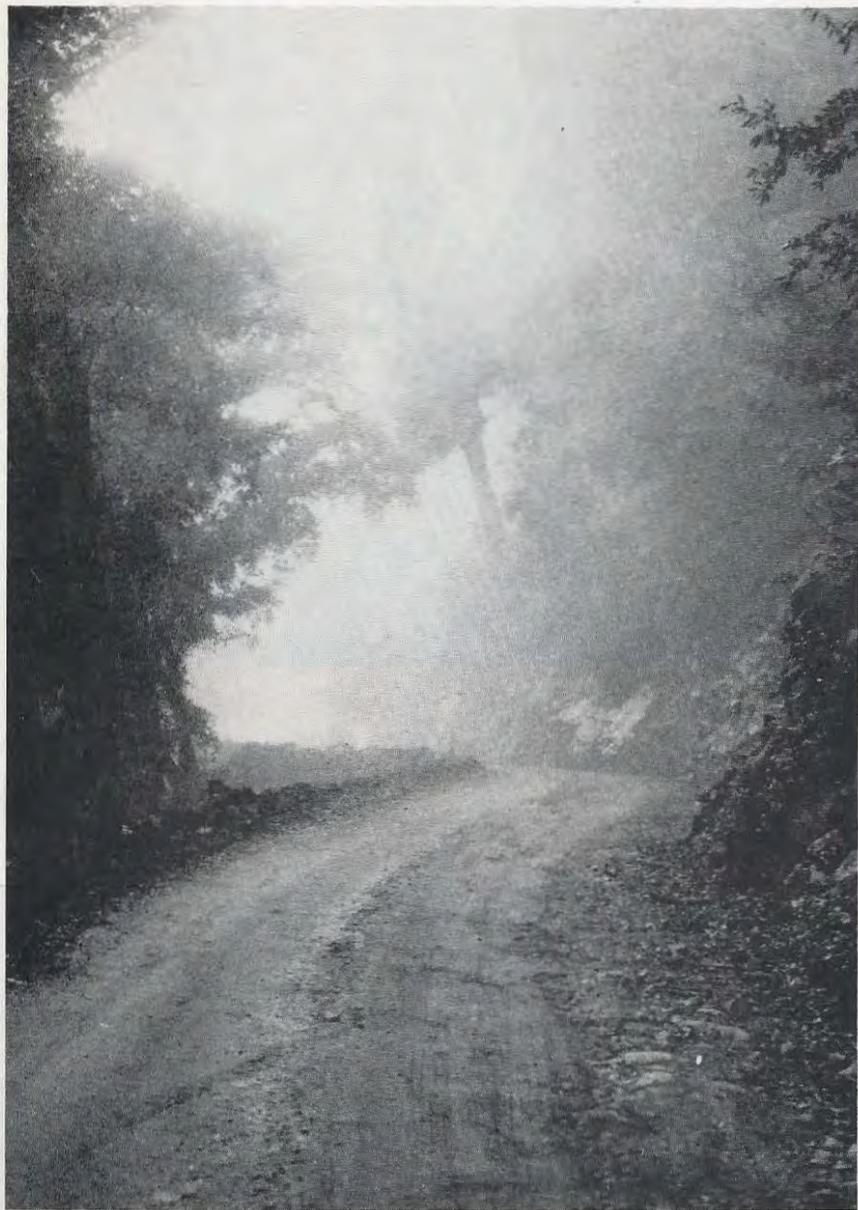


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Man on Bridge During Storm. Kano Tannyu (1602-1674). Gift from Nancy Wilson Ross to Zen Center.





Sesshin Lecture: June, 1971, City Center

Shunryu Suzuki Roshi

6/6/71
71-06-07

Shikan taza, our zazen, is just to be ourselves. We should not expect anything--just be ourselves and continue this practice forever. That is our way, you know.

We say, "Even in a snap of your fingers there are millions of *cetanas* (units of time)." We say, "moment after moment," but in your actual practice, a moment is too long. If we say moment, or one breathing after another, your mind is still involved in following breathing. We say to follow our breathing, but the feeling is to live in each moment. If you live in each moment, you do not expect anything. With everything, you become you, yourself.

If you feel yourself, without any idea of time, in the smallest particle of time, that is zazen. The reason we say this is that if we are involved in an idea of time, various desires will start to create some mischief. But when you have no idea of time, your practice will go on and on with everything.

This practice is not so easy. You may not be able to continue it for even one period, you must make such a big effort. Maybe what you can do, though, for the next five days is to extend this feeling for each period, or to prepare for this *shikan taza*. And this preparation or extension of the practice to another period of time eventually will be extended to everyday life.

How you extend our practice is to expose yourself as you are. You shouldn't try to be someone else. You should be very honest with yourself and express yourself fully. And you should be brave enough to express yourself. Whatever people may say, you know, it is alright. You should be just yourself, at least for your teacher. Until your teacher says, "OK, you should continue your practice in this way," you should try hard. And after your teacher says, "OK, now you should continue that practice forever, you don't need me anymore," that is actual practice, the actual life of you. This is rather difficult to do unless you trust your teacher. But if you find out that your teacher's spirit is the same as your spirit, then you will be brave enough to continue this kind of practice.

Sometimes you have to argue with your teacher. That is OK--you should do that. But you should be ready to give up your argument when you are wrong, when you find yourself foolishly sticking to only one viewpoint, or when you are making some excuse. That is how to be honest with yourself. You should give up--"I surrender, OK, I'm sorry." If you cannot accept what he said, you should try to understand your teacher until you can accept him. What we should do, for the teacher and for you, is try to have perfect communication. So for a teacher the important point is to be always ready to surrender to your disciple. If a teacher thinks he was wrong, he should say, "Oh, you are right, I was wrong." If your teacher has that kind of spirit, you should, too.

You may think that is easy, but it is not so easy. If you continue this kind of practice, sometimes people think, "He is crazy. Something is wrong with him." But it doesn't matter. We are not the same, you know. Each one of us is different from the others, each one has each one's own problem. So it is OK. Anyway, you should be yourself. Fortunately, you have Zen Center here. Zen Center is not an umbrella which will shade or protect you from the outside. But here you can have real practice--you can express yourself fully.

And you should open your eyes to appreciate others' practice, too. You should be able to communicate with each other without words. Your eyes should be open to see others' practice. This doesn't mean to criticize others, but to appreciate or know others. That is why we have rules and rituals.

You may say, if you are practicing zazen, no one knows, no one understands your practice. But when you are practicing, for me it is the easiest chance to understand you. Especially if I see you from behind, it is very easy to understand what kind of practice you have. That is why I walk around--not to hit you, but to see you. This is very interesting. If you are dancing or talking or making a big noise, it is rather difficult to understand you. But if you are reciting a sutra, each one has each one's own voice, and the way each of you recite the sutra is different from the others.

And it is easy to know each other, even though you are not trying to understand. If you practice together, eventually, naturally you will be good friends, because you know each other. You know too well, so you have difficulty because of your small mind. But as

long as your mind is big enough to expose yourself and to accept others, you will practice zazen or rituals together, then you will be good friends. To know your friend is to know something beyond yourself, beyond even your friend.

Another point that I already made is that we are free from an idea of time. You shouldn't try to be ordained, or worry how long you should stay a layman; or if you become a priest, you shouldn't worry about what your next step will be. When you are a lay student, without expecting to be something, you should be honest with yourself. When you try to be someone else, you lose your practice and you lose your virtue. But when you are faithful to your position, the true being of you is there. This is a very important point.

Zen Center is a community. Even though we do not call them "members," those who come and sit are also our members. When they come to Zen Center for the first time, it may be difficult for them to know what we are doing. But more and more they will feel what we are doing and join our practice. So those who know, who are practicing our way, should give them some idea or feeling of practice. The best way to give the feeling of practice is for each one of us to have our feeling fully--then naturally people who come will have a good feeling. But if our practice is wrong, what they will feel is something completely different from the proper feeling a Buddhist must have. Why wrong feeling is created is because we are involved in selfish practice.

Suzuki Roshi's ashes site at Tassajara



I said, "Don't have any idea of time." Why I say so is that if you are involved in an idea of time, today, or next year, or tomorrow, selfish practice will start from there. It is alright to have an idea of time when it is an extended form of non-selfish practice on this moment. This is to express ourselves. We don't know what will happen on each moment, so if you fail to express yourself fully, then you will regret it later. Because you expect some other time, you fail to express yourself fully, and you are misunderstood by your friend. So you should always express yourself fully.

That is why we eat in a certain way. You may think that you cannot express yourself eating in that way, but it is not so. Because you have a way to serve the food, you can express yourself, express how much sincerity you have. If there is no certain way, if you have many ways of expressing yourself, you don't know how to do it. But if you know how to do it, you can express yourself in that way.

It is a big mistake to think that the best way to express yourself is to do whatever you want to do, that you may do exactly as you feel with superficial feeling, just choosing some way when you don't know what to do. This is not expressing yourself. If you know what to do exactly, and you do it, then you can express yourself fully. In that way, doing the same thing, a strong person expresses himself in a very strong way, and a kind person will express himself very kindly.

When you pass the sutra cards from this end to the other end of the row, each one passes them in each one's own way. So if I see it, it is easy to see, because they do it the same way. If they do it in different ways, it is very difficult to know. Because all of you are doing it in the same way, from this corner of the room to the other, it is easy to see. And because you repeat the same thing over and over again, you can all understand your friends' ways, eventually. Even if your eyes are shut, you know, "Oh, that was so-and-so." That is an advantage of having rules and rituals.

Without this kind of understanding, your understanding of, or your relationship with, people will be very superficial. If someone wears a beautiful robe, you'll think he is very kind to you. If she thinks a beautiful thought, you think she is a good person. That kind of understanding is not good understanding. It is very superficial.

