in America would be

continued

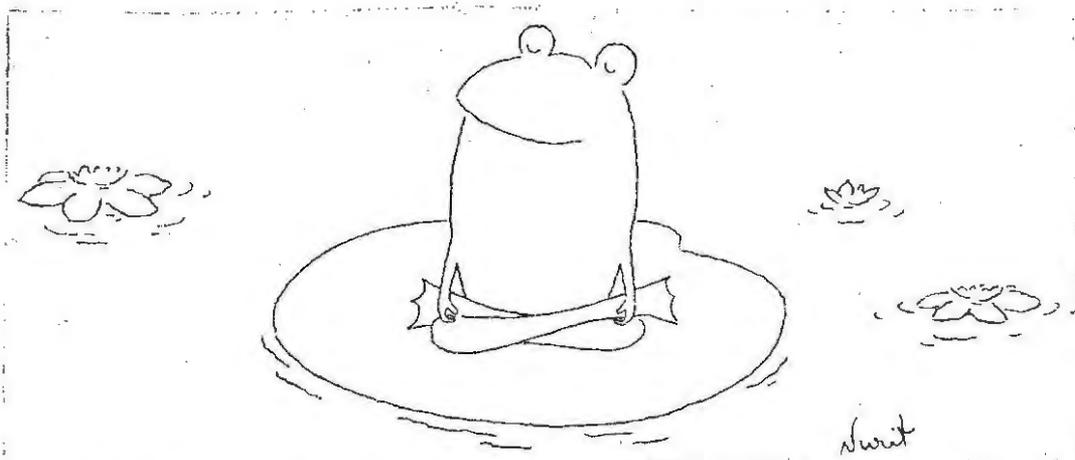
to bind it like the feet of ancient Japanese ladies. This doesn't mean that I am opposed to the Japanese expression of Zen in this country. When Japanese Zen is wholeheartedly Japanese Zen and American Zen is wholeheartedly American Zen then there is no problem. Eventually some American Zen practitioner may coin a new word to represent American or Western Zen but until that time it seems to me that the word Zen is the most useful term we have. In THE ZEN ENVIRONMENT I tried to indicate the difference between the universal and the institutional meaning of the word Zen by using the lower case for the former and capitalizing the later."

Here is my rationalization for this temporary solution: Gramatically the upper case is used for proper nouns or the names of specific individuals, places or things. "Zen", like "Catholic" refers to a specific religion or institution or philosophy. The lower case is used for common nouns and is applied to anyone of a class of persons, places or things. The word "catholic", refers to a universal spirit rather than a specific religion or philosophy. There is also a poetic association that seems appropriate in making a distinction between Zen and zen. Zen is proper and zen is common. American zen practitioners can show proper respect to the institution of Japanese Zen by capitalizing the word Zen. American zen practitioners can admit to some differences without giving up their common heritage with Japanese Zen by using the lower case to refer to non-institutionalized zen. The same principle can apply to other religious or philosophic words such as Buddhism and buddhism.

The honorary founders of the Cloud-Hidden Friends Letter represent the best of both worlds: D.T. Suzuki transmitted the proper spirit of Zen and Alan Watts transmitted the common spirit of zen.

With Palms together,

Marian



Sunit

"When a frog becomes a frog, Zen becomes zen."

Suzuki Roshi

124,

Irv Thomas
P.O. Box 48
Canyon, CA 94516

To Cloud-Hidden People:

If I may be so brazen as to plea admission to your circle - not being a Buddhist of any persuasion or anticipation - I consider myself, however, a somewhat unread Taoist, so perhaps I can claim entry on this account? In any case, there is a richness to your interweaving of voices that draws me in.

I particularly wish to respond to the good message from Frances Thompson (who writes from where?) which brings up the point about 'responsibility' that is so often heard in criticism, not only of wandering monks, but minstrels and social miscreants of every cast. Frances notes that "..someone provided the wood and bricks to build the temple, and someone built it, and someone grew food every day nearby, etc., that someone being starving wretched peasants working the land that belonged to the temple," ..and on in that vein.

Each of us, I think, carries the burden of a particular life - and each life is a burden. For some this burden must be expressed in labor, for some it must be expressed in wandering, for some indeed it must be expressed in the constant soul-search that results in writing. It is not that some do the work of others, but that each pursues a uniquely private travail. And each, I suspect, is equally rewarded at the interior point of discovery.

