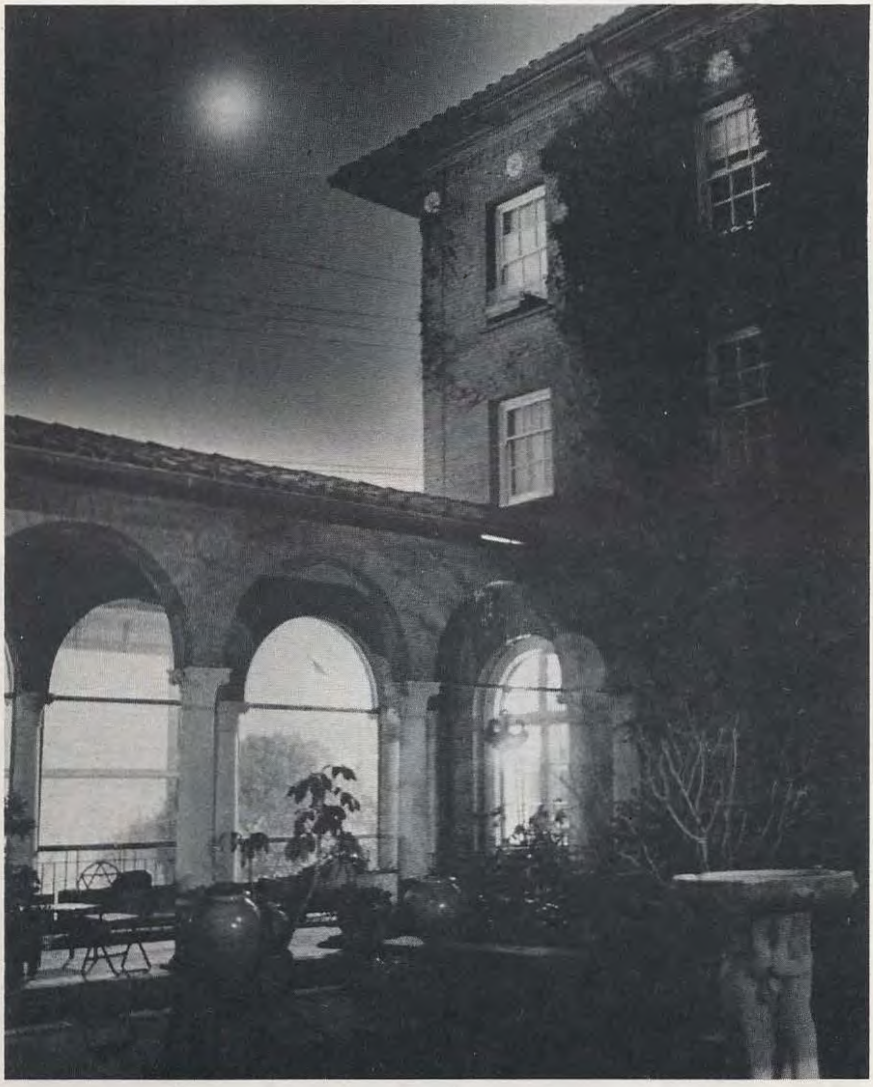
Wind Bell



PUBLICATION OF ZEN CENTER
VOLUME XIX, NUMBER 1 — SUMMER 1985

CONTENTS

FEATURES

ZEN CENTER NEWS

LECTURES

Buddhist statue in Japanese Tea Gardens, Golden Gate Park, San Francisco

Full Moon Ceremony at Green Gulch Farm. 1985

FULL MOON BODHISATTVA CEREMONY

The Uposatha ceremony which follows is very old. It has its roots in pre-Buddhist India. On the new and full moon, the whole Sangha, wandering ascetics and householders, would gather to recite the precepts and rules of conduct. It was an occasion on which the Buddhist community could join together to formally recite their vows, their deep intention to practice the Buddha Way. The ceremony traveled to China, Tibet, Korea and Japan where it is still performed today. The style and pattern of chanting in the ceremony is from the very early Indian tradition.

At Zen Center in 1970 we began chanting it on full moons at Tassajara. Since January, 1974, we have performed the ceremony at Green Gulch Farm and at the City Center as well. In the ceremony, the chanting is led by one person, who recites each line so that it can be repeated by the rest of the participants, while a second person sounds a large and a small bell to signal the time to bow and to set the pace of the chanting.

THE BODHISATTVA CEREMONY

Repentence

(repeated three times)

All my ancient twisted karma
from beginningless greed, hate, and delusion
born through body, speech, and mind
I now fully avow.

Homage to Buddhas and Ancestors

(repeated three times)

Homage to the seven Buddhas before Buddha
Homage to Shakyamuni Buddha
Homage to Maitreya Buddha
Homage to Manjusri bodhisattva
Homage to Samantabhadra bodhisattva
Homage to Avalokitesvara bodhisattva
Homage to the succession of patriarchs

The Four Vows

(repeated three times)

Beings are without end, I vow to save them.
Delusions are inexhaustible, I vow to end them.
The Dharma gate is endless, I vow to enter it.
Buddha's Way is unsurpassable, I vow to become it.

The Three Refuges

(chant leader) I take refuge in the Buddha

(group response)

Before all being,
Immersing body and mind deeply in the way,
Awakening true mind.

(chant leader) I take refuge in the Dharma

(group response)

Before all being,
Entering deeply the merciful ocean
Of Buddha's Way.

(chant leader) I take refuge in the Sangha

(group response)

Before all being,
Bringing harmony to everyone,
Free from hindrance.

The Offering

(priest chants one time)

On this full moon night
we offer the merit of the Bodhisattva's Way,
through every world system
and to the unconditioned nature of all being.

Dedication

(Congregation chants together)

All Buddhas, ten directions, three times,
All beings, Bodhisattvas, Mahasattvas,
Wisdom beyond wisdom, Maha Prajna Paramita.

Reading list for the Bodhisattva Ceremony

Dutt, S. **Buddhist Monks and Monasteries in India,** Allen & Unwin, 1962. Pp. 68-74 on the function of the Patimokkha in the monastic community in India.

Prebish, Charles S. **Buddhist Monastic Discipline.** Penn. State U., 1975. Pp. 17-28 on ritualization of the Pratimoksa. Discussion of the possible roots of the word "pratimoksa," description of the development of the uposatha ceremony. Pp. 42-113 present two different Pratimoksa texts.

Warren, Henry Clarke. **Buddhism in Translations.** Atheneum, 1963. Pp. 402-405 on the Buddhist Confession of Priests (from the Maha-Vagga). Pp. 405-410 have a description of the recitation of the Patimokkha in a monastery in Anuradhapura in 1875.

Welch, Holmes. **Buddhism Under Mao.** Harvard, 1972. Pp. 128-130 has a discussion of the vinaya rules and the uposatha ceremony in Chinese monasteries in the 1950's.

LAMA GOVINDA

Lama Govinda wrote the following piece shortly before he died in January, 1985. The article was originally written as a possible introduction to a proposed book on Buddhism by another author. The piece includes many of Lama's thoughts about Buddhism as he understood it at the end of his long life of study and practice of the Buddha's teachings. Lama's interest in Buddhism began when he was sixteen years old; our next issue will contain more about his life.

ON RIGHT TRANSLATION OF BUDDHIST TERMS

Religion is a form of experience, or more correctly, an expression of life (Erlebnis). Therefore a philologically objective and correct translation is not sufficient to express the essentials of a religion. Religion is a subjective experience which becomes foreign to life if we make it into an object of intellectual observation and judgment. This does not deny that religion also has its objective aspect, but any interpretation by outsiders who belong to a different cultural background is the result of a more or less subjective attitude. And this is all the more the case when they deal with word-symbols of a foreign and probably ancient language, which, like all verbal expressions, contain not only facts, but also feelings that are closely connected with other experiences and associations, which we can detect only in poetry. Therefore it requires an extraordinary degree of sensitivity to translate ancient religious literature without identifying ourselves with the contents and the tradition of a still living religious experience. Unfortunately, this sensitivity is lacking with most translators and interpreters.

Each religion is the mirror of, and the psychological condition in which, a particular part of humanity grew up. It is not a question of what is higher or lower. Important alone is what corresponds to our various states of consciousness. Before we think ourselves in a position to judge, we first should regard all forms of religious experience with respect and we should endeavour to understand them. This is the foundation of all tolerance. The Buddha in his admonition to the Kalamas has clearly outlined what he meant by tolerance. He was the first world-teacher who made this one of the main pillars of his message.