Usually the system of our society is built up in some superficial, frivolous way, always changing. The controlling power is money, or some big noise, That is the controlling power because our eyes and ears are not open, not subtle enough to see things, and our feeling is very dull. Most people who visit Zen Center may feel Zen Center is a very strange place. "They do not talk so much, they do not even laugh. What are they doing?" But actually, we can communicate without talking so much. We are not always smiling or talking, but we can feel others' feelings, and our mind is always open, and we are behaving exactly, expressing ourselves fully. Actually, you know, even when you are not trying to express yourself, you are expressing yourself anyway. If your mind is open, you can see. It's just that those who are accustomed to big noise cannot see anything here--that's all.

We should extend this kind of practice to city life, and we must have more friends, so that all of us can be good friends with each other. It is not difficult when you decide to

be honest with yourself and to express yourself fully, without expecting anything. Just to be yourself and to be ready to understand others is how you extend our practice to everyday life.

But it is not so easy to be free from selfish practice. So even if only for one hour a day, you should try to sit *shikan taza*, without moving, without expecting anything, as if you are in your last minute. Moment after moment you feel your last minute. In each inhaling and in each exhaling there are countless units of time, and you should live in each unit of time.

And you should breathe smoothly--exhaling first, and then inhaling. Calmness of your mind is beyond the end of your exhalation. If you exhale in that way, smoothly, without even trying to exhale, you are entering into the complete perfect calmness of your mind. Then naturally your inhaling will start from there. All your blood will be cleaned and that fresh blood will carry everything from outside to pervade and refresh your body. You are completely refreshed. Then you will start to exhale, to extend that fresh feeling to the emptiness. In this way, moment after moment, without trying to do anything, you continue *shikan taza*.

Complete *shikan taza* may be difficult because of the pain in your legs. But even though you have pain in your legs, you can do it. Even though your practice is not good enough, you can do it. So with your exhaling, you will gradually vanish, gradually fade into the emptiness. And inhaling will naturally bring you back to yourself with some color or form. And again, with your exhaling you gradually fade into emptiness--empty, white paper. That is *shikan taza*.

I'm just explaining the feeling of *shikan taza*. The important point of *shikan taza* is in your exhaling. Instead of trying to feel yourself, try to fade in emptiness when you exhale. When you have this practice in your last moment, you have nothing to be afraid of. You are actually aiming at emptiness, the empty area. There is no other way for you to have a feeling of immortality. You become one with everything after you completely exhale with this feeling. If you are still alive, naturally you will inhale again. "Oh, I'm still alive! Fortunately or unfortunately!" So then you start to exhale, and try to fade into emptiness. Maybe you don't know what kind of feeling it is. But some of you know it. By some chance you must have felt this kind of feeling.

When you have this practice, you cannot be angry so easily. Because you are interested in inhaling more than exhaling, you become angry quite easily. You are trying to be alive always, you know. The other day, my friend had a heart attack, and all he could do was exhale--he couldn't inhale. That was a terrible feeling, he said. But if he could have tried to exhale at that moment as we exhale, aiming for emptiness, then I think he wouldn't have felt so bad. The great joy for us is exhaling, rather than inhaling. He tried to take another inhalation, and he thought he couldn't inhale anymore. But if he could have tried to exhale as we do, then I think he could have taken another inhalation more easily.

So exhaling is very important for us. To die is more important than to try to be alive. We always try to be alive, so we have trouble. Instead of trying to be alive or active, if

we try to be calmer, and die or fade away into emptiness, then naturally we will be taken care of. Buddha will take care of us. Because we lose mother's bosom, we are not her children anymore. If we feel for the emptiness as we feel for our mother's bosom, then mother will take care of us. Moment after moment, you shouldn't lose this kind of practice as you practice *shikan taza*.

Various secrets of religious practice are included in this point. When people say, "Namu Amida Butsu, Namu Amida Butsu," they want to be Amida Buddha's children. That is how they repeat Amida Buddha's name in their practice. The same thing is true with our zazen practice. Zazen practice is not different from their practice. If you know how to practice *shikan taza*, and if they know how to repeat Amida Buddha's name, it cannot be different, as long as their practice is Buddhism. As Buddhists, we have the same practice in different ways.

So we can enjoy, we are free. We feel free to express ourselves, because we are ready to fade into emptiness. If you are trying to be active and special and trying to do something, you cannot express yourself. Small self will be expressed, but big self will not appear from the emptiness. From the emptiness, only great self appears. That is *shikan taza*, OK? It's not so difficult if you try, if you really try.

Thank you very much.



*Bodhidharma in
City Center Courtyard.*

Abbot Installation Ceremony

On Sunday, January 12, Tenshin Zenki Reb Anderson was installed as Abbot of Zen Center. Four hundred people attended the traditional Mountain Seat Ceremony at 300 Page Street. An outline of the form of the ceremony follows. We would like to give you some sense of the spirit of the occasion by printing some of the statements made during the ceremony.



Part I -- Entering the Temple (Shin San Shiki)

Resting Place Near Temple (Angesho) : The ceremony began at the Zen Center Guest House. Here the new Abbot rested and received visiting priests from other temples. The procession, which began from here, consisted of thirteen officers representing the administrative and practice aspects of the temple, the new Abbot, five attendants to the new Abbot, and visiting teachers.

Inner Gate (Sarmon) : At the front door, the new Abbot offered incense and made a statement.

Buddha Hall (Butsuden) : The procession entered the main hall and the new Abbot offered incense, bowed, and made statements to Shakyamuni Buddha, Daigen (symbol of the guardians of the Dharma), and to Bodhidharma (the first Zen Ancestor of China representing all the Ancestors).

Founder's Hall (Kaisando) : The procession left the Buddha Hall and went upstairs to the Founder's Hall where the new Abbot offered incense, bowed, and made a statement to Shunryu Suzuki, Zen Center's founder.

Abbot's Room (Hojo) : The procession went to the Abbot's room. The new Abbot and the Officers of the temple exchanged bows and formal greetings, signed documents, and inspected the temple seal.

INTERMISSION

Part II -- Presenting the Teaching (Shu Koku Kai Do)

Teaching Robe (Dennei) : The procession re-entered the Buddha Hall. The Abbot was given a new robe by the Sangha.

Supporting Statements (Sensho) : Supporting statements were made by Issan Dorsey of Hartford Street Zen Center, representing affiliated temples; by Leslie James, President of Zen Center, representing the Sangha; and by Peter Coyote, representing friends of the new Abbot.

Ascending the Teaching Seat (Todan) : The Abbot ascended the teaching seat, offered incense, and made four statements: first, for world peace; second, to all the Ancestors in this teaching lineage; third, to members, donors, families, and deceased members of the temple; and, fourth, to his teachers.

Invitational Bows (Monjin) : The attendants of the Abbot and the Ryoban bowed to the Abbot, inviting him to present his teaching. Then the first attendant offered incense and lead a bow done by everyone in the Buddha Hall.

Announcing the Teaching (Byakutsui-chi) : Visiting teacher Kobun Chino, playing the role of Manjusri Bodhisattva, announced, " Dragons and elephants, carefully listen to the Dharma of the new Abbot. The Dharma is thus."

Question and Answer (Mondo) : A group of people were invited to participate in asking questions.

Statements from the Abbot : Following the Mondo, the Abbot made various statements:

Fundamental statement	(Teiko)
Appreciatory statement	(Jago Byakutsui)
Personal statement	(Jijo)
Understanding of a koan	(Nensoku)
Concluding statement	(Ketsuza)

Concluding statements of participants

....



The following are some of Tenshin Zenki Reb Anderson's statements:

To Bodhidharma

*O great mountain Bodhidharma
First Cloud-driver in China
Opening the way of vast emptiness
Nothing holy.
We are still inspired every day
By your gutsy honesty.
Your dared to be yourself
And just don't know.*

"This incense is for my first teacher Shogaku Shunryu Daiosho."

*You came like a sweet bird to teach us.
You stayed like a warm mountain to teach us.
You left like fire and wind to teach us.
I came to study with you.
I stayed to study with you.
I will leave to study with you.*

"This incense is for my root teacher. We left a chair for him. It's empty."

*This offering is for that empty seat.
Twisted vines intertwined with twisted vines.
Thus I make my offering to my root teacher
Zentatsu Myoyu Dai Osho.*

Fundamental Statement : "Now I am supposed to demonstrate the essence of Soto Zen. How can I accept or refuse this assignment? Without saying what all our ancestors could not, and trying to succeed where they were willing to fail, let me just say that my faith is zazen, living in the present, steadfast, harmonizing body and mind, attaining the way, leaving the way to the way.

"Like the old Buddha Ru-jing (Dogen's teacher),
hitting the West side of the mountain seat--
'this is the host,'
hitting the East side of the seat--
'this is the guest.'
The teaching comes forth from this place."

Appreciatory Statement : "First of all, I want to thank Kobun Chino Roshi who came so far to announce the teaching. For so long he has been a kind teacher for me, a compass in the ocean of Zen, a small boat in the sea of Buddha's compassion. Next I want to thank Hoitsu Gyuhaku Daiocho, my dear dharma uncle and brother, who came all the way from Japan to help us do this ceremony with a feeling of calm and confidence. Finally I want to thank Taizen Maezumi Roshi for being here and for his great and steadfast support of me personally and of all of Zen Center, especially during the last three years."

Koan Statement : "The great master Chao Chou asked his teacher, Nan Chuan, 'What is the way?' Nan Chuan said, 'Every day mind is the way.' Chao Chou asked, 'Should one aim for it or not?' Nan Chuan said, 'If you try to turn towards it, you turn away from it.' Chao Chou asked, 'If we don't try, how can we know it is the way?' Nan Chuan replied, 'The way is neither knowing nor not knowing.'

"Later Dogen said, "Every day mind" means to maintain every day mind in the world of life and the world of death. Yesterday goes forth from this moment, and today comes forth from this place. Even though you do not know it...the moment is already here. Do not doubt it in the least. Even if doubt arises, this is nothing but every day mind.'