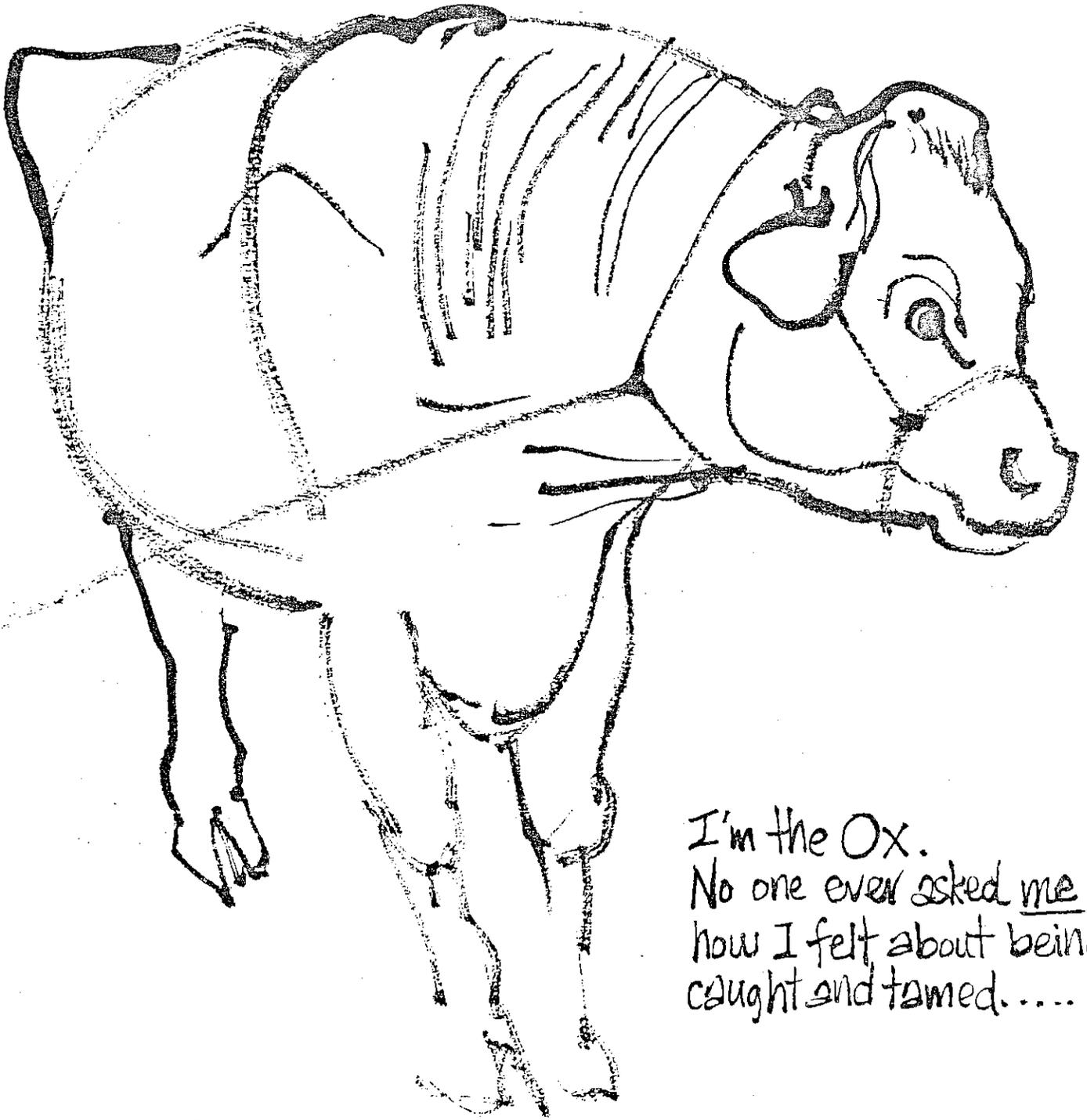
If one is terribly concerned about what is called responsibility, then that is this one's point of attachment to the illusions of world - perhaps the habit of judging others where one cannot ever know the life that goes on inside others. Many interior burdens are far heavier than the simple exterior one of a day's labor. And many who carry these have, literally, no room in themselves, nothing to spare, for the labor that is such a simple measurement of things to others.

Always, the safest rule is to look not at the inequities of life, but to your own apprehension of these. Therein lies the nugget of your own Truth.

I don't know what this ho-bo business is all about, but having lived off and on as one over the years of my life, I suppose I'm as entitled as any to claim it.

Yours, on the road..

-/RV



I'm the Ox.
No one ever asked me
how I felt about being
caught and tamed.....

Frances
Thompson

Frances Thompson
236 Cypress
Pacific Grove
CA 93950

WILD FOX ZEN

126
I like the haiku of Buson:

withered grasses where
a fox messenger on flying legs
passed through

at a wayside shrine
burning before the buddha
a firefly!

At nineteen I picked up a kimono-dressed doll in a glass cage and a training rifle from a dismantled military base, and spent most of the time coming out of adolescence. There were no Buddhist temples, netsuke, or court music. I suffered greatly from the vapors. When I first read the firefly haiku many years after the war, I realized how beautiful the country was where small insects give off great sparks of light comparable to a Buddha illuminating the one hundred thousand world-systems in showers of cosmic illumination. Besides being a great poet, Buson was recognized for his paintings. He was typically the artist, somewhat of a wanderer frequently travelling in the robes of a Jodo priest. He recorded the blue heron standing solitary on the great marshlands; of a winter-day thrown-out flowers from a temple, being washed down a mountain stream; or fresh new leaves along a shallow river running west to east.. Like the majority of cloud hidden friends he looked for elegant simplicity.