At the same time, we have to be conscious that every religion is subject to constant change, growth, and expansion, and to constant re-evaluation of all its values. When this process comes to an end, religion becomes dogma, philosophy becomes scholasticism, and scholasticism becomes mere tradition from which all life has fled. But if we recognize religion as a living organism, we must try to understand the necessary phases of its development which are the result of its growth.

The beginnings of Buddhism differ from those of all other religions because these beginnings were not based on revelation, or on an existing form of recognized religion, but on a general human experience. The Buddha was not interested in what people believed, or what they thought probable, but in what they did in order to relieve others' suffering as well as their own, and to find a path toward

peace and happiness. He was not a reformer of Vedic tradition, as scholars at one time assumed. Instead, he rejected the main pillars of the Vedic religion, which was based on animal sacrifices and caste distinctions, rather than upon the recognition of ethical values, such as the sacredness of life (ahimsa) and the dignity and self-responsibility of all men, irrespective of their caste (varna) or the color of their skin.

The roots of early Buddhism are therefore not in the Vedic-Brahmanic tradition, but, rather, in the tradition of the Sramanas who remained outside the social order and were known as wandering ascetics who sought for truth and for deliverance from the bonds of religious institutions. The Buddha was known to his contemporaries, and to the following generation, as Mahasramana (Pali: Mahasamana), which explains his reluctance to create a monastic institution with permanent dwelling places and administrative rules and regulations, places of worship and study, etc. But, as his community of followers grew, this institutionalizing became inevitable, and he finally gave in to the requests of his disciples. Just as the Jains did, he also maintained that he belonged to an ancient (pre-vedic) tradition, which continued to survive as an undercurrent, even during the overlordship of the Aryan invaders from the north who had conquered the greater part of India and had created the caste system in order to preserve their superiority.

Concepts like karma, causality, and rebirth, as well as ahimsa (non-violence), and karuna (compassion), concepts which we now think of as "Hinduism," were unknown to the Vedas and were introduced much later under the influence of Buddhism and Jainism. In fact, the word "Hindu" was coined by the Arab scholar and explorer Alberuni as a collective term for all the people beyond the river Sind (Indus). It therefore is wrong to maintain that Buddhism was derived from Hinduism. In fact, the opposite is the case! But it is difficult to overthrow this popular prejudice because previous generations of scholars regarded the Vedic religion as the foundation of all Indian tradition.

After having considered the philological foundations of the Buddhist teachings, it is time to explore the psychological and religious origins and motivations of Buddhism. The Buddha did not demand blind faith from his followers, but rather sincere effort and a selfless life for the sake of the happiness of all living beings, as well as for oneself. His teaching encouraged people "to come and see for yourself!" Open your eyes to the realities of life, be honest with yourself and do not try merely to escape suffering. Instead, try to overcome it within yourself where you will find its origins. What you believe is not important, but what you do is. You are inheritors of your deeds, thoughts, and intentions. In fact, thoughts and intentions are more important than the physical outcome of your deeds. Thoughts and intentions belong to you more than what you call your possessions.

Therefore it is said: "This six cubit body contains the origin and the dissolution of the world." The Buddha did not intend to promulgate a theory about the universe; he wanted, instead, to point out that the only world we can observe and influence is that of our own body in both its physical aspect and as a spiritual organism. He was aware that the functions of our body and our consciousness are not arbitrary phenomena, but follow universal laws, although they may be modified by our attitudes.

In the tantrism of the Vajrayana, we find this idea in an even more pronounced form when it is said that our body not only mirrors the universe, but that it is our ultimate body. Here the realm of consciousness and intuition turns into the realisation of a higher dimension in which we take part when our mind has transcended the limits of the three dimensional world.

Therefore it is said, according to the oldest Buddhist tradition: "Well proclaimed is the law (dharma) by the Enlightened One, visible to all, timeless, profound, comprehensible only to the wise." It

is a significant and characteristic feature of Buddhism that it emphasizes the value of seeing, of direct perception, as a means of intuitive knowledge. While "ditthi," in the sense of "opinions," is to be shunned, "samma ditthi," complete or perfect seeing (not merely a partial or one-sided vision) is the way to the highest realization. In the same way, "dhyana" (jhana) is not what some people explain as "trance"; in fact, it is visualization as a means of direct perception, as opposed to "thinking and reflecting" (vitarka-vicara). The Buddha is never represented with closed eyes. Meditation is not "mystic trance," or aimless speculation, or mushy thinking. Buddhism is based on clarity of mind and thought. Tantric visualization demands clear definition, but not "visionary hallucinations," as modern mystics are apt to believe.

The simplicity of the Buddha's words and of the formulations of early Buddhism confounds the overly intellectual and is comprehensible only to the wise man who has rediscovered his inner unity. However, before we have rediscovered this unity, we follow blindly the all-pervasive force of life, which in itself is neither good nor bad, but which may become one or the other according to our attitude. It is the immanent force of our consciousness which carries us beyond the limitations of our individuality or separateness.

Therefore the first link of the Pratityasamutpada is "avidya," ignorance of the conditions of our all-relatedness, in which nothing can be regarded as separate, or absolute, without relationship to everything else. This ignoring of reality has nothing to do with "stupidity" or lack of intelligence, as has often been assumed, for we are not concerned here with intellectual knowledge, but with subconscious formations (sankhara) which precede the awakening of normal human consciousness (vijnana) in which we do not yet realize our position in the world, but assume ourselves to be different, thus splitting the world into subject and object, mind and matter (nama-rupa), self and others. Out of the dualism arises the further split into the six realms of consciousness (sadayatana), on account of which contact (sparsa) of the senses with their objects becomes possible. On this basis arise feelings (vedana), craving (trsna) (literally "thirst"), clinging or the urge to possess (upadana), which, in turn, results in the further process of becoming (bhava), birth (jati), old age and death (jara-marana).

The only link of this chain of cause and effect (or in this concatenation of events) which we are able to influence or direct is our consciousness (vijnana), and this enables us to become conscious of ourselves and of our relationship to the world in general, and

of our attitude towards all living beings. That, however, is why the Buddha stresses the importance of meditation, which is the realization of all-encompassing love, compassion, sympathy (sharing the happiness of others) and equanimity (maitri, karuna, mudita, and upeksha). The latter has been defined as the faculty of being able to define one's own suffering as unimportant, but it does not mean showing indifference towards the suffering of others. According to the Pali scriptures, upeksha is defined as "mental balance" (tatramajjhattata).

Pratityasamutpada is to be understood not only as a causal nexus, but also as a simultaneously arising concatenation of events which may be conceived either as a successive development in time or as a timeless principle of interrelated conditions. The Buddha opposed neither logical thinking nor the principle of synchronicity, but recognized both ways of thinking, as we can see from the many forms in which he referred to pratityasamutpada in his discourses, sometimes leaving out several of the consecutive links. This also corresponds to the literal meaning of the word itself, which is "dependent" (causal) and "simultaneous arising" (sam-utpada). Under this latter aspect, even the term "akaliko" ("timeless" or "synchronic") becomes plausible, and we understand the Buddha's exhortation when Ananda thought the formula of Dependent Origination was a matter of simple understanding and mere common sense without any deeper meaning.

As long as we are on the level of human thinking, the Buddha maintains the rules of logic. But he knows that the deepest aspects of reality are timeless, and he refuses to give in to any metaphysical speculation, so that even concepts like nirvana and karma lose their metaphysical connotation and, within the structure of Buddhist psychology, are reduced to their original meaning. By popularization of these concepts, nirvana has become a purely quietistic ideal, implying one's "dissolution into the All"; but the Buddha, by contrast, gives us a clear psychological definition, namely, the absence of greed, hatred, and infatuation. Karma is not an unqualified fatalism, in which every action and every happening becomes a fetter which binds us to our past. According to Buddhist understanding, karma means "deed," "action," in the sense of an intentional act with a fully conscious resolve (cetana), which creates our pattern of repeating our behavior when similar circumstances arise again.