"If someone asked me about this I would say that Soto Zen is language and we should not be fooled by words."

Concluding Statement :

*Of four horses, one goes at the shadow of the whip,
one at the sound of the whip,
one at the feel of the whip,
and one when the whip draws blood.*

"Guess what kind I am. I'll try to be more sensitive, but you may have to draw blood. It is only by circumstance that I'm standing here today. Many in this room surpass me in their practice."

....



Other statements made during the ceremony:

Zen Center President, Leslie James: "Our Friend, we welcome you to this place. 'Continuously creation runs her loom and shuttle,/ hearing the ancient brocade, incorporating the forms of Spring.' You are now a golden thread. We will surround you like the woof and the warp. We will support you with our anger, our love, our confusion. Thank you for leading us in this ancient activity."

Peter Coyote: "Tenshin Zenki, I have been asked to speak as a friend....I can say that I support you....I see or hear 'support' in the indivisible mutuality, the 'no independent arising' sense of the Jeweled Net of Indra—the wonderful metaphor of the universe as a giant net hung with a jewel at each intersection, where each jewel reflects all the others.

"When one ascends the Mountain seat, I feel that some slack has been taken out of the Jeweled Net, that now the refractions and reflections are just a bit brighter, just a bit truer. And, caught in this net, I can now say that your 'friends'—not only the human ones, but the smiling clouds; the dancing mountains and singing rivers; the trees and shrubs and grasses, and all the finned, feathered, furred, flying and crawling friends, 'support' your ordination. Thank you."

Brother David Steindl-Rast: "Brother! Tenshin, it is a great joy to greet you as new-born Abbot of Zen Center. It is a joy, not only because of my friendship with you, but also on account of my friendship with Zen Center. For Zen Center, too, this can become a new beginning through a new expression of unity that finds the focal point in you.

"In preparing myself for today's celebration, I looked again at what St. Benedict, our own monastic ancestor, had to say about the Abbot fifteen hundred years ago. He uses five images to characterize the Abbot's task. The Abbot is Father, Teacher, Servant, Shepherd, and Physician.

"Father, Teacher, Servant, Shepherd, and Physician--what do these disparate positions and professions have in common? Is there something which all five of them share, I asked myself? And the answer seems clear. What they all have in common is, in one word, compassion.

"A father without compassion is merely a tyrant in the home. A teacher without compassion is merely a schoolmaster or a disciplinarian. A servant without compassion is a slave. Yet, even a slave becomes free by serving out of compassion. A shepherd without compassion is the 'hireling' of whom Jesus speaks in his parables, the hired hand for whom shepherding is merely a job. And a physician without compassion is unthinkable. Such a physician could at best be a fixer, never a healer. Compassion alone heals. And compassion truly heals, even when that which needs to be fixed is beyond repair.

"Among all the gifts I wish for you as Abbot of Zen Center, this seems to me the most important: compassion. Not a condescending compassion bestowed from a position of superiority--that wouldn't be compassion at all. Rather a compassion that moves others to be compassionate and receives their compassion in turn....

"All traditions meet in compassion, like the spokes of the Dharma Wheel, which you have turned today for the first time. Congratulations to you! Congratulations to Zen Center!"





Professor Robert Bellah: "We can see this event as part of the historic process of the transmission of the dharma to the West. This process has been going on for nearly two centuries in that translations of key texts and books about Buddhism have been appearing for a long time. But teachings become real only when they are practiced and practice depends on the establishment of the sangha.

"What we have seen in the past few decades is a much more secure establishment of the sangha than had occurred before. Through living communities and not just through the written word the dharma is now being made available in the West. I believe this is a matter of great importance. It is not that I expect millions of Americans to become Buddhists. But Buddhism is already having a leavening effect in our cultural and spiritual life as the sangha becomes more securely established and operates with greater ease. I expect this process to continue and to deepen. It is a process comparable to the influence of Christianity in Japan, which is far greater than the small size of the church there would lead one to expect.

"The installation of Reb Anderson as abbot is an important moment in the Americanization of Zen Buddhism. The community has taken charge of itself and acted democratically. It has also recognized the need for continuity with the forms and structures of the Japanese past. Reb seems to me to embody the middle way and to symbolize the new leadership that will take the next steps to make Buddhism generally and Zen in particular a part of American cultural and spiritual life.

I congratulate both Reb and the community on this auspicious occasion."

Mrs. Shunryu Suzuki: "Today, at this event, I'm reminded of what Suzuki Roshi said to me seventeen years ago, I perceive great potential in Tenshin, something special."

Hoitsu Suzuki asked Tenshin Anderson, "Will you follow my father's way?" and Tenshin replied, "Yes."

The final statement was an ancient Chinese poem read by Tenshin Anderson's wife, Rusa Chiu:

*Water lilies bloom on the Great River
Brilliant red on the green water.
Their color is the same as our hearts.
Their roots branch off.
Ours cannot be untangled.*

Many, many people helped create this ceremony. Special thanks to Kobun Chino, former Abbot of the Los Altos Zen Center, Taizen Maezumi, Abbot of the Zen Center of Los Angeles, and Hoitsu Suzuki, Abbot of Rinso-in, Mel Weitsman, Abbot of Berkeley Zen Center, Jakusho Kwong, Abbot of Sonoma Zen Center, Les Kaye of Mountain View Zen Center, and Issan Dorsey representing the Hartford Street Zen Center.



News

New Board Members

This Fall, Ed Brown, David Chadwick, Keith Meyerhoff, and Diane Burr were elected to the Zen Center Board. Professor Robert Bellah, Brother David Steindl-Rast, and Marsha Angus were appointed by the Board to serve as "Outside" Board members. We are grateful to them all for their willingness to help in this way.

Nyogen Senzaki Papers

We are pleased to announce the donation to the Zen Center Library of a collection of the papers of Nyogen Senzaki by Karl Ray of San Francisco.

Karl was the founder of the Zen Center bookstore, and co-founder, with Jack Weller, of the Zen Center Library.

Nyogen Senzaki was one of the pioneer Zen teachers in this country. He lived in San Francisco for seventeen years, and in 1925 he opened an apartment/zendo on Bush Street, the street on which the original Zen Center community was located. Senzaki moved to Los Angeles in 1931, and he was held in an internment camp in Wyoming during the second World War. He returned to Los Angeles after the war and died there in May, 1958.

Mr. Ray has asked that serious students and scholars be able to have access to the papers, many of which have notes in Senzaki's own hand, which will be possible when Zen Center's present, rather informal, library can be upgraded. We are deeply grateful to Karl Ray for his generosity, and his devotion to preserving the legacy of Nyogen Senzaki, who, like D.T. Suzuki, was a modern "Bodhidharma," transmitting Zen to America.

Conference on Zen Buddhism in North America

There will be a conference on Zen Buddhism in North America from July 14 - 19, in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Hosted by Samu Sunim and the Zen Lotus Society, it will include scholars such as Robert Buswell, Griffith Faulk, Luis Gomez, Richard Hayes, and Kenneth Kraft, and Zen Teachers such as Zenson Gifford, Bernard Glassman, Albert Low, David Mott, Sukha Linda Murray, Yoshin David Radin, Lincoln Rhodes, Robert Schrei, Sujata Linda Uptegrove, and San Francisco Zen Center's Ananda Dalenberg. For more information, call or write Zen Buddhist Temple, 1214 Packard Road, Ann Arbor, Michigan, 48104, (313) 761-6520.

In Memoriam: Nancy Wilson Ross



The Buddhist world, and Zen Center in particular, has lost a concerned and estimable friend with the passing of Nancy Wilson Ross on January 18, 1986. A vibrant and multifaceted individual, she has been an important transmitter of Eastern culture and thought to the West.

Nancy was born in the Pacific Northwest in 1901 and often remarked that mountains and rivers there looked so much like the ones in Chinese landscape paintings that she felt the Chinese influence from early childhood.

Nancy was a student at the Bauhaus in Germany in its final two years. She was a collector and connoisseur of art, both modern and oriental. She was also an apt observer of the passing social scene. Her writings on the rise of Hitler in Germany in the early 1930's were clear and far-sighted--though disturbing to Americans who reacted very critically to her observations.

In 1939 she travelled to Japan, China, and Korea. The trip was a moving and lasting experience for her. "In Japan, in particular," she wrote, "the theatre of the Noh and the Kabuki, the abstract gardens of rock and raked sand, the meaning behind the tea ceremony...all these suggested new dimensions in art and considerably reduced my arrogance as a modern."

Nancy's published works reflect her wide range of interests: novels like, *The Left Hand is the Dreamer*, *The Return of Lady Brace*, and historical studies; *Westward the Women*, *Farthest Reach*, essays, poems, short stories, and articles on Paul Klee, the Sioux Indians, surrealism, etc. And, of course, her Eastern works: *Three Ways of Asian Wisdom*, *The World of Zen*, and *Buddhism: a Way of Life and Thought*.

Nancy loved nature: the woods, lakes and oceans. Everywhere she lived she collected wild grass vines and branches to make arrangements for the house. She rarely bought flowers; she used what was available. In Long Island she cut branches with red berries and twisted vines from a wooded area along the site of a golf course. In Florida she picked flowers and leaves she found appealing from abandoned hedges which grew along the beach. In the Adirondacks she made little gardens for inside the house from moss, rocks, and small conifers.

Her practice of finding something she felt a kinship to and bringing it home, making a place for it, is also evident in her contact with Buddhism. She incorporated the illumination she found in Eastern culture and in Buddhist practice into her way of life, and, through her work, into American culture. She created, thereby, an intellectual and social support for a Buddhist approach to the West.

Nancy helped Zen Center in many ways. She was widely acquainted in many circles and introduced us to numerous friends. Many of us studied with her and served as her personal assistant. Her influence continues in all who worked with and were touched by her.