When I spoke of the unseasonable things of the world, my teacher (Hayano Hajin) pretended not to listen to me and looked absent-minded. He was indeed a really superior old man. One night while he he was sitting formally, he told me, "In the way of haikai you should not always adhere to the master's method. In every case you should be different, and in an instant, you should continue on without regard to whether you are being traditional or innovative."

We were picked up by a destroyer escort and "under weigh" to Sasebo. The crew members told us that only two days ago they picked up a young mother and her two children on a raft -- and this was in mid-December! They sunk the raft with the ship's heavy guns, and left behind a pool of bobbing tangerines. On December 7th (American date) we were standing in front of the Nagoya train station, watching a wretched old lady comforting soldiers who were stretcher cases; this is the first real image of Japan. Nagasaki was a Christian city. Not a single trace of the American POW barracks on top of the hill was found. The total destruction of the area was unimpressive, and I would not have remembered the "city" except for the amount of publicity given it following the war. The cruelest incident was not the atom bomb but rather a double-bind some sailors were imposing on a young boy working in the "navy beer hall" (for we always bring America with us, in the manner of the British imperialists of the 19th century). "Put more wood on the fire!", said one sailor, and his mate countered with, "I told you not to put any more wood on the fire!" Back and forth until the boy silently responded with tears streaming down his face.

One day, when Genshin was a young boy, he met to Bonze drinking clear water collected in small pools. Responding to the boy's questions, the monks told him there were no preferences in the buddhadharma. "If so", said Genshin, "why are you drinking the pure water, and not from the muddy bank which is more convenient?" Later in life Genshin became the head of Tendai and wrote his famous work, "Ojoyoshu," finely illustrated and appreciated by Chinese Buddhists. These scrolls depicted hells and all their gruesome details beyond description.

An old lady visited a scholar and was asked if she brought a gift. And she replied, "I was in such a hurry that I did not have time." When told to leave behind at least some klesas (bonno), she curtly reminded the eminent teacher that she was taking all of these klesas with her to the Pure Land, and could not part with these gifts. 127

The first things we learn as Buddhists are; (1) the difficulty of self-reflection; and, (2) an appreciation of dialectics of different types. Of course, shinjin (cittaprasada) which is emphasized in Shingon and the Pure Land schools, is not the same as bodaishin (bodhicitta), and things bothering the zen student are not the same problems facing the Pure Land adherent. This is readily apparent in reading the last issue of our journal, "Cloud Hidden Friends." It does not matter. What is interesting is HoBo Frances Thompson, "A push from the other direction." And HoBo Norman Moser's, "You can't pretend"; and from our dharma friend, The Yellow Mouse : "Our communication must be a dialogue. My definition of a dialogue is a continuing response by the listener to what the speaker has said." Aha! Expressions from the previous LETTER that are the crux and theme of this correspondence, WILD FOX ZEN !

There is a long tradition in China of learned masters who got quite upset and took a dim view of bodhi children who refused training in the vinaya and scoffed at sutra learning. One of these illustrious masters was Tzu Min, a rare "journeyman" who went to India and returned loaded down with Pure Land sutras, not to supplement zen meditation practice but to instill the full comprehensive teaching of Sila, Dhyana, and Prajna (The Three Learnings). Whatever the life-style of my HoBo friends (often referred in our Journal as "fellow Travelers"/dogyo), it is important to know the complaint of these masters who characterize the mental looseness of certain zenists as "wild foxes". They consider themselves cut adrift from organized sanghas and "sectarian formula". I hope there are no Ho Boes who take offense at this. I am not arguing in favor of ecumenical accommodation, or spiritual compromise of any kind. I am suggesting we consider the meaning of Thompson's metaphor of the dirt behind the kitchen stove, assuming a consensus of practicing Buddhists to keep intellectual aspiration free from grime and dust. How much klesa are we willing to give up?

Wild Fox Zen resembles American pragmatism. Maybe that is compatible with some of us HoBoes, and maybe not. In any case, it does resemble a nihilistic posture keeping in step with the passionate chorus of anti-intellectualism. The tragedy for all of us on the North American continent is the swelling of fundamentalism. This affects everyone, and shapes basic attitudes and relationships externally and internally of the Buddhist movement. There is an antidote: The Diamond Sutra , the quintessence of dharma conduct full of altruistic wisdom, aesthetics, and spiritual medicine. I would be going against the "Hidden Cloud" mythology to explore the appropriateness of a certain morality, ecology, or politics for readers of the LETTER ; but we can and should talk about the textual and oral sources of our involvement. It has always sounded silly to me to fear doctrines and ideology. For me the Four Noble Truths, the Bodhisattva and Buddha vows, eko, ojo, and karma, have never been speculative or abstract.

Deep ignorance (avidya/mumyo) is surprisingly complex in recalling my Japanese experience. My personal biography reveals not only this poison, but also poisons of hatred and greed. How is it possible not to be concerned with koan activity or at least in agreement with some of our sages in the past, "Hell is my natural abode"?

Cloud Hidden Friends Letter could well be the right juncture for the dharma to enrich the sangha. Like the problem of the middle ages, East or West, I am stuck on the polarization of individuality and universality. But I know the place to look is in the dialectics of Nagarjuna and Vasubandhu, and in the inspiration of Mahayana Sutras. Wild Fox Zen is an illusion. The Hidden Cloud is what arises out of encompassing emptiness.