The Lankavatara Sutra describes this tendency as "habit-energy," the force of habit, the tendency to repeat the same action automatically unless new motivation has been created, as happens when there is a complete "turning about in the deepest seat of our con-

sciousness." If such a thing were not possible, no liberation would be thinkable. Therefore, the Buddha calls conversion (or the reversal of our will due to honest conviction) the only miracle that deserves the name.

In the same way, he also freed the concept of egohood (or the "I") from being an eternal, unchangeable principle, and considered it to be, instead, a psychological point of reference of the individual consciousness which changes continually according to prevailing circumstances. This inner point of relationship is the necessary precondition for every kind of balanced consciousness and every reasonable action. However, if this so-called "I" becomes an independent and automatically acting principle of uninhibited self assertion, it turns into a cancerous growth which destroys the very organism that it intended to support.

Even if Buddhist psychology rejects the concept of a soul-monad, in the popular sense, it nevertheless emphasizes all that we understand under the word "psyche," that is, all the spiritual and psychic forces of man which make us human beings. Buddhism is not the teaching of "soullessness," but of solidarity and compassion with all living beings, as expressed in the "divine states" (brahmavihara) of meditation.

Nowadays it has become a fashion, even in Buddhist circles, to translate the word "maitri" (Pali: metta) by "friendship," in order to exclude any connection with sex. The latter seems to have become an obsession due to the overemphasizing of this quality, and the tendency of most modern religions to outlaw sexuality. Instead of it being understood that love is a matter of the heart and not of reason or of cold calculation, and that love is a matter of inner sharing and of intimate relationship which involves the whole of our being and goes far beyond a mere friendship or a mere well-wishing, the word maitri has been robbed of its original meaning and has been replaced with a colorless (morally disinfected) expression. The Buddhist definition of "maitri" is:

> "Just as a mother protects her child with her own life,
> in a similar way we should extend an unlimited heart to
> all beings."

Just as "love" has been purged from the Buddhist vocabulary, the word "sankhara" has become the source of misunderstandings and has turned Buddhism into dark pessimism. In this connection even the Dhammapada, the most popular Buddhist scripture, which has been translated into all the major languages of the world, has frequently been quoted as saying: "All is transiency, all is sorrow, all is unreal." The text says: "Sabbe sankhara anicca, Sabbe sankhara dukkha, Sabbe dhamma anatta."

First of all, "Sabbe sankhara" is not "all," or "the whole world," but only our subconscious formations or latent tendencies (conditioned by our past), and, secondly, the original Pali text makes it clear in the third line that all that is real in the ultimate sense (dhamma) is "non-ego". So, the word "anatta" (non-ego or not-self) has simply been omitted (!) and the original meaning of the text has been supplanted by the opinion of the translator (or that of the Upanishads, which were at one time thought by some to be the origin of the opinion of the Buddha). On the basis of such "translations" the whole of Buddhism has been misinterpreted. Finally, under the influence of Schopenhauer's philosophy, to which most of the early interpreters of Buddhism succumbed, the teachings of the Buddha were made into plain pessimism.

But in the same Dhammapada which we quoted above we find verses in the "Canto of Happiness" which give quite a different picture, one which shows us that the ancient Buddhists did not feel that their attitude had anything to do with pessimism:

> "Let us be free from hatred and let us live happily among
> those who hate. Among men filled with hatred, let us live
> free from hatred." (Dhp. 197)

Here it becomes abundantly clear that it is not impermanence which is the root cause of suffering, but greed, hatred and delusion. These three factors make us imagine that we can hold on forever to what we regard as our ego or our mortal "I." Therefore it is said in the same chapter of the Dhammapada:

> "Let us live happily, we who call nothing our own. Let us be like the shining gods (abhassara), who are nourished on joy (or 'inspiration': piti)."

To make this exhortation even more justified, each of the above-mentioned root causes of our suffering is followed by the words:

> "He who perceives this with a clear mind (or with 'insight') will be freed from all suffering. This is the way of purity."

But even this important statement has been spoiled by some translators who have thought fit to replace the word "nibbindati" by the notion that we should get "fed up" with suffering, instead of overcoming it as the Buddha intended.

How little we can trust even our philologically correct translations becomes evident when we consider such words as "shunyata," "Siddha," "siddhi," etc. The philological equivalent of "shunyata" is "emptiness." However, this is not identical with "nothingness," as has been frequently thought. "No-thingness" would perhaps be more adequate. Emptiness as such is unthinkable. Even what we call a vacuum does not exclude radiations of various forces like magnetism, gravity, light, etc.; it only excludes air, or any other known form of gas.

So, if we speak of emptiness, the question arises: "empty of what?" Buddhism answers: "empty of all designations or preconceived conditions and, therefore, a state of infinite potentiality or primal space." It was this idea which inspired Nagarjuna's philosophy and the subsequent growth of the movement of the Great Vehicle or Great Way (Mahayana), which freed Buddhism from a narrow orthodoxy of purely monkish institutions and opened the way for a universal fellowship comprised of men and women, monks and laymen, scholars and poets, artists and common folk. If this were not the true meaning of emptiness, how could we explain how an abstract and apparently negative term like shunyata could inspire millions of people of many races and carry Buddhism into the farthest reaches of Asia?

Something similar happened with the teachings of the Siddhas, the medieval Buddhist mystics, who lived between the sixth and the tenth centuries, who rejected any kind of orthodoxy. They were poets and

philosophers, monks and laymen, princes and commoners, workers and wandering ascetics, Brahmins and outcasts. They did not recognize social conventions and used the common language in preference to Sanskrit.

Fortunately, the tales of the Siddhas became part of the religious tradition of Tibet and have been preserved in faithful Tibetan translations. The aim of the Siddhas was a realization, which would be attainable by a religious life even under the most unfavorable conditions, thereby allowing any occupation to become the means to perfection. For this reason the Siddhas were called the "Perfect Ones." Grunwedel's first translation of the Siddha stories never seems to have reached the wider public, probably because of his misleading title, which introduced the Siddhas as the eighty-four "sorcerers." Yet he would not have called Buddha, or Christ, a sorcerer, in spite of the fact that many miracles are ascribed to the latter. It is strange that everything which does not correspond to something in a translator's or interpreter's own cultural background is usually represented by him as being from a culture of a lower order.

In the same way, the Buddhist mystery plays have consistently been represented as "Devil Dances," and even the images of Dhyani-Buddhas, which depict the Buddha as the supreme physician, are labelled as "Medicine Buddhas," which creates the impression that we are dealing with something like the "medicine men" of some primitive African tribes.

The Buddha compared himself to a physician and formulated his doctrine as a diagnosis of human suffering, in which the first of his "Noble Truths" represented a fundamental analysis of universal suffering, the second the cause of suffering, the third the remedy of our ills, and the fourth the practical way to apply the remedy. So the Buddha was not only a physician of bodily ailments, but a healer (German: "Heiland," i.e., a "savior") of all human suffering.

In the same way we have to understand that rebirth in Buddhism has a completely different meaning from what is commonly known as the "transmigration of souls." It would be more correct to speak of a continuous transformation of psychic forces, even beyond the destruction of our material body. The same forces that built up our former body, and all its mental and spiritual faculties, now create a new body, freed from all accretions and superfluous accumulations, transferring the flame of life to the germ of a new organism that now develops according to the impulse and the direction given by the character of the past incarnation.

It is like lighting a lamp from another one. The flame does not wander from one lamp to another, by disappearing here and reappearing somewhere else: it merely transfers the impetus or impulse from one source of energy to another. The only difference is that the flame does not transfer the quality of the material on which the flame feeds, but only the heat that is necessary to ignite the new material. But as no simile is perfect, and shows only one particular side of the process one wants to illuminate, we have to bear in mind that our psychic forces are complex, and, at the same time, dependent on our past experiences and our present character, so that the impetus expresses not just the initial direction of our life force, but its qualities as well.

When the wise Nagasena was asked by King Menandros whether or not the person who is reborn is the same person who died in his previous existence, Nagasena replied, "na ca so, na ca anno," "neither the same, nor another one." This is because (as Heraclitos said) "we do not enter the same river twice": not only is the river a differ-

ent one in each moment, but also we ourselves are not the same in two consecutive moments. As the river flows constantly, so do we ourselves. The newly born child is not the same as the grownup person, though the grownup person has become what he is due to his childhood. Identity is one of those abstractions on which we build our logic and all our statistical values, which are merely simplifications, without which no science can exist.