New Publication of Dogen's Writings

January saw the long awaited publication by North Point Press of *Moon in a Dewdrop*. This collection of Dogen Zenji's writings was translated by Kaz Tanahashi and many students and teachers at Zen Center. We are very happy with both the quality of the book and of the translations. What follows is an excerpt from "Only Buddha and Buddha," translated by Kaz Tanahashi and Ed Brown.

'Buddha-dharma cannot be known by a person. For this reason, since olden times no ordinary person has realized buddha-dharma. Because it is realized by buddhas alone, it is said, "Only a buddha and a buddha can thoroughly master it."

When you realize buddha-dharma, you do not think, "This is realization just as I expected." Even if you think so, realization invariably differs from your expectation. Realization is not like your conception of it. Accordingly, realization cannot take place as previously conceived. When you realize buddha-dharma, you do not consider how realization came about. You should reflect on this: What you think one way or another before realization is not a help for realization.

Although realization is not like any of the thoughts preceding it, this is not because such thoughts were actually bad and could not be realization. Past thoughts in themselves were already realization. But since you were seeking elsewhere, you thought and said that thought cannot be realization.

However, it is worth noticing that what you think one way or another is not a help for realization. Then you are cautious not to be small-minded. If realization came forth by the power of your prior thoughts, it would not be trustworthy. Realization does not depend on thoughts, but comes forth far beyond them; realization is helped only by the power of realization itself. Know that then there is no delusion, and there is no realization.'



Kaz Tanahashi at a book signing party at 300 Page Street on March 16, 1986.



Warm Smiles in Cold Mountains

Tassajara Sesshin Talk by Tenshin Reb Anderson

Sesshin can be seen as a week in which you will sit and deepen your practice, and perhaps recognize something of the nature of mind. It's certainly fine if you see it that way. This is one traditional approach. It is the gate of cultivation, entering enlightenment from ordinariness. Another way to see it is that for seven days you are maintaining the essential working of the Buddha way. It's not so much that you do a week's sitting in order to get somewhere or see something, but you do a week's sitting in order to do a week's sitting. You do one week of Buddha's work. You do one week of Buddha's play. This is the natural gate, entering ordinariness from enlightenment.

I understand our practice during this sesshin and throughout the year as the practical application of the heart teaching of our lineage, the *Heart Sutra*, which includes both of these entrances. This is the enactment of "Form is inseparable from emptiness; emptiness is inseparable from form." The heart teaching is the context in which we do this limited practice of sitting and following the schedule. This teaching is the background of this very particular effort that we are making. *The Song of the Jewel Mirror Samadhi* and the *Merging of Difference and Unity* are commentaries on the intricate interpenetration of form and emptiness, of feelings and emptiness, emotions and emptiness, concepts and emptiness, awareness and emptiness.

The Song of the Jewel Mirror Samadhi starts, "The teaching of Thusness has been intimately communicated by Buddhas and ancestors. Now you have it, so keep it well." The starting point is Buddhahood. "Now you have it." The rest of the poem explains how to keep it well. How do you keep it well? By doing buddha's work. So if you see your

practice this way, then just take it easy. Relax and enjoy yourself. This is not a technique to accomplish anything; it is simply the daily activity of Buddha.

When Old Buddha Dogen came back from China, in his first lecture to his students he said, "In China I learned that eyes are horizontal and nose is vertical. I came back empty-handed. So now I just while away my time and take things as they come."

Most buddhas have open, empty hands. If you're a buddha, you don't need to have something in your hand. You are the attainment, you are the practice. You don't need any extra equipment to justify your effort. A nice thing about sesshin is that it's so simple. All you have to do is sit, and that's enough. You can enjoy yourself. Enjoy the simple fact that your eyes are horizontal and your nose is vertical. Marking time, just take things as they come. Just take this breath as it comes, this breath as it goes, this sitting posture, this sound of the stream. This is what our ancestor Dogen Zenji called the "self-enjoyment samadhi" (Jijuyu Zammai).

After Buddha was awakened, he sat and enjoyed the bliss of freedom (*vimoksha-sukha-samadhi*) under the bodhi tree for seven days. Can we give ourselves permission to simply sit and enjoy the bliss of liberation this week? Will I give myself that permission? Will you give yourself that permission? I give you my permission and my encouragement to enjoy yourself as Buddha's work.

Could it be that to enjoy yourself as you sit here, as you follow this schedule, is Buddha's work? Do you have any doubt about that? If you have doubt about it, it is Buddha's work to enjoy that doubt. Examine that doubt. See if that doubt has any substance, any reason.

So I'm pointing in the direction of becoming free of any big or little impulses to accomplish something during this week or in this life. I don't say you shouldn't desire to accomplish something. I say let's encourage ourselves to become free of our impulse to accomplish something. Let's live in the midst of desires for attainment and improvement without being ensnared by them and see that as Buddha's work, understand that as Buddha's work. This is to settle into the samadhi of self-enjoyment. Our ancestors say it's not that there's no attainment--buddhas have great attainment--it's just that their practice in realization and their realization in practice is undefiled by attainment.

The Tathagata's body cannot be seen by marks. This doesn't mean it doesn't have any marks, but you can't recognize it by marks. As the *Diamond Sutra* says, the Tathagata's body is "marked by no-marks." The famous Japanese folk potter, Shoji Hamada, didn't sign his bowls. People said, "Why don't you sign them?" He said, "Well, after I die, when people find bowls that are unsigned, if they're bad they'll say they're not mine, and if they're good, they'll say they are mine." In this way the Tathagata is unmarked, unsigned.

Arhats are signed, they're marked. So if you look at Buddhist statues, arhats are sometimes depicted as deformed and ugly. Their bodies are distorted by, marked by, their great attainments. But bodhisattvas are not deformed, because there is no sign of attainment. That doesn't mean that there isn't any attainment, but that there's no sign of attainment. Don't deface yourself by attainment. Don't sprout some accomplishment on

your unmarked body. Well, I shouldn't say don't do it. Go ahead, do it if you want to. But already you are doing Buddha's work. You are maintaining the Buddha way in the world.

This week I would like to meditate on the heart teaching with you. The teaching of Thusness is not captured in words, and yet it is spoken. However, when Thusness is depicted in literary form, it is relegated to defilement. Still, it is okay to defile it, it is okay to speak about it. As the great teacher Chao Chou says, "It knowingly and deliberately transgresses."

One of the things the teaching of Thusness says is that, "Right in darkness there is light, but don't see it as light." That is to say, form and emptiness are extremely intimate, but not equal. Therefore, the translation, "Form is emptiness," is not quite correct. Emptiness and form are inseparable and reciprocal, but not equal, like the right and left hands when the palms are joined in bowing. They are interdependent, but not the same.

At this time of year, it is cold at Tassajara. Ed Brown and I were reminiscing about the old days at Tassajara, when some of the students made vows to attain all kinds of things. One of the vows that was made, I believe in the Fall of 1968, was to go through the whole practice period wearing nothing more than a tee shirt under a thin grey robe. Two or three people made that vow. It was quite cold that practice period, and one of the

Lay Ordination at Green Gulch Farm on April 20, 1986



people who made this vow sat by the door of the unheated zendo. He made it through the first few days of the December sesshin. Then he went into his room, got into his sleeping bag, and didn't come out for the rest of the sesshin.

During the next practice period, the same person conceived the idea to send Richard Baker, who was in Japan, a tape of greetings from the students at Tassajara. So each person in the practice period said, "Hi," in some way or another. I remember that I said, "Warm smiles from cold mountain."

So here we are, warm smiles in the cold mountains. We're still here, eighteen years later. We still have warm smiles, warm bodies, warm hearts in these cold mountains. The interpenetration of warm bodies and cold mountains is also form and emptiness. You can't separate warm bodies and cold mountains. As long as you're alive, you've got both going on. When you're in your sleeping bag, maybe you can separate warm bodies and cold mountains. Then you've just got warm bodies and warm sleeping bags, which is okay. But walking around at Tassajara, the dynamic interpenetration of form and emptiness is demonstrated.

I don't like the cold, but I love the cold. Walking in this cold wind, I hate it, but I feel myself surrounded by the truth. I feel I am in the right place. This cold wind--so invigorating, so vital. And I hate it. We feel both of those things. We're a little bit afraid of it, afraid it will take us away, take away our warm smile and warm heart. Certainly it can take away our warm fingers and warm toes. Can we find a way for this warm person to be settled and comfortable in the cold mountains without going too far this way or that way? If we stay too warm, we'll be afraid of the cold. If we get too cold, we'll be afraid of the cold. What is the Buddha's work in the middle of the cold? This is one of the things we can do while maintaining the essential working of the Buddha way. Have a dialogue with the cold, a dialogue with emptiness. Stare at the cold, stare at the not-you. If you look at it long enough, it will look back at you. The cold mountains will smile.

The Tang Dynasty poet Cold Mountain (Han Shan) said,

*People these days search for a way through the clouds.
But the cloud way is dark and without any sign.
The mountains are high, and often steep and rocky.
In the broadest valleys the sun seldom shines.
Green crests before you and behind,
White clouds to East and West.
Do you want to know where the cloud way lies?
There it is, right in the midst of the void. **

This poem is well-suited for Tassajara. In the broadest valleys the sun seldom shines--not to mention the narrow valleys like this one. If you walk up the road, the sun's shining, but down here it's not. Green crests are ahead of you and behind you, and white clouds are to the East and the West.

You are maintaining the essential working of the Buddha way. But there is a little bit of danger of slipping on the steep mountains of attainment. There is the temptation to

* *Burton Watson translation*

improve this essential working, some tendency to try to do a higher quality job of maintaining the Buddha way. So all the teaching is intended, first of all, to empower you to carry out Buddha's work, and then to protect you from thinking that you have to add something to that. I'm offering you encouragement to do the practice that you're already doing, and some background so you won't feel you need to add anything else.