Elson

I would be delighted to receive correspondence in Esperanto from some unsuspecting HoBo reader. gassho.

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ZEN GARB

what should a Zenist wear?
 loose underwear,
 loose clothing everywhere,
 a loose mind that strays
 and plays
 without supervision,
 no tightness anywhere,
 nothing to be
 pulled into.

EVEN HERE

sitting in vast desert wilderness,
 so far out even buzzards turn back,
 that hot coal of a man, Jesus,
 a fried fish here....

sitting tall in aloneness,
 snug in the silence, when
 a spanking new customized
 tapedecked stereo blasting off-
 the-road buggy comes

sailing along with beautiful
 American sunbaked couple,
 the boy leans out:

EXCUSE ME, SIR.
 IS THIS WHERE THE GRATEFUL DEAD
 IS PLAYING TONIGHT?

Joel Weishaus...
 1115 Copper N.E.
 Albuquerque, NM
 87106

129,
Breck (Bob Breckenridge)
Harbin Springs P.O. Box 782
Middletown CA 95461

Dear Cloud Hidden Friends,

How fortunate! It seems that there is a Post Office up on that mountain where where the master(s) went herb picking. Issue #2 pleased me so that I knew I'd want to get another letter off soon and here it goes following Marian Mountain's system for overcoming writer's (ego's?) block.

I mean I have trouble writing from the heart because it seems so many sentences have to start with "I" and "I" seems to keep me in an illusion usually called "ego". This "I" is (believes it is) 52 years old and has had a very full 52 years of experiences, adventures, misadventures, thrills spills, chills, fame, shame, and blame, guilt, suffering, despair, perspirations, illuminations, liberations. A full lifetimes worth, I imagine, but here "I" am happily contemplating each new day's adventures.

"Everything is a lesson God would have me learn" (Course in Miracles
Workbook Lesson 194)

This "I" who is happily contemplating might be a different I? I mean there is always the "I" who can observe contemplate, report, etc. all these lessons. And can observe contemplate, report, etc. on these observations, contemplations, reports, etc. Or is it just something created by grammar to provide a subject for a sentence? No! I have been listening very carefully and there's someone else involved in all of this. It is true what all these books and teachers have been saying. Another "I" (soul, God, spirit, Buddha, heart) comes along, and occasionally penetrates the screen I keep Him hidden behind. He is definitely a person. He can talk with my voice but He certainly doesn't have the same ideas I have. He's not afraid or worried and after listening to Him for a while I begin to notice that "I" am getting less worried myself. This gets a little complicated. There's this "I" (heart, spirit, God, Buddha, guru, master, etc.) who's usually behind the screen, this other "I" who has preferred to believe He's not there and doesn't want to listen to him (invents distractions, excuses, forgets) and this "I" who is learning to listen to Him. Maybe I should not be writing this. It's not very clear to me who's who and besides maybe I should keep it secret, and I might get egotistical about those "I's". I mean it sounds like I might think I'm something special but actually I'm writing about all this because I'm sure there are other "you's" in you and if you haven't found the big You I want to encourage you to listen to You!

Whew!

Marian Porter wrote, "My greatest fear of all is that there is no fear!" Seems odd at first but actually it isn't. The part of us that believes we are separate, alone, vulnerable, subject to death, etc. is rather crazy and quite mistaken. The ego believes that fear is necessary to maintain its existence.

Many thanks to Frances Thompson for the New Yorker cartoon. A copy shall be enshrined in our front office and imbedded in my memory.

Ananda, these dogmas of No Dogma puzzle me. I can't find the way out of there.

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I'd like to mention to all of you that Harbin Hot Springs is a "New Age" community/business operated by the Heart Consciousness Church. (No practices or dogmas enforced). We have a system whereby visitors can come and camp or take a room and do work exchange for the rent. Hot, warm and cold pools, massage, nudity, 1100 acres of hilly country land, entities and oddities. If any of you are travelling this way or looking for a place to settle in, I'll be happy to send detailed info.

I enjoyed Tom Thompson's discussion of AA. We have four or five AA members in our community. They have switched from drinking to other spiritual practices which are more satisfactory for the long term adept. Another connection with Tom about Mental patients. Last year Harbin & the Esalen Institute tried to establish a Spiritual Emergency Center here at Harbin where certain "psychotics" could receive non-drug treatment and care during their rather chaotic forms of spiritual emergence. We haven't been able to establish this center yet, but Esalen continues to fund and operate a Spiritual Emergency Network which puts people who want and need this kind of treatment in touch with people who can offer it. The address is:

S.E.N. House
Esalen Institute
Big Sur CA 93920

Truth, Love, Peace, Joy!

Breck

Robert C. Finch
P.O. Box 219
Basile, La. 70515

To Cloud-Hidden Friends:

EARTH BREATH

In winter's exhale, there exists waiting,
The crystal wombs of a slower age...

...Till full-breathed summer's heat
Bursts forth Earth's entropic ends.