But have we ever seen two identical trees or two absolutely identical human beings or animals? The relationship between childhood and old age rests not on the identity of the person concerned, but on the dependent origination of perpetually changing conditions of life which develop in the direction of their growth.

Man may strive after the blissful state of being, but just because he is striving, he is in the process of becoming. Only when he is capable of releasing the fullness of his being can he transcend the state of becoming. Therefore, the Buddha emphasizes the process of becoming as the law of all life, and the Buddhist psychology speaks of the "bhavanga-sota," the stream of becoming.

The Lankavatara Sutra likewise declares:

> "There is a constant stream of becoming, a momentary and uninterrupted change from one state of appearance to another."[1]
>
> "Things are not eternal, because the marks of individuality appear and disappear, that is, the marks of self-nature are characterized by (what we call) noneternality. On the other hand, because things are unborn and are only mind-made, they are in a deep sense eternal."[2]

The overcoming of suffering was the main object of the Buddha's teaching, and the way to achieve this is the Noble Eightfold Path. But here arises the question: have we to understand this as a way of eight steps, of which each one is higher than the previous one, or as a way that is broad enough to accomodate eight individual paths side by side? Most people prefer the idea of a flight of steps. But how is one then to explain that the first step already presupposes the last and highest step? How can one, without deeper insight into the nature of the world, achieve an impartial (not ego-conditioned) "right view" (samyag drishti), in order to make the right resolve (samyak samkalpa) that leads to ethical behavior

---

[1]Translated by D.T. Suzuki and quoted by Dwight Goddard in his Buddhist Bible, Thedford, Vermont, 1938, p. 296.

[2]Ibid., p. 295.

in words, deeds and livelihood (samyak vak, s. karmanta, s. ajiva), resulting in "right effort and mindfulness" (samyak vyayama, samyak smriti) and culminates in the perfect realization of samadhi?

The word "samyak" (Pali: "samma," Tibetan: "yang-dag"), which generally is rendered as "right," has a far greater importance than that. This is because "right" and "wrong" are relative concepts, which depend merely on the view point of the observer, but have no value in themselves: what appears right to one person may be wrong to another. But "samyak" has a much deeper and wider meaning. It signifies a state of mind in which our whole being is involved and united.

Would it not be better to translate this word according to its original meaning, as it is revealed by the language which was used in the time in which the teaching of the Buddha was remembered and committed to writing? The term "Samyaksambuddha" shows us that the word "right" does not fit into the context, for the Buddha is not a "rightly" Enlightened One, but, rather, a perfectly or completely Enlightened One. This is also confirmed by the Tibetan translation of "samyak" as "yang-dag," which implies the idea of the Middle Way, avoiding all extremes, being unprejudiced and open minded.

It is this attitude of the Buddha which became the foundation of his teaching and which is represented as the highest step of the

Eightfold Path: samadhi. It is the complete unification and integration of our being. In order to achieve this we must first attain a perfect unity of all our psychic faculties. And if we have thus established harmony within ourselves, we have to course the Eightfold Path on ever ascending higher planes of experience and realization.

In order to comprehend this we have to have a clear conception of the last steps of the Eightfold Path, namely, wholehearted mindfulness and complete one-pointedness of purpose. All these qualities have concentration as their root. But "samadhi" is much more than simple concentration. Every bank clerk has to have perfect concentration, but that does not mean that he is a saint. In the same way, "samadhi" is not just a state of tranquility, hypnosis, deep sleep, or a self-induced trance.

In the West, the words "concentration," "contemplation" and "meditation" have become almost synonymous. But there is a vast difference in the terminology of Buddhism. Effort is the one-pointed exertion of the will to abstain from harming others and to promote all that which is beneficial to others and to ourselves. Contemplation is the attentive observation of our thoughts and the mental visualisation of our aims. Samadhi, however, is more than what is commonly regarded as meditation, in the sense of intellectual activity, or thinking and reflecting on a given subject. It is the integration of subject and object, the becoming one of the meditator and the object of his meditation.

However, one thing remains the common basis for all these steps: they are characterized by the word "samyak," which means that we are to employ all psychic and spiritual faculties. They consist not only of merely moral and intellectual motives, but are the expression of a well balanced mind, undisturbed by momentary intentions and expectatiions. They are the expression of our innermost convictions. Samyak excludes any kind of one-sidedness.

"Samyag Drishti," therefore, signifies more than what is commonly called "right views," or the acceptance of a certain set of recognized religious ideas. It means a perfectly open, unprejudiced attitude, which enables us to "see things as they are" (yatna-bhutam), i.e., not only from one side (and especially not from our own!), but from all sides, without bias, without suppressing what appears to us disagreeable. Instead of closing our eyes to all that creates suffering for ourselves and others, we have to recognize its cause. And if we realize that this cause lies also in ourselves, we shall be able to transcend it.

However, he who tries to close his eyes to this fact due to indifference, or so-called "detachment" (in the sense of cutting oneself off from all human emotions), misses the very essence of the Buddha's message. Detachment means non-possessiveness, but not callousness. The selfless but warm love which is able to share the joys and sufferings of others is what the Buddha calls "cetovimukti" and the "liberation of the heart" and the realisation of wisdom (prajna vimukti).

The illustrations for this article are drawings by Lama Govinda based on Tibetan originals.

ZEN CENTER NEWS

ELECTION OF NEW ZEN CENTER BOARD OF DIRECTORS

In an effort to make Zen Center more answerable to the needs and desires of its membership, the Board of Directors decided to resign and to ask the members to elect a new Board from a list of candidates who had been members of Zen Center for five or more years who expressed a willingness to serve. The election took place in October, 1984, and the new Board met for the first time on November 27, 1984. The following people were those chosen by the vote of the membership:

Marc Alexander* (1-year term)
Layla Bockhorst (3-year term)
Tom Cabarga (2-year term)
Linda Ruth Cutts* (2-year term)
Ananda Dalenberg* (1-year term)
Issan Dorsey (1-year term)
Emila Heller (2-year term)
Wendy Johnson (3-year term)
Gib Robinson (1-year term)
Paul Rosenblum (1-year term)
Ken Sawyer (3-year term)
Steve Weintraub* (2-year term)
Mel Weitsman* (3-year term)

(*indicates a former Board member returned by the voters)

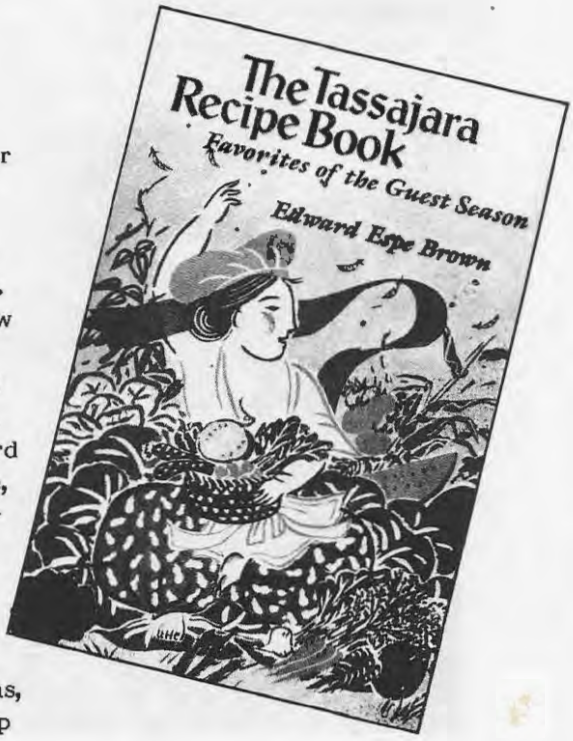
Meeting of the newly elected Zen Center Board

The length of the term the Board members will be serving was determined by the number of votes they received in the election. About 175 people, out of approximately 240 eligible voters, cast their ballots in each of the two elections.

Last spring the Zen Center Board invited Dainin Katagiri-roshi of the Minneapolis Zen Meditation Center to be Abbot of Zen Center for one year. Roshi spent two months with us this past summer working, teaching, and sitting with us at Green Gulch and the City Center. Recently he finished leading the winter practice period at Tassajara Zen Mountain Center.