The lineage of Soto Zen, particularly as it comes down through Suzuki-roshi, is a lineage of cloud-drivers and cloud farmers. It is the way of the clouds, and the way through the clouds. It may sometimes seem difficult because it can't be recognized by marks. It's unmarked. Unmarked means it is you. Unmarked means you're Buddha. This is the face that you have, so let's enjoy ourselves and continue our work.



Tassajara.

Song of the Jewel Mirror Samadhi (Baojing Sanmeike)
Dongshan Liangjie

translated by Thomas Cleary

*The teaching of thusness has been intimately communicated
by buddhas and ancestors;
Now you have it, so keep it well.
Filling a silver bowl with snow,
hiding a heron in the moonlight;
When you array them, they're not the same;
when you mix them, you know where they are.
The meaning is not in the words,
yet it responds to the inquiring impulse.
If you're excited, it becomes a pitfall;
if you miss it, you fall into retrospective hesitation.
Turning away and touching are both wrong,
for it is like a mass of fire.
Just to depict it in literary form
is to relegate it to defilement.
It is bright just at midnight;
it doesn't appear at dawn.
It acts as a guide for beings;
its use removes all pains.
Although it is not fabricated,
it is not without speech.
It is like facing a jewel mirror;
form and image behold each other.
You are not it, it actually is you.
It is like a babe in the world,
in five aspects complete;
It does not go or come, nor rise nor stand.
"Baba wawa," is there anything said or not?
Ultimately it does not apprehend anything,
because its speech is not yet correct.
It is like the six lines of the double split hexagram;
the relative and absolute integrate;
Piled up, they make three;
the complete transformation makes five.
It is like the taste of the five flavored herb,
like the diamond thunderbolt.
Subtly included within the true,
inquiry and response come up together.
Communing with the source and communing with the process,
it includes integration and includes the road;
Merging is auspicious; do not violate it.*

Naturally real yet inconceivable,
it is not within the province of delusion or enlightenment.
With causal conditions, time and season,
quiescently it shines bright.
In its fineness it fits into spacelessness;
in its greatness it is utterly beyond location.
A hairsbreadth's deviation
will fail to accord with proper attunement.
Now there are sudden and gradual,
in connection with which are set up basic approaches.
Once basic approaches are distinguished,
then there are guiding rules.
But even though the basis is reached
and the approach comprehended,
true eternity still flows.
Outwardly still while inwardly moving,
like a tethered colt, a trapped rat:
The ancient saints pitied them,
and bestowed upon them the teaching;
According to their delusions,
they called black as white.
When erroneous imaginations cease,
the acquiescent mind realizes itself.
If you want to conform to the ancient way,
please observe the ancients of former times.
When about to fulfill the way of buddhahood,
one gazed at a tree for ten aeons,
Like a tiger leaving part of its prey,
a horse with a white left hind leg.
Because there is the base,
there are jewel pedestals, fine clothing;
Because there is the startlingly different,
there are house cat and cow.
Yi, with his archer's skill,
could hit a target at a hundred paces;
But when arrowpoints meet head on,
what has this to do with the power of skill?
When the wooden man begins to sing,
the stone woman gets up to dance;
It's not within reach of feeling or discrimination;
how could it admit of consideration in thought?
A minister serves the lord,
a son obeys the father.
Not obeying is not filial,
and not serving is no help.
Practice secretly, working within,
as though a fool, like an idiot.
If you can achieve continuity,
this is called the host within the host.

Lecture by
Yvonne Rand

Green Gulch Farm



I want to talk about two practices which are conducive to cultivating Beginner's Mind --the mind fresh and awake to many possibilities. This mind is different from the mind one brings to a situation in which one slips into some habitual pace or activity or habitual language or ways of thinking about things. How can I be a beginner in each moment, even in those situations where I am doing something that I have done many times before?

Any of the following practices is conducive to cultivating Beginner's Mind. They will be more penetrating if you do them regularly than if you do them occasionally. Practice zazen: practice sitting down quietly once or twice a day; settle yourself; let your mind become quiet; find some physical posture which brings with it some stability and openness; let your attention be settled on your breath. I have found the practice of the half-smile conducive to cultivating Beginner's Mind, as is also the practice of taking on several points of view in a particular situation. These last two are the practices I want to consider today.

There are some practices, like the practice of the half-smile, which for the space of one, or two, or three breaths can bring us to some experience of what I call "Buddha space." By this I mean the space that I know from sitting every day over some long period of time. It is that space which is the most open to the most possibilities and to seeing most widely. Often having a moment of that space is enough to recall me to a wider mind, a bigger mind than the mind I normally have as I race around through the course of the day striving to get a lot of work done, answering the telephone, driving to an appointment--all those circumstances which are so familiar.

Please try the practice of the half-smile. Do it now. For the space of three breaths. It has nothing to do with feeling like smiling. For those of you who have not done this practice before, you can think of it as "mouth yoga." Just lift the corners of your mouth slightly for the space of three full breaths. Not a full smile or a grin. And let your attention be with your breath, particularly on the exhalation.

This is a practice that you can do when you first wake up in the morning. If you already do some daily meditation practice, the half-smile is a practice you can do when you first begin your regular meditation. When I first began doing the half-smile I did it whenever I found myself waiting. So I did it whenever I came to a stop sign or a stop light. I did it standing in the check-out line at the grocery store. I did it when I was on hold on the telephone. I did it when I was waiting for an appointment in the doctor's office or the dentist's office or when I was waiting for an appointment with someone coming to see me.

I found that if I had some signal to remind me to do the half-smile when I first woke up in the morning, then I could readily remember to do the half-smile. And if I did not have a signal, I usually did not remember. I would think of it some time around noon or three days later. So I took a picture of Suzuki-roshi laughing and put the picture by the side of the bed. Now, when I wake in the morning, it is usually the first thing I see. And the agreement that I made with myself was that whenever I see that picture I will stop and do the half-smile for three breaths. This has been an easy way for me to begin doing the half-smile when I wake up and before I go to sleep at night. What I found was that in doing the practice whenever I was waiting, that after a while, after a month or so, it also occurred to me to do the practice when I noticed some feeling of anger or anxiety or some tension arising; and the half-smile is, in fact, traditionally used as an antidote to negative states of mind.

Most of all I find that the half-smile is a practice which brings me to some sense of spaciousness, and in that spaciousness I notice more than I do when I am feeling crowded by my pace or my activity, or by the expectations I hold for myself in terms of what I want to get done this morning, or today, or this week, or maybe even in this life time.

A practice I would like to consider this morning is that of taking on different points of view. I think that I can suggest this practice best by telling you some stories which illustrate the practice.

When you came here to this meditation hall this morning you came into the outer hall through one of the two sliding doors. They are noisy sliding doors. Furthermore, if the doors are not closed on a cold day, and if the stove there in the back area is lit, all the heat from the stove escapes out through those doors. If both doors are left open, a wind tunnel results and a gale blows through. There has been colloquy for some time about what we can do to get each of us to remember to close the doors. Sometimes people are rather angry. We have had all kinds of discussions about rules and punishments. We have cultivated our policeman's mind quite wonderfully.

Recently the people who live in the back area of the building were standing in a circle around the stove warming themselves and fussing together about this problem. In the middle of the discussion, Sierra, the blond golden retriever who lives here at Green Gulch, came wagging happily along. She pushed open the sliding door and joined the

group. Suddenly everyone realized that it was Sierra who comes in in the middle of the night, opening and not closing the door. She comes in to be warm and dry and near her friends. Suddenly there was a kind of opening or spaciousness about this big problem with the unclosed doors. There may even have been some irritation with Sierra, but nothing like the irritation which some of us had felt toward each other.

Our minds are tricky. What happens in a situation where I am certain that Mary or Joe is the one who has left the door open? And what happens, by contrast, when I imagine that it is sweet old Sierra dog getting in out of the cold and rain? A kind of generosity may arise in my mind if I think it is the dog who is leaving the door open.



Green Gulch Farm Central Area

Thich Nhat Hanh wrote a poem called *Please Call Me by My True Names*. I find it a moving and powerful poem. There is one verse of the poem which, one day, under trying circumstances, leapt off the wall where I had the poem hanging. This verse expresses in another way the practice of taking on more than one point of view.

*I am the 12-year old girl refugee on a
small boat who throws herself into the ocean
after being raped by a sea pirate
and I am the pirate, my heart not yet capable
of seeing and loving.*

My tendency is to take the point of view of the 12-year old girl. It is much more difficult for me to be the sea pirate.

The last day I was in Delhi, just before I came home in January, I had an experience with a rickshaw driver: another example of this practice of taking another point of view. I had gone to the memorial site for Gandhi. It is the place where he was cremated after he was assassinated. I decided that I wanted to spend my last day in India at this memorial gathering. The monument is in old Delhi. I stayed until it was dusk and then discovered that there were no taxis in the midst of the traffic. I had no idea how I would get back to the guest house where I was staying. The only way I could find was by a bicycle rickshaw. I had ridden in a bicycle rickshaw for short distances in the more modern parts of Delhi, but never in heavy traffic. They are flimsy affairs compared to the big cars and buses and even compared to the little three-wheel taxicabs which we called mosquitos. After standing waiting for a motor taxi for a long time, it became clear to me that I would ride in a bicycle rickshaw or nothing. I was frightened, but I decided to flag down a bicycle rickshaw and take my chances.

The previous evening the bookkeeper at the YWCA guest house where I was staying and I had stayed up rather late talking. He was Indian and had asked me what it was like being in India and what was I doing and what did I do in America. He wanted to know how did I like India. We talked about some of my encounters with taxi drivers because they were sometimes rather unhappy encounters for me. He talked to me for some time about the life of a taxi driver: what it is like for someone, whether he is a bicycle rickshaw driver, or a mosquito driver, or a driver of a funky car held together with string and gum, or the driver of an elegant taxi. In all instances, he said, these drivers have expenses which they have to meet--payments, for example, to the owner of the vehicle--whether they get enough fares in a day or not. He talked to me a bit about the way a taxi driver survives. He helped me to see the perspective of a taxi driver in Delhi, who saw me as a westerner, a lone woman. I became fair game. And if I were unaware enough to pay ten times the usual fare, that is alright. I could begin to see the situation from the point of view of the driver.