Expressing my thoughts, this poem, finds me in search of Earth's breath, which are in the seasons. So many of us live day to day, week to week...so few live by in, the seasons. Letting exhaling be autumn, inhaling be spring, I am seeking to co-ordinate my body to Earth's breath.

Of course, summer in the Northern Hemisphere, is winter in the Southern Hemisphere. And so in exhaling I remember the fading of transitory life, and growing eternal life. (Inhaling-fading eternal life, and growing transitory life.) And of course the opposite, presents a very equilibrrious solution.

I found the First Issue a very full meal of meat, yams, drink, and desert, for the mind and spirit... I have found myself as a pilgrim in this land, and am soon embarking on another sojourn, this time on an 800 mile trek, through the mountains of central California. Ananda has called it a pilgrimage with naturalistic overtones, and searching for inward meaning... I agree, but isn't all of life this? Perhaps a good graveyard is where the giant trees grow....

R.C. Finch

March 19, 1983

To My Hobo Friends,.

As Spring opens around me, once again I watch the universe as it springs forth with messages for my spirit. Knowing we are all one with the flow, I look to nature as my silent and knowing teacher. Examples of her lessons grow around me seasonally calling my attention.

Contrasting my own thoughts, the trees as they open into color, never grow with a comparative mind as they bloom into new life. Similarly, as toddler children develop in creative play, they are "open" to all without comparing- never closed by shyful self-consciousness.

Stephen Levine in his book, "Who Dies", speaks of "closing the heart around our physical pain. Stephen speaks of closing our heart as something other than our true nature and that it is in the struggle with our fear, thereby closing our hearts, where the pain gets its energy. If this closing is really not our true nature, where then did we come by it? Our persistence to remain separate from not only each other, however from the flow with the universe also increases the growth of the comparative mind.

I have never seen a tree closed or flowers or streams closed to growth.

I have never seen grass stopped by sidewalks - no matter what the difficulties. Once they start on their journey, there is never any question but to complete their task.

As I ponder this question of our differences, the word CHOICE comes to mind. We have choice as a curse, as a gift, as a tool....whatever and for on and on. CHOICE... what a simple word for some heavy stuff to add to what we already use to separate ourselves from the natural flow of life.

continued

132 Were we to take choice out of thought before we learn (re-learn) the peace of an open heart - we might have a life with closed vision and nature. Perhaps it is the lesson of having an open heart that is what our journey is all about.

Closing or opening seems only to describe the unnatural behavior of the limitations of speech. The language of the "chattering mind."

The tree does not need to be told what season it is - it just goes with what is at present. The tree lives quietly in its pure natural unspoken harmony with all that is at the very present moment. Watching trees grow green during periods of warm days even though we might be in the middle of winter. The tree cannot grow in its yesterdays nor in its tomorrow. It can only grow in its todayness....What a lesson for us to learn from. I laugh to think of a tree wondering where its fruit has gone to live after parting from the tree. "I hope my little apples are all right without me." "I think that my branches should be bigger next year." "Well, I think that my cherries are prettier than yours." They never struggle with closing their hearts with the wants and desires of comparisons. They are just open to everything at the very moment. They live in the presentness of time. They live in the middle of a relationship with time and "what is".

The minute we try to FIND our relationship - it is in that trying that we lose the nowness. It is in the trying, that we think of the choices of a relationship with ourselves, to others, and to life. Thereby, we set ourselves apart.

Spring comes to us as a lesson to add to our knowing from the same nature we all are apart.

Ho!
Marian Poirier

LETTERS RECEIVED

132.

FROM YELLOW MOUSE

409 ATKINS AVE.
LANCASTER, PENNA.
17603
FEB. 15, 1983

TO THE CLOUD HIDDEN FRIENDS

DEAR A.C. ELECTRIC:

WHICH IS, BY THE WAY MY WAY OF SAYING THAT I REALLY GOT A LARGE CHUCKLE (FOR SEVERAL DAYS) OUT OF YOUR CHRISTMAS CARD RETURN ADDRESS AND THE ADRESSEE Y.M.(C.A.) - LOVED IT!

Which is also my way of presenting the information that I now have gotten my new toy - or perhaps my new information tool. Yes, I bought myself a new Apple computer and word processor. I am now putting in hours daily to try to learn how to work the damn thing. So you can expect the next editions of my writings to start coming your way shortly (more than you ever wanted to know about [?]).

As I told you previously, my wife and I returned east to care for her mother who was in her terminal stage. Well, she passed and we are now dealing with the estate settlement. WHAT FUN!!!!!!!!!!

The purpose of this epistle to the Bayareans is that my copy of the CHFL was missing the finish of Tom Thompson's letter: the back of page 2-3 was blank. His letter was excellent and I really want the ending. So please send page 2-4, if you will please. I'd appreciate it greatly.

While I'm at it, let me thank you for the poem "Searching for the hermit in vain", its always a dream to partake of that again and again. And likewise to Joel White (for purity)house (or lodge) for his pure and innocent open sharing: giving others the opportunity to find insight which is true love: the giving of oneself.