The Zen Center Board, in accordance with the recommendation of Katagiri-roshi and Tenshin Reb Anderson, the assistant abbot, has decided to set aside the discussion of the question of who shall be abbot of Zen Center for a period of six months. We are grateful for Katagiri-roshi's ongoing teaching and support.

PUBLICATION OF TASSAJARA RECIPE BOOK



Ed Brown has completed another cook book which continues the tradition of attentive care to the preparation of food that is satisfying to our body and mind. Published by Shambhala, the new book will be available in June and contains about one hundred favorite recipes from Tassajara guest seasons and has a foreword by Alice Waters of Chez Panisse, the famous restaurant in Berkeley, California. What follows are some brief selections from the new book.

"While sitting quietly, a cook might visualize how the food was, how it could be, and how to keep composed in the midst of cooking,

how to be unfazed, non-frazzled, not fried. Entering a universe of imagined tastes and smells where dreams speak to the tongue, a cook might roam and wander to return at last to the fresh, inspiring taste of mountain air."

Food is not matter
but the heart of matter,
the flesh and blood of
rock and water, earth and sun.

Food is not a commodity
which price can capture,
but exacting effort,
carefully sustained,
the life work of countless
beings.

With this cooking I enter
the heart of matter,
I enter the intimate activity
which makes dreams materialize.

Fruit Soup

This is one of the most requested recipes of the guest season. At midday in the hot, dry Tassajara Valley, cold fruit soup is deliciously refreshing, always a pleasure. A variety of fruit juices and pureed fruits make up the base with cut fruit added to bob and float and appear at the bottom. Simple...and the possibilities are endless, so experiment with what's in season, what's on hand, and what's on mind. Don't be overwhelmed by the number of ingredients. Doing something simpler could well turn out elegantly.

Makes about 8 cups

Stock:

1 cup cranberry juice
1 cup apple juice
1/2 cup orange juice
1/2 cup coarse-cut seeded watermelon, blended
1/2 cup strawberries, blended
1/2 cup coarse-cut peaches, blended
1 cup bananas, blended
3/8 cup lemon or lime juice

Optional:
1/4-1/2 cup white or red wine, sake, or champagne
fresh mint leaves blended in with the fruit
1/4 teaspoon cinnamon
1/8 teaspoon cardamom

Cut fruit:

1/2 cup strawberry halves
1/2 cup watermelon chunks
1/2 cup seedless grapes
1/2 cup peach slices, halved
1/2 cup pineapple chunks
1/2 cup cantaloupe balls/chunks
1/2 cup honeydew balls/chunks

Combine ingredients for the liquid base, adding optional ingredients to taste. If possible start early, as the flavors improve as the concoction sits.

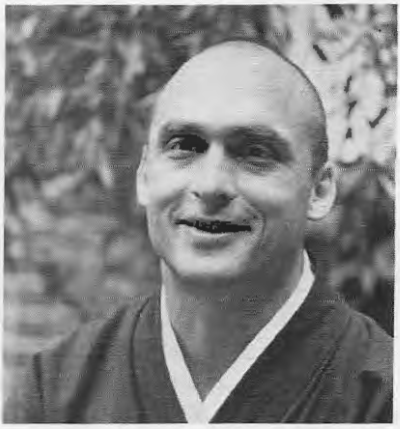
Add the cut fruit.

After making melon balls, any melon remnants can also be pureed.

The truth is you're already a cook.
Nobody teaches you anything,
but you can be touched, you can be awakened.
Put down the book and start asking,
"What have we here?"

Though recipes abound, for soups and salads,
breads and entrees, for getting enlightened
and perfecting the moment, still
the unique flavor of Reality
appears in each breath, each bite,
each step, unbounded and undirected.

Each thing just as it is,
What do you make of it?



Ed Brown

REBUILDING THE TASSAJARA BATH HOUSE—AN UPDATE

In the past twelve months we have developed the plans for the reconstruction of the Tassajara Bath House and have raised $110,000 towards the total anticipated cost of $175,000. If we raise the remaining $65,000 by September 1, 1985, we will begin reconstruction this Fall and the Bath House will be ready for Summer, 1986.

The design for the new building is modest but beautiful, maintaining the simple and informal feeling that seems fitting for Tassajara. The floor plan remains basically the same. Long requested shower facilities for both men and women will be added. Deck areas are to be extended; plunges, tubs, and floors will be tiled to provide a durable finish. The new peaked roofs will allow more light and air into the dressing and bathing rooms. Plunges will have built-in seating for a more relaxing soak. The reservoir and hot water system will be insulated to improve the hot water supply, and temperature regulators will be installed for the plunges.

The reconstructed building will be open to the air and the mountains, creating an informal feeling. We have found an unglazed tile for the floors that is remarkably similar to the Tassajara granite. The tile in the plunges will also complement the soft granite colors. Port Orford Cedar will be used for the trusses spanning the front and back walls, and the walls themselves will be white stucco. Kerosene lamps will continue to provide lighting for the building.

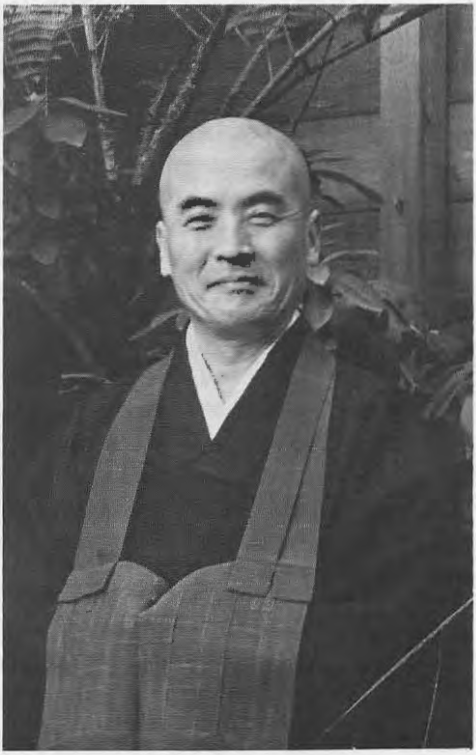
Architectural rendering of Bath House remodeling by Vicki Austin

The Bath House design is by Mui Ho, who practices in Berkeley and teaches at the U.C.-Berkeley Department of Architecture. She is co-founder of the Organization for Women Architects and has done extensive work for the Chinatown Community Housing Corporation in San Francisco. Engineering is by Geoffrey Barrett, of Mill Valley, a long-time friend of Zen Center and Tassajara summer guest. Construction of the building will be directed by Gene de Smidt and Peter van der Sterre. All of these people have worked with a design committee of Zen Center members who have, themselves, spent many summers and winters at Tassajara.

A Bath House Building Fund Committee, chaired by William W. Sterling, has been established to help raise the $65,000 still needed to begin the project. A fundraising letter to Tassajara guests and donors was sent out at the end of April, and a Bath benefit dinner and wine tasting is planned for Sunday, June 16th, at Greens restaurant. This year, again, we are offering the Tassajara Yukata (Bath Robe) designed by Mayumi Oda for sale by mail; proceeds go to the Bath House fund.

If you would like to help us finance the reconstruction of the Tassajara Bath House, you may send a tax-deductible contribution to the Tassajara Bath House Fund.

LECTURES



TRUE HEART: Raising the Banner of Truth
by Dainin Katagiri-roshi
Tassajara, March 20, 1985

When Nan-yueh ch'an shih (ch'an shih: Jap. "zenji") was practicing under his teacher, his teacher asked him, "From where do you come?" Nan-yueh ch'an shih said, "I come from Mt. Sung." His teacher said, "What is it that thus comes?" Nan-yueh ch'an shih didn't know the

answer, so for eight long years he pondered this question. Then one day it dawned on him, "Even to say it is something, doesn't hit the mark."

I think this is very important. Every day, in every activity we have to think, "What is it that thus comes?" What comes? What comes with what reason? What comes for what? Who comes with what reason? This is a big koan we have to meet day in and day out--otherwise, it's pretty hard to keep our boat on the right course. We slip off course immediately. We make a detour, moment after moment. "What is it that thus comes?" It's a very difficult question, but our outlook on life should be built up in the light of this teaching; then we can know what to do right in the middle of suffering, human life, human confusions. Constantly we have to reflect upon ourselves this way. If we don't, we become crazy pretty easily, we become overly infatuated with good or bad or neutral. So, even though we don't understand what it means, we must constantly ask, "What comes with what reason?"