I had, up to the time of this conversation, felt angry sometimes at the taxi drivers who would try to charge me three or five or ten times what I came to know as the usual fare. This man helped me to understand the taxi driver's point of view. That conversation came up for me that Friday afternoon as I was sitting in the bicycle rickshaw feeling uncomfortable being a passenger as a young, apparently healthy, but certainly thin young man made his way through the traffic peddling us along. I felt frightened but realized also that I might be in the rickshaw at most for an hour. The driver was spending long hours every day, perhaps his lifetime in that situation, wending his way in among trucks and buses and cars.

I developed quite a different sense of what was going on when the taxi driver and I discussed how much he wanted, and how much I wanted to pay, for him to carry me as a passenger from one place to another. I could enter into a discussion—not exactly as a game—but with a stance from which we could come to some meeting point and some respect for each other, and then continue on in our respective ways. It was very different from feeling angry at the taxi driver whom I resented for trying to take advantage of me.

What I am suggesting is that when you find yourself in a situation, especially a situation which you will be in for a while, take on the point of view of another being in that situation. If you are working in the garden taking care of tender new plants that the snails love, you might for a while be a snail. A friend recently described doing Hospice work, sitting in a hospital room with someone who is sick, with the family and friends there, and a television set turned on but with no one watching it. She sometimes takes on the point of view of the television set. And she can see all these people and things happening. And she can be there with no one noticing her, quietly. Please try it and see what happens.

Thank you very much.



South wall of Buddha Hall at 300 Page Street

Techniques
of Reconciliation

Lecture
by Thich Nhat Hanh



Green Gulch Farm, November 3, 1985

At the beginning of this retreat, I asked the question whether a particular effort should be made in order for us to enjoy a beautiful morning. That was almost four days ago. I did not give the answer. But it seems that after four days of practice, my friends here found out that there is no particular effort that should be made in order for us to enjoy a beautiful morning.

When you look at the blue sky, you see the beauty of the sky. Do you have to make a special effort in order to enjoy it? That is the hard question. And that is the question of the practice also: is practice hard? Do we have to make a lot of effort in order to practice? If we ask those who have gone through four days of practice, we think that practicing is a very pleasant thing and each second, each minute of practice should be a second of joy, a minute of joy. Do you have to practice enjoying the blue sky? No, I guess not. You just enjoy it.

Life is full of suffering, but is also full of wonderful things like the blue sky, the sunshine, the eyes of a baby. To suffer is not enough. We should be in touch with the wonders of life. It is all around us, anytime and anywhere. We don't need to go to China in order to enjoy the blue sky. We don't have to travel into the future in order to enjoy the air we are breathing here. So please be in touch with the wonderful aspects of life, because it would be a pity if we are only in touch with the suffering.

You know as well as I do that in Theravada Buddhism, we stress more on the aspect of the pain and suffering, and in Mahayana we stress more on the aspect of the wonder-ness of life. Look at the Arhats, and then the Bodhisattvas. The Bodhisattvas are very beautifully dressed, smiling all the time. Today I have asked all the children to dress beautifully in order to be Bodhisattvas. The other day, during a Dharma talk, children were sitting in front of me then there was a boy smiling beautifully. I said, "Tim, you have a very beautiful smile." And he said, "Thank you." I said, "No, you don't have to thank me, I have to thank you. Because of your smile, you make life more beautiful. So instead of saying, 'Thank you,' you should say, 'You're welcome.'" (laughter) For the past two days, the children have been smiling a lot, and when I look at them, they say, "You are welcome." (laughter)

You know that if a tree is a tree, that is about all a tree can do. If a tree is not a tree, then life is not life and we cannot profit from the tree. The fact that a tree is a tree is very important for us. We profit a lot from the being of a tree. Therefore one person should be a person. If one person is a real person living happily like a tree, smiling, then all of us, all the world will profit from a person. A person doesn't have to do a lot in order to save the world. A person has to be a person. That is the basis of peace.

If a child smiles, if an adult smiles, that is very important. If in our daily life we can smile, if we can be peaceful and happy, not only we profit from that, but the members of the family will profit from it, living peacefully, joyfully, smiling, blooming like a flower, and everyone in the family will profit from it. The world around us will profit from us, and that is the basic kind of peace work. Therefore, when I see Tim smiling, I am so happy. If he is aware of the fact that he is making other people happy, he can say, "You are welcome."

We have been practicing smiling, not only during walking meditation, during the time working in the kitchen cutting carrots, but also where we sit. Sitting in the zendo and smiling, that would be a very revolutionary act. (laughter) At first some of us find it very hard to smile, really hard to smile, and we have to think about why it is so difficult to smile. Smiling means that you are yourself, that you have sovereignty over yourself, that you are not drowned into forgetfulness. That kind of smile can be seen on the face of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas.

So I would like to ask you all not to be observers here, or spectators, but to be actors. Let us smile and enjoy our breathing while we go on. There is a gatha for us to breathe and smile which I would like to share with you.

Breathing in, I calm body and mind.
Breathing out, I smile (And I actually smile.)
Dwelling in the present moment
I know that this is the only moment.

"Breathing in, I calm body and mind." Don't just recite this line, practice it. It's like when you drink a glass of ice water, you feel the cold, the freshness, permeate your own body. So when I breathe in, I feel the breathing calming my body, calming my mind, and I feel like a glass of orange juice, just squeezed from an orange, put it on the table and the small particles of the orange slowly go down to the bottom and settle.

When I breathe out, I smile. You know the effect of the smile. The smile can relax hundreds of muscles in your face, and relax your nervous system and make you master of yourself. That is why the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas are always smiling. If you smile you see the wonder of the smile.

"Dwelling in the present moment." While I sit here, I don't think of elsewhere in the future or the past. I sit here, and I know where I am sitting. This is very important. We tend to be alive in the future, not now. We say, "Wait until I finish school and get my Ph.D. degree, and then I will be really alive." And when you have it, and it's not easy to get, you say to yourself, "I have to wait until I have a job in order to be *really* alive." And then after the job, a house. After the house, a car. And we are not capable of being alive in the present moment. We tend to postpone being alive to the future, the distant future, we don't know when. The only moment for me to be alive is the present moment. So the time you are with me, here, now, is not to listen to a lecture, but to be in the present moment.

Breathing in, I calm body and mind
Breathing out, I smile.

If you don't remember the entire lines, you can just remember one word: "Calming." Breathing in, calming, calming body and mind. Breathing out, "Smiling." Smiling. A real smile. You smile to yourself, and not to anyone else.

Dwelling in the present moment

Buddha's Birthday at Green Gulch Farm





Buddha's Birthday at Green Gulch Farm

You have to dwell really in the present moment. Be here and now. Be your own true self. Don't jump into the future. Don't jump into the past. It is wonderful this morning, it is wonderful that we sit here able to breathe and to smile. And if we cannot enjoy the moment, if we cannot be happy now, when? When shall we be happy?

I know that this is the only moment.

So you become alert, you let all the air in your lungs out first, because we all always have some air left in our lungs. And then you begin to breathe in, "Calming, Smiling, Present moment, Only moment."

Now I would like to share with you the practice of the bell. Because during this lecture every fifteen minutes there will be a bell. The Bell Master is to take care of the bell in the most mindful way. She will have to stand in front of the bell and breathe three times in and out in this way: "Breathing in, I calm body and mind/ Breathing out, I smile./Dwelling in the present moment I know this is the only moment." And then she will recite a gatha, like this:

Body, speech, and mind in perfect oneness
I am sending my heart along with the sound of the bell.
May the hearers awaken from forgetfulness
And transcend all anxiety and sorrow.

So the Bell Inviter is very mindful and concentrated. Before she invites the bell to sound, all of us who are bell hearers, we have to respond in kind. We stop all our thinking and talking. Even if we are giving a Dharma talk, we should stop also. Because nothing is more important than being aware. We practice breathing, and we recite the gatha:

Listen, listen, this wonderful sound
brings me back to my true self.

And we enjoy that practice very much. So we would like to share with you a few sounds during this lecture. Stop thinking. Smiling, breathing, you say to yourself, "Listen, listen, this wonderful sound brings me back to my true self." Shall we try? And we should be able to enjoy the bell, because the bell is made for that. The sound of the bell is like the voice of the Buddha calling us back to our true self. And not a Buddha outside of yourself, your own Buddha, you own Buddha nature.

(Bell, silence, bell)

Shall we try once more? "Listen, listen, this wonderful sound brings me back to my true self." And breathing.

(Bell, silence, bell)

So please, during your sitting here in this place, do not be observers. Please enjoy your breathing, your smiling. That is more important than the talk that I am giving to you.

During the retreat, a friend asked this hard question, "How can I smile when I am full of sorrow? It's like forcing myself to smile. That is not natural." Maybe some of you in this audience think the same.

I answered the question like this: "You should be able to smile to your sorrow, because you are more than your sorrow." A human being is like a television set with millions of channels. If you turn the Buddha on, you are the Buddha. (laughter) If you turn the sorrow on, you are the sorrow. If you turn the smile on, you are the smile. And so on. Don't let one channel dominate you all the time. You have the seed of everything in you. Therefore we have to seize the situation in our hand, to recover our own sovereignty.