For your use and edification, I enclose a copy of a piece that I put on the machine a week ago as practice. "Desire" was important to or for me because I had always had a problem with the Buddhist: "Our basic problem is desire" and "The cure is to rid oneself of all desire". My problem was both the translation of the the Buddha's ideas into english and my own problem of interpretation: when I "have to" take a leak, I "desire" to take a leak.

So there you are and see you later. Let me add to Joel Weishaus' "furabo" Suzuki's: the "I" is merely a swinging door as we sit here breathing.

LOVELY !!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

YELLOW MOUSE

PS: Yellow is the color of enlightenment: the Amer-indian sez:

When man sits in his lodge, looking out from his night, he faces the rising sun whihc will give light to his world. Obviously, thus the direction is east.

This metaphor is valid for the Amer-indian always placed his teepee (or lodge) on the ground so that the entrance faced east. And the man of the house sat against the side opposite facing the entrance: or he faced east from the darkness within.

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DESIRE

EXPECTATIONS: the act of expecting.

Expect: to look forward to the possible occurrence or appearance of - to consider likely, reasonable, certain or due.

ex (out) + spectare (to look at): to look at that which is out in front of one - approaching - with no reservations as to the likelihood or probabilities.

DESIRE: to wish, long for, want, crave; desiderare: [SWEID]: to shine - sweidos: sidus: sideral: stars - this came from: usage in augery: to see the shining (stars) + con (together) = considerare: to observe the stars carefully - with de (the intensive meaning completely, also down from the stars) + siderare = or to investigate in the sense of the strong motivation for the results of the investigation (in augery) thus to long for.

Thus an intensive motivation for some prediction or wish to occur here on earth; that is in concrete terms.

WANT: simply, a lack

WISH: a desire or longing including the striving for, seeking after, hoping for, to be or become accustomed to, that is the hope to attain such, even to the point of love, obsession, craving, etc.

NEED: a condition where something is desired, required or wanted - a general term without emphasis on urgency. Originates from [NAU]; the negative: death or to be or become exhausted or ended - need: ned: distress (to the point of being a corpse or plain dead boredom) - sometimes gets connected to or confused with [NE]: naught, none, nil - thus want.

Thus Desire emphasizes the longing, craving, obsession, compulsion, addiction or driving unconscious force

WHEREAS

Need lacks (wants) urgency (that drive inherent in 'desire') and does not distinguish between lack and desire, although it indicates the negative: a source exhausted.

CONCLUSION: There are two routes:

1) WANT or NEED

wherein we must distinguish between actual lack and a lack which has arisen to consciousness, whether it is actual or imagined: A FELT NEED;

2) but it does not become DESIRE or WISH until the psychological drive complicates matters: addiction, craving, obsession, love.

LETTERS RECEIVED

133.

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The purpose of this epistle to the Bayareans is that my copy of the CHFL was missing the finish of Tom Thompson's letter: the back of page 2-3 was blank. His letter was excellent and I really want the ending. So please send page 2-4, if you will please. I'd appreciate it greatly.

While I'm at it, let me thank you for the poem "Searching for the hermit in vain", its always a dream to partake of that again and again. And likewise to Joel White (for purity)house (or lodge) for his pure and innocent open sharing: giving others the opportunity to find insight which is true love: the giving of oneself.

For your use and edification, I enclose a copy of a piece that I put on the machine a week ago as practice. "Desire" was important to or for me because I had always had a problem with the Buddhist: "Our basic problem is desire" and "The cure is to rid oneself of all desire". My problem was both the translation of the the Buddha's ideas into english and my own problem of interpretation: when I "have to" take a leak, I "desire" to take a leak.

So there you are and see you later. Let me add to Joel Weishaus' "furabo" Suzuki's: the "I" is merely a swinging door as we sit here breathing.

LOVELY !!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

YELLOW MOUSE

PS: Yellow is the color of enlightenment: the Amer-indian sez:

When man sits in his lodge, looking out from his night, he faces the rising sun whihc will give light to his world. Obviously, thus the direction is east.

This metaphor is valid for the Amer-indian always placed his teepee (or lodge) on the ground so that the entrance faced east. And the man of the house sat against the side opposite facing the entrance: or he faced east from the darkness within.

Daily Prayer

135,

Blessings
liberation
salvation
grace
tenderness
consciousness
sensibility
humanity
animality
spirituality
sexuality

Adventurousness

risk
courage
Determination
will-power

follow-through

Holy cleansing magical vibrations!

Patience

humility
humour

warmth
and Love
to All Sentient beings
in ALL Four Directions
of the

U
n
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v
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e . . . !

Om ni padme hum

Zen-poem

rocks here
flowers there
they are
along the banks
mixed with one another.

the waterfall comes closer
in the afternoon sun,
the stream rushes.
Now that I am here,
nothing to say

Norman Moser
2110 9th St. #B
Berkeley, CA 94710

Ananda Dalenberg
753 44th Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94121

1361
Dear Fellow Pilgrims:

I am one of J. Krishnamurti's admirers, and I've been reading him again recently. Each time what he has to say seems to be more relevant. For one thing he makes quite a case against becoming anyone's disciple, and he seems to have little use for what might be called "guru-ism". I presume he would be equally critical of "roshi-ism" in Zen. I can't say that I actually disagree.