Please return to your first motivation. Your first motivation is very vague. You don't know what it is, but you want to do it. That's why you say, "I want to know human life with a true heart." What do you mean by "true heart"? True heart is really vague. You can know the true heart, but you cannot pin down what it is that compels you to practice the Buddha Way, or to seek for the truth. What compels you is your first motivation. In that moment, that very first motivation, the Buddha, Truth, true heart can be found. But you simply cannot put any name on it. Whatever name you put on it, it becomes a blur, you don't know what it is.

Even though you come to Tassajara with your first motivation, seeking for the truth, don't you feel that you quickly lose your way? This is because the moment you are here, which is what you wanted, you forget your first motivation and you begin making detours looking for many kinds of courses to take. I want to ask you, what is the basis of why you are here? Your first motivation? If that were true, there would be no struggle. You would just be here and practice steadily. But you don't. What is it? Why do you do this? From the point of view of first motivation, all you can do here is just be as you really are. But, when you are right in the middle of this Tassajara you really wanted, something happens. You seek for peace, but when you are right in the middle of the peace you sought, you lose your way immediately. You seek for something else, and the result is violence, fighting, arguments, squabbles-invariably there are squabbles in your small world, in your small society, and in

the larger society, or even within yourself. In your deep heart, in your true heart, you always seek peace, but when you have it, you don't know what it is. You completely lose the way. That's why you have to constantly come back to the first motivation. First motivation is really pure, clean, and shining. Temporarily we call it Buddha nature. In plain language, maybe we can call it "true heart" or "sincerity" or "truthfulness".

Constantly you have to ask yourself if you are trying to just satisfy your desires. Did you come here to practice the Buddha Way, to lead the life of a priest, or to get priest ordination? That is alright, but it is already slipping off course because that is a course that you are looking for, that you are expecting to take. Basically, what you really want to do is to practice the Buddha Way at Tassajara. That is all you want to do, but then, immediately, you start looking for some new course to set out on: some so-called "priest's life," some spiritual fantasy, or "enlightenment". If you think "enlightenment," right away there is another situation: so-called "delusion". So if you see the delusion, you try to keep away from the delusion and try to keep the enlightenment, or nice spiritual fantasy. But that means you have gone off on a detour. What is real peace, real harmony? What is the Buddha Way?

By becoming a priest, by anticipating or expecting the life of a priest, can you understand the human world, can you understand the Buddha Way? There is no way to understand the Buddha Way, even though you become a priest. As a priest you become more confused and wherever you go it is pretty hard.

Are you attracted to the wonderful food at Tassajara? That's why you come here to practice. Are you attracted to the natural surroundings at Tassajara? Is that why you come here? Or are you attracted to success in life? Spiritual success in life? Or are you attracted to a lazy way of life? Usual human society is hard, so you may practice here because it is easy--you do not have to struggle as businessmen do to be successful, you just follow the schedule. You can just be at Tassajara and practice the Buddha Way in peace and harmony. Are you attracted to this lazy way, this easy-going way? Then, for you, "just sitting" is the "just sitting" you have understood. It is not the Buddha Way. If you practice like this, it is really easy-going. Is this your first motivation? Are you attracted to hard practice, or to neutral practice? You should repeatedly ask yourself this.

I don't think it is necessary to know something which you don't already know. This is not practice for us. As long as you are a

Hill cabin at Tassajara

human being, you are right in the middle of the situation of not understanding anything, because life is vast, because it is the truth. Truth or vastness, or emptiness, is very rich, but you cannot name it. So all you can do is to practice, receive, and accept that full richness. How do you know this? There is no way to know, but you are already there, so first accept this fact. Do not try to poke your head into something in order to know. You should confirm that you are right in the situation of not understanding anything at all. This is the point you have to know. That's why you constantly have to come back to the source.

When Dogen Zenji went to China, he was asked by a Chinese monk, "What are you doing?" Dogen Zenji replied, "I am reading the scriptures." The monk said, "For what reason?" "Because I want to learn about the ancestors' lives, sayings, and activities." The monk said,

"For what?" "I just want to help human beings when I go back to Japan." The monk said, "For what?" "Because it is helpful to human beings; because everyone suffers so much." The monk said, again, "For what?" Then, Dogen Zenji said, "This is my way of life. I want to offer my life to all sentient beings. I want to help." And again the monk said, "For what?" Finally, Dogen Zenji couldn't say anything. This is very important because this monk cross-examined Dogen Zenji through returning to the source, what we are calling "first motivation," "Buddha Nature," "Truth," or "What is it that thus comes?"

For eight long years, Nan-yueh practiced, pondered thoroughly and precisely the question, "what is it that thus comes?" Then, he said, "nothing to hit the mark in words." "In words" means in terms of your understanding, in terms of your thinking. Without words, you cannot think. Thinking and words come together and work together. By your thinking, by your words--if you try to put a name on it--nothing hits the mark. Maybe you can hit the mark sometimes, but it doesn't last for long. Sooner or later you must come back to zero and start again from the beginning. Whatever thing you pick up, whether from the Buddha's teachings (emptiness, enlightenment), or from the usual aspects of human life (love, hatred, passion, emotions), please look at it closely. You can temporarily put a name on it, but the more carefully you think, the more it becomes a blur and you don't know what it is.

When I was nineteen I listened to teishos given by Hashimoto Roshi. I didn't expect to understand what he said, but I really wanted to hear him. People called me crazy. I was young and didn't understand anything, but over and over I listened to him. What I can tell you now is only this point: at that time I felt the truth of what Hashimoto Roshi said in his lecture, but I couldn't put any names on it. He said that, in whatever situation you may be in, in whatever place you are standing right here and now, this is the place in which you have to erect the banner of truth. That's it. I felt this. Whoever I am--whether I am a stupid person or a wise man--doesn't matter. Again and again I listened to him speak, but I didn't understand or remember any of the words. I can tell you about it now, but in those days I couldn't say anything, although I felt the truth in what he said.

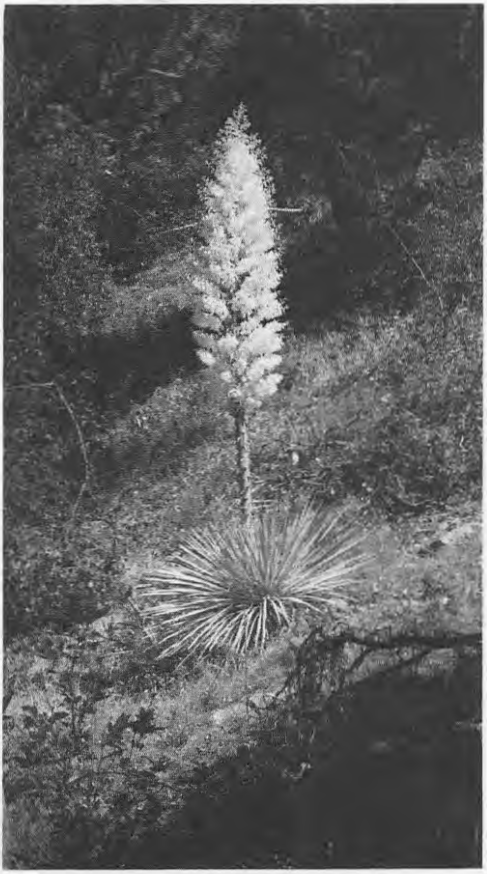
But what does this mean? It means that the naked reality of being is full of richness, but you cannot name it, you cannot understand it. Your whole existence is completely embraced by this full richness, just like a baby held in its mother's arms or sitting in its mother's lap. This is the naked reality of all beings. It is not the

point that you should try to understand it. If you want to know, you should know the reason why you cannot know it. That is why, finally, after eight long years, Nan-yueh understood that nothing hit the mark. This means you have to come back to your first motivation.