When we sit down like this, peacefully, breathing and smiling, we are our true selves, we have sovereignty over ourselves. When we open ourselves up to a TV program, we let ourselves be invaded by the TV program. Sometimes the program is good, but often the program is just very noisy. And because of the fact that we don't like ourselves, don't want to be with ourselves, we want to get away from ourselves. We want to have something other than ourselves enter us. So we sit there and let the very bad TV program assail us, destroy us, invade us. Even if we suffer, our nervous system suffers, we don't have the courage to stand up and turn the TV off. Because if we do so, we have to go back to our self.

But the sound of the bell is doing the opposite. It helps you go back to your true self. Practicing in this kind of civilization is very difficult. Everything seems to work in concert in trying to take away your true self. You are so busy that when you have some time, you cannot stand it. You have to pick up a book to read, telling yourself that you have to educate yourself more. (They laughs) Or to pick up the telephone. You don't mind that the telephone bill will be too high. (laughter) Or you turn on the TV. And you have a million other things, like video tapes and music, in order to help you be away from yourself. Practicing meditation to be aware--to listen to the bell, to smile, to breathe--all these things are on the opposite side. We want to go back to ourself in order to see what is going on, because to meditate means to be aware of what is going on. What is going on is very important.

But I would like to go back to the smile. This morning I met with a young woman who is expecting a child. The child will have to wait for four more weeks in order to come out. And I told the young mother, "Please breathe and smile for him or her." And I really meant it. Because you don't need to wait until the baby is born in order to take care of him or her. You take care of him or her right now. Or even sooner. (laughter)

What if that lady tells you that she cannot smile? This is not the case. This is only a supposition, but what if the lady cannot smile? This is very serious. What if the young lady cannot breathe, cannot smile, cannot enjoy the blue sky? That's very serious. She cannot say, "I am too sorrowful. Smiling is just not the correct thing to do." Maybe crying or shouting would be the correct thing to do. But your baby will get it all--anything you are, anything you do, your baby will get it.

Even if you do not have a baby in your womb, the seed of the baby is already there. So those of you who are still unmarried, you should be aware that the baby is already there somehow. Don't wait until the doctors tell you that you are going to have a baby to begin to take care of it. It is already there. And whatever you are and whatever you do, your baby will get it. So anything you eat, anything you do, any worries that are on your mind will be for the baby, so be aware.

Can you tell me that you cannot smile? No. Think of the baby. You smile for him, for her, for the future generations. So don't tell me that the smile and my sorrow just don't go together. Your sorrow, but how about your baby? It's not his sorrow, it's not her sorrow; it's your sorrow. You have a baby, so you should be responsible. So smile.

And I would like to go a little bit deeper. There is a baby Buddha in every one of us. As Buddhists, we believe that everyone has Buddha nature, and everyone is a Buddha-to-be. Therefore there is a baby Buddha in yourself, and you would not be very polite and kind to let baby Buddha, if you suppress him or her with all the weight of your sorrow and anxiety, you don't give that baby Buddha a chance to be. For the Channel 4 on the television, you give it a chance, you turn a knob and it comes on. But for your Buddha, you may be more unkind than you are with the TV set. You don't let the Buddha baby-to-be come up. So when you tell me that you just cannot smile, well you want to deny the chance for the Buddha in you. It's very serious.

We have the illusion that we are one [thing], that if I am sorrow, I cannot be something else [as well]. This is wrong. It's like a TV set saying, "I can only be Channel 5. I cannot be something else." And a human being, what a marvel it is.

The children in this retreat understand that in each man, in each woman, there is a capacity of waking up, of understanding, and of loving. And they told me that they cannot show me someone who doesn't have that kind of capacity. The only thing is that there are people who allow that capacity to develop, and there are those who don't allow that capacity to develop. So that capacity of waking up, being aware of what is going on in your feelings, in your body, in your perceptions, in the world, that kind of capacity is called by a very complicated word, "Buddha nature." Buddha nature is the capacity of understanding and loving. When you understand, then you can accept and you can love. And the baby of that Buddha is in every one of us, and we should give him or her a chance. Smiling, that is it. And I can tell you that if you are unable to smile, then the world will not have peace. It's not by going out for a demonstration against the nuclear

missiles that you can get peace. It is with our capacity of smiling, breathing, and being understanding that we can make peace. Practicing meditation, practicing smiling, breathing, enjoying the blue sky, you will bring a new dimension to the peace movement. Because in the peace movement there is a lot of anger, frustration, misunderstanding. The peace movement can write very good protest letters, but they are not able yet to write a love letter.

(Bell of mindfulness, silence)

We need to learn to write a letter to the Congress or to the President of the United States that they will not put in the trash can. We need to write the kind of letter that they will like to receive. The way you speak, the kind of understanding, the kind of language you use should not turn people off. Because the President of America is a person like any one of us.

Can the peace movement talk in loving speech, showing the way for peace? I think that will depend on whether the people in the peace movement can be peace. Because without being peace, we cannot do anything for peace. If you cannot smile, you cannot help other people to smile. If you are not peaceful, then you cannot contribute to the peace movement.

Green Gulch Farm Central Area



We know that our situation is very dangerous. A nuclear war can happen at any moment. Practicing meditation is to practice awareness of what is going on. Therefore, if we are awake, if we know what is going on, we will be something and do something in order for the worst not to occur. We need people who understand, who are capable of being in touch with people, and we do not have many people like that. To reconcile the conflicting parties, we have to have the capacity of understanding the suffering of both sides. If we take sides, it is impossible for us to do the work of reconciliation. And humans want to take sides. That is why the situation gets worse and worse. Are there people who are still available to both sides? That is our chance for peace. Are there people who are able to understand the sufferings being endured by both sides? These people do not need to do much. They need only to do one thing: to go to one side and tell all about the suffering endured by the other side, and to go to the other side and tell about all the suffering endured by this side. That alone can already change the situation. But how many of us are in a position [to do this]?

You know, during the war in Vietnam, there were Vietnamese who tried to do that--not to take sides, trying their best to be in touch with both sides. But that was a very dangerous thing to do and to be. This side suspects you as an agent of the other side, and the other side thinks of you as a slave of this side. You will not be surprised to learn that one poem of mine was banned by the Saigon government and also denounced by Hanoi Radio. It happens all the time.

Yesterday, I promised people in the retreat I would talk about the seven practices of reconciliation, as used during the last 2,500 years in Buddhist monasteries. I have them here. They are used to settle disputes within the circles of monks. But we might use them in our family or in our society as well.

The first method is "Face-to-Face Evidence." In a convocation of the whole sangha, everyone sits like this, very mindful, breathing, smiling, with the willingness to help, and not with the willingness to fight. This is basic. The two conflicting monks are present, and they know, they are aware of the fact that everyone in the community expects them to make peace. So before saying anything, that atmosphere should be expected, should be real already. And the people refrain from listening to stories outside of the assembly, spreading news about this monk or other monks, commenting on the behavior of this monk or the other monks, that should be forbidden. Everything should be said in the community. Face-to-face evidence.

So the two monks are sitting facing each other, like this, breathing, and--how hard--smiling. (laughter) And the members of the community will not accept any talking, and comment outside of the assembly. That would not help. Everything should be said in public, in community. Anything this monk wants to say, he says publicly and to the other monk.

The second method is "Remembrance." Both sides try to remember what happened during the whole history of the conflict, to recall every detail of the conflict, every detail of the life having to do with the conflict. And the whole assembly just sits very patiently and listens. Both monks are encouraged to do this.

"I remember that that day it was rainy, and I went to the kitchen and you were there...", telling as much as you can recall. This is quite important, because the monks are trying



*Bridge at
Green Gulch Farm*

to mend the things in the past. Because the principle of sangha life is to be aware of what is going on every day. And if you are not aware of what is going on, one day things will break apart, explode, and it will be too late to take care of it, to deal with it. So if we are in assembly and there are two monks confronting each other like this, that means already the conflict has exploded into the open. So to sit there and try to recall the details in the past is not the best thing to do, but it's the only thing to do now, as far as the past is concerned..

A man and a woman who get married and then live a neglectful life, not knowing what is really going on in their subconsciousness, their feelings, their perceptions—that is, a couple just married and not practicing meditation—is a dangerous situation. Sometimes things are going on beneath the surface which will eventually explode, but by then it is too late to deal with, so the only recourse is divorce or fighting or even killing each other. To meditate is to be aware of what is going on in yourself, your feelings, your body, your perceptions, your family. This is very important to any kind of life. So the second technique is to recall, and the more details which the community has, the easier it is to help.

The third principle is "Non-stubbornness." (laughter) It means everyone in the community is expecting the two monks not to be stubborn, to try their best for reconciliation. The outcome is not important. The fact that each monk is doing his best in order to show his willingness for reconciliation and understanding, that's more important. So when you do your best, trying to be your best in understanding and accepting, you don't have to worry about the outcome. You do your best, and that's enough. The other person will do his or her best. The atmosphere of the assembly is very important. Because everyone has high expectations for the two monks, they know they must act well or they will not be recognized as brothers.

(Bell of mindfulness, silence)

The fourth technique is very interesting--"Covering the mud with straw." You know when you walk in Green Gulch Farm after a rainy day, there is a lot of mud. You cannot go to the ocean. I tried that. (laughter) I think if I had straw to spread on the mud, I would be able to go.

One high monk, respectable monk, understanding monk is appointed to sponsor one side of the conflict, and on the other side, another high monk, respectable monk is asked to sponsor the other monk. And then the whole assembly listens to these two senior monks. They will say things in order to de-escalate the feeling in the concerned people. And you know that in a Buddhist sangha, at least in mine, people respect, have great respect for the high monks. We call them ancestral teachers. And they don't say very much, but anything they say is taken very seriously by the rest of the community. And they say something concerning this monk, and then what he says will cause the other monk to understand more and to de-escalate his feeling, his anger or his resistance. And then the other high monk also says things to protect this monk, but saying it in a way that the other monk feels better. And by doing so, by practicing so, they dissipate more and more the hard feeling in the hearts of the two monks and cause them to accept a verdict proposed by the community. So we call it putting straw on mud. The mud is the dispute. The straw is the lovingkindness of the Dharma.