On the other hand, the relationship between master and disciple seems to me to be almost archetypal, whether it is Hindu, Catholic, or whatever, and often is a deep and beautiful thing. Indeed as a student I have experienced a bit of such a relationship myself, and am enormously grateful. Certainly I don't think anyone should be denied such.

What I find surprising is that usually we only think about the master/disciple relationship in two ways, either we are for or against such. Surely there must be a third viewpoint, or fourth or fifth.

My own viewpoint centers in a kind of vow I have taken, and I'd like to share it in some way with you. To begin with, it is my faith that "Everyone has the Buddha-Nature", or to put the same thing a little differently, "There is that of God in every one". It seems to me that the inevitable conclusion to that is that everyone is my teacher. My vow is to take everyone as my teacher.

By "everyone" I mean all sentient beings and all of nature. The sky for example is profoundly important to me.

One might ask if animals and dogs should also be included. My guess is that is what the old koan "Does a dog have Buddha-nature is all about. At least I hope it is about actual dogs, and not merely a literary and symbolic device.

I feel obliged here to give a little personal testimony on the subject, concerning an actual dog, namely one Sassafrass Dalenberg. She has in some very real way often been my teacher, and I trust that I have sometimes been hers. Being an old dog she doesn't put up with much nonsense, and doesn't even find Joshu's "Mu!" at all interesting. With her I have to get right down to the bottom of it.

I must admit I am having a hard time trying to follow my vow. I find for example that in recent years I have acquired an active dislike for the term "Roshi" with its sanctimonious overtones. In fact if I could muster up enough courage I'd eliminate the word from my vocabulary and use the term "Sensei" instead, a simple word meaning "teacher". It is important to me because of this vow I have taken.

I have tried to present a third viewpoint here, as a possible alternative to the more usual master/disciple variety on one hand, and self-reliance as represented by Krishnamurti on the other. But these are viewpoints, not absolutes. As a matter of fact I think they reflect different character types, and what is good for one is not for another. Also no one is 100% one or the other forever. At different stages in our life we are different people, which is no doubt as it should be, being of the nature of life and growth.

In any case these three or four or more viewpoints surely do not need to be such rivals and be so antagonistic towards each other. Often it seems to be more a matter of politics or some power trip than anything else. There are already more than enough people out there trying to lord it over everyone. I for one would much rather be just an old hobo.

With palms together,

Ananda

Richard W. Boerstler 137,
206 Maplewood Street
Watertown, MA 02172

Dear Cloud-Hidden Friends:

For some years I have been filling "The Well With Snow" in collecting and gathering the below anthology. However perhaps it will all end with this introduction and one selection. After all, how long can one go on, "selling water by the river" ?

THE HALF GODS

An Anthology Of Liberation

"Only those concerned with the problem of life and death should enter here- Those not completely concerned with this problem have no reason to pass this gate".

(Inscription on the main gate of Eihei-ji, Japan, The "Temple Of Great Peace")

"When the half-gods go, the gods arrive". - Emerson

"Not knowing it is near, they seek it afar. What a pity! It is like one in the water who cries out for thirst. It is like the child of a rich house who has strayed away among the poor". - Hakuin

"There is a paradise on earth. It is in us". - Reps

PREFACE

This collection of poems sayings and spiritual harvestings was gathered during several decades of seeking and searching. The reader should not expect to find any answers here, only high velocity glimpses into the universe. Usually the answer is contained within the question. Thus most of the pages record queries and questions of those seekers who have climbed the hills before us.

It is, however, quite probable that one of these questions will become lodged in our throat like that oft-reported red-hot iron ball that can "neither be swallowed nor spit out. If this does occur it has been said that enlightenment may be on the horizon. (??)

If so this outrageous gathering of medicines and matching diseases may have served its purpose. It is important to remember that while we follow various paths the inexorable laws of cause and effect will be our inconceivable partners on every turn of the path regardless of the conceptions we may have about what is going on.

My comments about the various quoted texts will be brief and personal. As Coleridge has said, "If I have been able to see any vision on the horizon it is because I have been carried on the shoulders of giants".

INTRODUCTION

What type of liberation are we talking about? Someone has said that he had rid himself of the disease of a lifetime, the disease of categories! In a time when Moslem is killing Moslem, when Semite is killing Semite, and when an auto license plate in the United States carries the motto, "Live Free Or Die", we need to learn more about another kind of freedom and another kind of liberation.

The liberation that I have sought could be described as attempting to trace our origins back to a spirit of undifferentiated oneness, our source, which might be called the "Spiritual Mind Of True Oneness" - In the course of many years of searching I came across the third Zen patriarch Seng-Tsan (d. 606). Here

continued

continued

138 in a document called "Believing Mind", we may catch a sight of the liberation of which I am speaking. Here the concepts of likes and dislikes, of one religion over another one, the preferences of one race against another race are dealt with at their root source. One translation calls the struggle between "for or against" "the mind's worst disease".