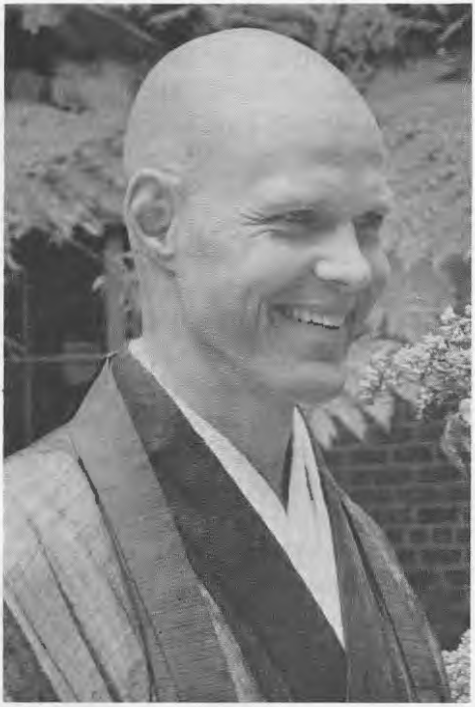
The Prajna Paramita says, "Gate, gate, paragate, parasamgate, bodhi, svaha." Go beyond, far beyond. "Go beyond" means let's return to the first motivation. This is a really simple life: that is, to erect the banner of life, the banner of truth. This is Dogen's teaching, and also Buddha's teaching. Through this continuing practice, you can understand lots of different courses through the human world: lots of toys, techniques, teachings. Teachings are nothing but toys, if you misuse them. If you don't misuse them, the teachings become pretty nice. Then you can understand many toys, teachings, courses, and techniques for living in peace and harmony. If you don't practice this way, you are completely involved in the big whirl of courses, knowledges, suffering, entanglements, and human relations. You never stand up straight. It's pretty hard. This way is very vague--you don't understand it. But you feel something, because this is your first motivation. You are attracted to it, but you cannot put a name on it, or say whether it is useful or not.

So, the dialogue between Nan-yueh and his teacher continues. After Nan-yueh said that, "even to say it is something doesn't hit the mark," his teacher asked, "Do you think it is contingent upon practice and enlightenment?" If there is nothing to say which hits the mark, why do we do zazen, why do we think about enlightenment and delusion, life and death, etc.? Nan-yueh replied, "It is not that they don't exist, but that they cannot be defiled." Many things exist from moment to moment, but they don't hinder each other, because the basis of existence, total dynamic energy/form, exists before you think of it, and even if you don't think of it. This means that there is nowhere to go: no way to find directions, no way to know what it is, and if you try to know, this is already a detour. Just do your best to take care of here and now with true heart. When practice comes, all you have to do is take care of practice with whole heartedness. Then that moment spreads into the ten directions. That is called infinity. Where are we heading for? What is the target we have to aim at? The target is infinity, or truth, or the vastness of existence, emptiness. It is right here, right now. That is why Nan-yueh said that it is not that practice, delusion, enlightenment, and existence don't exist, but rather that they don't interfere with one another.

The Sixth Patriarch, Hui-neng, said, "Only this undefiledness is kept and held by the Buddha ancestors." Yes, this is true; "this undefiledness" means right here, right now. Where there is nothing to find, no directions, no reason, no expectations--we have to be exactly there. Being present right now, right here, with wholeheartedness is completely beyond your speculation--nothing can contaminate it. The practice of undefiledness has been kept and held century after century by the Buddhas and ancestors. "So you are thus now, so I am likewise, so are all successive ancestors in India, in China likewise." Not only by Buddhas in India, China, and Japan, but wherever we follow the Buddha's Way. This is not something to speculate about. You have to be this, you have to do this. If you start to think about it, you immediately begin to dig your own grave.



Yucca plant on Tassajara hillside



SITTING IN THE HEART OF SUFFERING:
Where the Clouds Crop Up
By Tenshin Anderson, sensei

It has been said that all the Buddhas and ancestors are sitting at the heart of all the worlds of suffering. This is the way they develop their unshakeable vow to drop body and mind and, thus, save all sentient beings.

Depending on how we conduct our lives, we find ourselves in one of a variety of forms of existence. Of course, these varieties are endless, but there are six major categories, called the six worlds. These worlds, which we create for ourselves, have nicknames: the human realm; the realm of divine bliss; the hell realm of extreme torment and isolation; the insatiable realm of the hungry ghosts; the animal realm of fear; and the realm of the fighting gods.

The human realm is the center of gravity of the other five. As human beings we tend to return here. And in the very heart of the human realm is Jambudvipa, which in Sanskrit means "Apple-Rose Island. "This is where we are right now. It is the place where we feel connection with all forms of suffering.

Here in Jambudvipa, the heart of suffering, all manifestations of suffering are close at hand, from the most gross to the most subtle. When you are in the realm of bliss, it is difficult to empathize with extreme isolation and torment. And when you are in a

state of great torment, it is hard to appreciate bliss. But at the center of this range of suffering, we can sense the suffering that is present within blissful experience, within torment, within insatiability, within fear and numbness, and within power-seeking.

The human realm may be described basically as dissatisfaction, the frustration of all our desires and strivings. Things just aren't quite the way we want them to be, and yet it is only in this realm that there is also the possibility of seeing things just the way they are. There is no point in looking to another realm for comfort. The only real comfort is to be found by settling in right here and now.

Our sitting practice is this settling in and making ourselves at home at the heart of all sentient beings. How do we do this? Actually, it's a simple practice. There is nothing to do, because we are already at this place. But because of our accumulated opinions, philosophies, and striving human nature, we are obstructed from this simple practice of paying attention to what is right under our feet at this very moment. Great effort is required to be free of our ideas of effort. It takes courage to give up our personal views and to attend to our life, just as it is.

One description of this process which I find very helpful is given by the T'ang Dynasty Chinese Buddhist poet, Wang Wei:

> "In my middle years I became fond of the way. I make my home in the foothills of South Mountain. When the spirit moves me, I go off by myself to see things that I alone must see. I follow the stream to the source. I sit there and watch for the moment when the clouds come up. Or I may meet a woodsman, and we laugh and talk and forget about going home."

At first, sitting meditation is a settling down and a retiring to the foothills. Then, when the spirit moves us, when something happens, we follow the stream to the source--the heart of all sentient beings. We sit still and observe the time when the clouds crop up. To be present at this moment is to witness the inevitability of thought and its illusory nature. This is the birth of compassion: when we observe the production of phenomena and understand its source.

The source of the stream of experience is completely calm and serene. Still, something will crop up. For example, when Kishizawa-Ian, Suzuki-roshi's second teacher, was a young monk, he was sitting in meditation on a rainy day and heard the sound of a distant waterfall. The han was hit. He went to his teacher and asked, "What is

Lay Ordination at City Center, Jauary 14, 1985

the place where the sound of the rain, the waterfall, and the han meet?" His teacher replied, "True eternity still flows." And then he asked, "What is this true eternity that still flows?" "It is like a bright mirror, permanently smooth." "Is there anything beyond this?" "Yes." "What is beyond this?" "Break the mirror. Come, and I'll meet you."

When we are at this source, sitting completely still, all Buddhas and sentient beings are there with us. Then, because we are alive, this calm mirror experience breaks and clouds of thinking crop up. At this point we don't have to think, "Now I must be compassionate." Just being willing to give up great calm and to become involved again in particular thoughts is compassion. In this way we knowingly and willingly re-enter the world of confusion and suffering.

Clouds crop up at the source of all thought. At that point, we feel connection with all the different varieties of suffering. We sit calmly without fear. We are open and at ease. We could stand up from our sitting and walk to hell, walk to heaven, or walk to the animal realm. We can also welcome them if they come to us. From this place, compassion is not dualistic: we don't do it, and we cannot stop it. Our body interacts fearlessly with all forms of suffering. This does not mean that the fear does not exist--or that it does exist. It means that we are open to all varieties of fear,

so that the forces around us are balanced. We do not have more friends in heaven than we have in hell. If we have too many friends in heaven and not enough in hell, then there will be fear. So we can look at the community we live in. Do we know more people in heaven than in hell? If we do, we are not truly calm. If we observe our own body and mind as we are sitting, and find that we have more friends in heaven than in hell, or more friends in hell than in heaven, we have not yet realized the calm of Buddha's mind. Whenever our mind is completely open and we are not controlling what we are exposed to, the body and mind can sit still, in the heart of all suffering beings. That is all we have to do. Everything else will take care of itself.

In our basic instructions for upright sitting, we say don't lean to the right or to the left; don't lean forward or backward. We harmonize body and mind. This is downright sitting.