The next is the "Voluntary Confession." Voluntary confession means that you try to tell your own shortcomings, not to let the others say. You have to say it first. (laughter) If the others say it, you feel different. And if you say it, it's wonderful. So first you try to say your minor weakness. Maybe you have a big weakness, first you try to hide it, and you only tell other people of a minor fault you committed. (laughter) You know there is an art in all that. And as you make a confession, "Oh, I'm sorry, on that day I was not very mindful. I said such and such a thing. That's horrible. I'm sorry." Even [though] that is a very minor confession, it helps the other [person] feel better. And then he is encouraged to confess something of the same kind. (I'm thinking of the Soviet Union and the United States of America trying to de-escalate slowly the small things.) That atmosphere is very encouraging, and everyone is expecting, supportive, so that the de-escalation will be realized throughout the meeting. And the Buddha nature in each monk has the opportunity to come out. And the pressure on each monk from the anger or resentment will lighten, and the capacity of understanding and mutual acceptance will be born. And then the old monks also say that, "Well, you are part of the community. The well-being of the community is above all, is the most important thing. Therefore don't think only of your own feeling. Think of the well-being of the community." And then each monk will be ready to make a sacrifice, and get ready to accept the kind of verdict or decision made by the community.



Green Gulch Farm

The next technique is "Decision made by consensus." It is agreed in advance that the two monks will accept whatever verdict is pronounced by the whole assembly. Otherwise, if they don't accept the decision made by the community, they will have to go and live elsewhere. This is a real democracy. Therefore, after exploring every detail of the conflict, after realizing the maximum of reconciliation, a committee will present a verdict. Asking three times, the head of the community would read the decision and say, "After meditation, after exploration, after discussion, after all efforts have been made, it is suggested that this monk will do so and so, that monk will do so and so, this should be repaired in this way, that should be repaired in that way. Would the assembly of monks accept this verdict?" First asking. And then the community remains silent. That means, "Okay." And then he repeats exactly the same thing with the same words, "Would the noble assembly accept this verdict?" And then, silence. And the third time, "Would the community accept this verdict?" And then a third time of silence. Then he pronounces, "The noble community of monks and nuns has accepted the verdict. So, please, both sides carry out the decision." And then it's the end of the session. And there can be many sessions succeeding one another in order to solve one case. If one of the two monks revolts against the verdict, his voice is of no value, because he has already agreed that he would obey any kind of verdict made by the assembly.

So these seven methods of settling disputes have been adopted by Buddhist monks and nuns in India, in China, in Vietnam, in Japan, in Korea, and in many other countries for

more than 2,500 years. And I think you can learn, we can learn, something about this in order to apply it in our social life.

Shall we practice the breathing once more before I continue? Calming, smiling, present moment, only moment.

(Bell, silence, bell)

I think we can feel very happy while practicing breathing and smiling. And the conditions are available. You can do it in a meditation hall. You can do it back home. And I suggest that in each home we have a tiny room for breathing. It's like a zendo. Because we have one room for sleeping, one room for eating, one room for cooking, why don't we have one room for breathing? And breathing is very important. I suggest that that room is decorated in a very simple way--not too bright. You don't need to have a Buddha statue. Maybe one pot of flowers will symbolize our true nature. I say that because many times I see Buddhas not representing very well relaxation, peace and happiness, because those who make Buddha statues don't practice breathing, smiling. (laughter) Be choosy when you ask a Buddha to come home. A Buddha should be smiling, happy, beautiful, for the sake of our children. If they look at the Buddha and don't feel refreshed and happy, then that is not a good statue. Also the bell, we should get a good bell so that the sound of the bell can produce a good effect on us. So we need only one bell in that room. A few cushions. If the family has five members, we have five cushions, and then we have a few for guests. From time to time, we would invite a guest to come and sit and breathe with us for five minutes, or three minutes.

I know of families where children after breakfast go into that room, sit down and breathe, in-out-one, in-out-two, in-out-three, ten times, and they go to school. Being a Buddha is a very nice way to start the day. So if adults would like the children to do it, they should do it themselves, starting the day by being a Buddha. And in that way we have the chance of not being a Mara at the end of the day. After a day of hard work we might become a Mara. Therefore we should be careful to be a Buddha in the morning and try to nourish the Buddha throughout the day. And how wonderful if you come home with a smile. The Buddha is still there. Mommy will be very glad if Daddy comes home as a Buddha. (laughter)

So, that room is important. It must be very clean--only the cushions and one small table with a pot of flowers. Children can arrange flowers in mindfulness, smiling. And then if you have a beautiful Buddha, put the Buddha on the altar. If you don't have a beautiful Buddha, wait, and have a flower instead. A flower is a Buddha. A flower has Buddha nature. And you know that your smile is also a Buddha. If you address other people with a smile, then you have to say, "You are welcome."

So every time you feel a little bit sad, or irritated, don't say anything. Just begin to breathe and slowly open the door of that room, go into it, slowly sit down, and breathe and smile for a few moments. That is a very civilized thing to do. It's beautiful to begin the day by being a Buddha and every time we feel that we are about to leave our Buddha, to go and sit until we come back to ourself. So I would suggest that each family set up such a room in the house. If we have a room for cooking, we should have a room for breathing. Breathing is very wonderful to do. The breath is the mediator between the body and the mind. The breath unites body and mind, and the breath nourishes the Buddha.

I think that if you can practice breathing, sitting, for a few minutes every morning in your home with your children, that would be marvelous. And before going to sleep, take your children out for walking meditation. Ten minutes. That would make a very big difference already. And a room for meditation, for breathing. These are things I recommend to you. I think these things will be very important. They can change our civilization.



Arnold Kotler, a student at Zen Center from 1969 to 1984, is in the process of starting a small Buddhist publishing company, Parallax Press. Its first book, *Being Peace*, is a collection of talks by Thich Nhat Hanh; it will include this lecture.

River Meditation

by Wendy Johnson

This past Fall, Thich Nhat Hanh came to Green Gulch Farm and led a retreat. He emphasized the importance of cultivating understanding as the bed for compassion. One of the practices we did was a guided meditation led by Wendy Johnson. This meditation is a practice which can lead to a sense of the interdependence of all things.

*I am the voice of Redwood Creek
running in the little streams that drain the western slopes of
Mount Tamalpais,
gathering in the waters that roar through Green Gulch Valley,
out to the Winter Sea.*

*As a river I am small, made of rain and fog
Yet my heart is old, running deep, a heart of many colors.
I have seen the coastal mountain range be born,
I have shaped this valley.
For many centuries I have watered the roots of the giant Redwood
trees of these forests:
trees that stood as saplings during the War of the Roses
trees that grew in silence on the Northwest coast of California
while Buddhist pilgrims passed from India into China,
trees that reached hundreds of feet into the vault of the night sky
while the Dalai Lama was a child in Tibet.*

*In the Summer I am forgotten,
Lost in the heart of silence...
Even the mystery of the spawning salmon may be forgotten.
Please remember, though you may not see it,
water is always moving
connecting life to life, calling out your name,
remembering and forgiving all trespassers,
All who do not follow the old songs of the River.*

*For rivers cannot be polluted;
water is not changed.
Along Redwood Creek there are farm lands;
here, chemicals are spread on the soil, then carried by rain
into my waters.
Pollutants are added to my water
yet water itself cannot be polluted.
This is the voice of the River.
All atoms in all worlds
do not exchange places.*

*One day last autumn
Jose Gonzales from Jalisco Province
crossed Redwood Creek.
He was looking for work on a farm along my shores...*

*He worked hard all day, planting Irises until dusk
and then was sent along, just as night fell.
In the darkness he walked along my streambed,
following the roll of waters,
until he was no longer afraid.*

*In the night Jose saw the lights of Green Gulch,
riding like a ship on the harbor of the valley.
Idilio met him, found him clothes, food and a place to sleep.
All night Jose heard the river water, flowing in darkness:
At daybreak he was gone.*

*I ask each of you, for the sake of your Rivers:
work hard to develop compassion and understanding.
Be alert,
Listen to the waters.
We run in the blood and tears, breath and waters of your own body--
We can understand one another.*



Redwood Creek



Wendy Johnson is head of the Green Gulch Garden, a Zen Center Board member, and a lay practice leader.

SCHEDULE

	SAN FRANCISCO	GREEN GULCH
ZAZEN AND SERVICE	MONDAY through FRIDAY: 5 - 7:10 a.m. (2 zazen periods & service) 5:30 - 6:30 p.m. (1 zazen period & service)	MONDAY through FRIDAY: 5 - 7 a.m. (2 zazen periods & service) 5 - 6 p.m. (zazen & service) 8 p.m. (zazen only)
	SATURDAY: 5 - 7:10 a.m. (2 zazen periods & service) 9:10 - 9:50 a.m. (zazen only) SUNDAY: No schedule	SATURDAY: 7 - 8 a.m. (zazen & service) SUNDAY: 6 - 7 a.m. (zazen & service) 9:25 (two zazen periods & service)
LECTURE	SATURDAY: 10 a.m.	SUNDAY: 10:15 a.m.
SESSHINS	ONE-DAY SITTINGS: usually in first weekend of each month except during months in which a 7-day sesshin is scheduled. SEVEN-DAY SESSHINS: usually in June, September and October. <i>(Please phone to confirm)</i>	ONE-DAY SITTINGS: usually on third Saturday of each month except during months in which a 7-day sesshin is scheduled. SEVEN-DAY SESSHINS: usually in April and August. <i>(Please phone to confirm)</i>
ZAZEN INSTRUCTION	SATURDAY: 8:30 a.m.	SUNDAY: 8:45 a.m.
ZEN MOUNTAIN CENTER September 12-13: Zenshinji Alumni Weekend Fall Practice Period: September 18: Tangaryo December 17: Practice Period ends		

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