This most celebrated statement of Zen in Chinese literature begins: "The Perfect Way (Tao) has no difficulty except that it avoids preferences". Here a first century look is taken at the duality of subject and object and we come to know ourselves as we really are: small or large, oneself or another, all being one, with no past, present, or future. This early holistic writer said, "When the ten thousand things are seen in their unity we are back at the origin where we always really were". Further quotes from "Believing Mind will be found later on.

The Mind will be seen as the only reality and the container of both samsara and nirvana in inseparable unity. Here (in the Mind) we may let go of all dualistic attachments and especially of the concept of the existence of the ego (I, me, mine).

"Hopefully in some of these selections the mind will be found to be one with ultimate wisdom we are seeking- immaculate, clear non-dual, timeless, uncompounded, the unity of all things".

Here the reader may give a hearty laugh at my efforts in wasting many years in seeking what was never lost! What a joke! One could ask, "Why do you go with the Buddha to seek the Buddha? Doesn't one use mind to grasp the mind!" Don't you realize that if you cease thinking and forget thought, the Buddha will spontaneously appear!"

Two similar stories illustrate this point: A great crowd had gathered to ask the master the pivotal essentials and to reveal a little of the great design. The master said "A bubble floating on the water displays the five colors, at the bottom of the sea a frog is croaking, the moon is bright". And, stepping into the public hall his reverence said "Having any sorts of knowledge can not compare with giving up seeking for anything, which is the best of all things. Mind is not of several things and there is no doctrine which can be put into words. As there is no more to be said the assembly is dismissed".

There is no reason to read any further in this book. Close the covers tightly together and return it to its place on the shelf. Walk briskly out in the fresh air and join the king who is cutting capers and the priest who is picking flowers.

SELECTION NUMBER 1 & 01 :

"The choice is always ours, then let me choose the longest art, the hard Promethean way, cherishingly to tend and feed and fan that inward fire, whose small precarious flame, kindled or quenched, creates the noble or the ignoble men we are, the worlds we live in and the very fates, our bright or muddy star".

-Aldous Huxley

I believe it is Victor Frankl who says that it is the choice of our reaction to the world that can never be taken from us. When all else is gone including our health and our freedom we can still choose our attitude to what happens to us.

When all that is seen is truly recognized to be nothing but the manifestation of Mind, how can discrimination regarding being and non-being arise?

- Lankavatara Sutra

All suffering arises from our trying to cling to fixed forms, objects and ideas instead of accepting the world as it moves and changes. This world of ceaseless change and incessant motion contains nothing worth clinging to. The practice of recognizing that change is the only constant usually may only be achieved in a contemplative environment. One can hardly say that the world (both East and West) of 1983 is contemplative. And yet Victor Frankl would tell us this is the one true choice no one can make for us unless we allow it.

Richard

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1. Clerk's Corner -- Everything seems to be coming along fine with our Letter. We seem to have settled down to an issue out every two months, the next one coming along about the first of July. Thanks to those of you who have sent along the names of a person or two who may be interested. It certainly helps to have others waving the flag a little bit. I've gotten a few requests from New Age groups to have a copy sent to their library, and I'd like your reaction to this. I can think of some pretty good reasons both for and against.
 2. Books Etc. -- Richard Boerstler has been working for some time with the terminally ill, trying to find ways to help them face death. He has written a book on the subject: "LETTING GO, A Holistic And Meditative Approach To Living And Dying". If you would like a copy, it is available, for \$1 postage, to the C.H. Friends. Write 208 Maplewood St. Watertown, MA 02172. One of the quotes in the book is this fine one by Alan Watts:

Some people are always afraid if they let go, the devil will take over first, unaware that not having let go is the devil already in full control. For ordinary self-control is the domination of one's behavior by the selfish self: its love is assumed, pretensive, and dutiful; its righteousness is hypocritical; its chastity issues in cruelty; its spiritual ideas are highbrow ways of inflating the ego: its profuse confessions of sin are subtle ways of one-upping more ordinary people and its beneficence has an odd way of arousing resentment in its recipients.

Joel Weishaus has tracked down an unpublished manuscript by Thomas Merton, and has managed to get it published, including Joel's explanatory notes and an introduction. "Wood, Shore, Desert" by Thomas Merton; Museum of NM Press, P.O. Box 2087, Santa Fe, NM 87503.

Marian Mountain's book, "The Zen Environment" is now also out in paperback, \$3.95, published by Bantam.

3. BROWN RICE

I stumbled on a method of cooking brown rice that works better than any other method I've tried. My husband Jack, who is a scavenger, came home with an old iron pot without a lid. I couldn't find an iron lid for the pot so I bought a pyrex lid. Now when I cook brown rice I don't have to lift the lid to see how its coming along. (I've always been told that you must not lift the lid while cooking rice but never was able to time it perfectly so always resorted to peeking.) Now when I see through the pyrex lid of the iron rice pot that the water is evaporated but there is still moisture in the pot I turn off the heat and let the rice steam for another 1/2 hour. Never fails.

Marian Mountain

4. Marian Poirier has a new address: 7282 29 NE, Seattle, WA 9815
5. Joel Weishaus is wondering if anyone has seen Pat de Sercey.

Ho!

Ananda
Clerk