Amida statue in the Buddha Hall, City Center

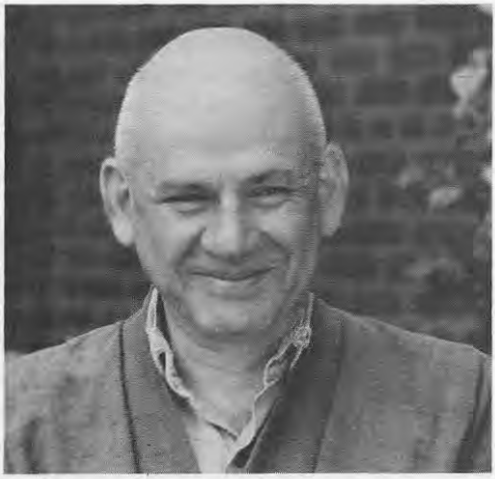
Buddha asked his ordained disciples to beg for their food from house to house, without prejudice towards the rich or the poor. Mahakasyapa, the first ancestor in our lineage, preferred to beg only in the poor neighborhoods. Buddha told him that he should not beg just from the poor, even though that was his tendency.

So we have tendencies to lean this way or that way, forward or backward, and occasionally our teachers may adjust our posture and show us what it feels like to be in the middle. We tend to go back to the way we were, until we find out that being off balance is painful. That is why sitting is very good: if we are off center, and sit long enough, we will find out that it doesn't work. The most comfortable way is upright sitting, where we don't emphasize one direction more than any other. Eventually our own experience will bring us back to the middle--if we sit again and again. But if we are not paying attention to our experience we may not be able to learn from it and find our way home.

I personally need to sit every day. Although I have been sitting for a while, it is still difficult for me. When I get up in the morning I am often aching and slow to get going. I take this sore, resistant body, and I put it on a black cushion. As I stretch and settle into the sitting position the resistance falls away. If I didn't do that, then later in the day I would not be ready for the other kinds of suffering that arise. But if I can let this body settle into itself, then it is empty and open. And I'm ready to meet all of you.

It is like bamboo in the falling snow. Snow piles up on the leaves, and the bamboo bends. It bends and bends and bends. It keeps bending all the way down until finally the snow drops off and the branches spring back. We have to experience and accept our share of suffering every day. And then it can drop away leaving us ready to live.

When I look at that picture on the wall of our compassionate teacher, Suzuki-roshi, I feel that he is inviting all of us to come and sit with him. Actually, he is very happy that we came and sat with him today. This sitting is a great joy for all the Buddhas and ancestors. They are connected to us; they are always with us. We don't just sit with them. We also stand up and walk, bringing the heart of suffering into all the activities of our daily life. Then true eternity flows, wherever we are. Come back to sit. Please come back, every day.



LECTURE
by
Sojun Mel Weitsman, sensei

During sesshin, one of the topics I talked about was friendliness or relations between people. Because Zen puts so much emphasis on prajna or wisdom, seeing the true form through the cold eye of wisdom, we tend to neglect the warm eye of compassion, without which our practice becomes unbalanced. In Buddhism, there's a meditation practice that focuses on love in four different ways. It's not a formula, but it's a way of looking at love from a Buddhist point of view, a non-self-centered point of view. It's something I think we need to bring up frequently and remember. They are called the four "brahmaviharas." They are four unlimited places from which we act. They're also called the Divine Abidings. They're very ancient and come from the Hindu background of Buddhism. They're highly regarded in Theravada Buddhism and considered a basis for any serious practice.

If you don't remember what they are, I'll refresh your memory. There are quite detailed meditations on each of these, but we don't have time to go into them here. The first of the four brahmaviharas is "metta" or lovingkindness. There is a Metta Sutra which you should know about. Metta is translated as lovingkindness; it's a way of extending yourself to everyone without partiality. When we meet people or are having some interaction, we should always be extending metta. It means good will or concern with the well-being of others. Strictly speaking, it means extending love impartially without having any desire in it or any kind of ulterior motive.

We always have to look at our motives when we do something: "Why am I doing this?" If we have a motive, we may say, "Well, I'm doing this good thing now so that maybe later something good will come

to me because of it." That's a kind of motive, a kind of desire. It's okay, but it's not really pure. It's okay to have a motive, and within our relationships we do have motives: if I do this for you, then you'll do this for me. But strictly speaking, pure metta is to extend ourselves regardless of whether or not anything comes back. So the practice of metta is simply to extend lovingkindness. And, of course, the enemy of lovingkindness is hate or ill-will. They cannot exist simultaneously. It's easy to recognize the enemy, but it's also interesting to look at the counterfeit, what's called the near enemy.

The near enemy is something so close it looks almost the same. Selfish affection is the near enemy of metta, and it looks like love; but there's often so much desire in it that one's motives get mixed up easily. It's very easy to fool ourself, very easy to create an imaginary kind of love based on self-interest. So, to be really clear, we should know and respect a person in many ways before we decide what kind of relationship we're going to have with them. Love, we say, hides many faults. It's easy to fall in love with someone for selfish reasons and overlook what later you will observe as faults.

This can be a big problem between men and women: how as a man can you extend lovingkindness to women impartially, or as a woman, how can you extend lovingkindness to men impartially? That's a big challenge: how not to let it get mixed up with your desire or your illusions and fantasies. It's something we have to practice in a conscious way. It's especially important in relating to members of the opposite sex, where desire can easily come up, to be able to relate from a non-selfish standpoint. That has to be at the basis of the practice in order that we don't get confused in our goodwill. This is just one example. Metta is something which can be extended to all of our relationships. First to ourselves and to those to whom we are close, then to those we don't know, and finally, if possible, to those we don't like.

The next brahmavihara is "karuna" or compassion. Karuna, strictly speaking, means to identify with someone's suffering or to suffer with others. We have a sympathetic understanding with people which leads us to help them because we can identify with their suffering. Sympathy is a kind of compassion, but compassion is a little bigger than sympathy.

The near enemy of compassion is feeling sorry for people who don't get what they want in a materialistic way. If John doesn't get his Mercedes, we feel sympathy, but we don't necessarily feel compas-

sion. But for the persecuted people in Central America and the starving people in Ethiopia, we feel compassion. And for people who don't see the underlying cause of their suffering, we feel compassion. It comes up in relation to the suffering people have because of their ignorance or because of the inability to change their lives in a wholesome way. The polar enemy of compassion is ruthlessly causing people to suffer. Anything we do that causes real suffering is the enemy of compassion.

The third one, "mudita," is sometimes called gladness, but it's more usually called sympathetic joy. Sympathetic joy is being able to feel glad about another's happiness. Of course, its polar enemy would be jealousy or envy. So it's freedom from envy, freedom from competition. If something good happens to somebody, we can share that with them and rejoice in their good fortune, even if it's someone we don't like particularly. That's the hard part: even if it's somebody you don't like. That's hard to do.

The near enemy of sympathetic joy is joy over material wealth or something which satisfies our greed. So sympathetic joy is more the happiness you feel for people's true welfare or accomplishment in a fundamental sense. If you realize your Buddha Nature, we feel sympathtic joy with you. If you make some progress for social change

Buddha's Birthday Ceremony at Green Gulch Farm, 1985

in the world, we rejoice in your success. I won't begrudge you your new automobile or stereo set, but, strictly speaking, mudita applies to rejoicing in someones success in unfolding as a human being. Its polar enemy is boredom or aversion.

The fourth one is "upekkha" or equanimity. Equanimity means observing things impartially, to maintain a balanced view; to be able to see every situation as it is and to be able to decide something from the point of view of impartiality. The near enemy of upekkha is indifference based on ignorance. Upekkha doesn't mean to be indifferent. Rather it means not being one-sided or partial, not being influenced by resentment or approval. It's the basis for seeing clearly. In our meditation, in zazen, impartiality is one of the strongest factors. But we must always be careful not to mistake indifference for impartiality or non-attachment, and be ready to respond to each situation that confronts us free from greed and resentment, the two enemies of equanimity.

Although these four factors are always present in our lives in some form, they become strong guiding principles when we focus on them as meditation. According to the Visuddhimagga, the near enemy is that which masquerades as the other, and the far enemy is it's opposite. The far enemy is usually obvious. What one has to be careful about is the near enemy, which may not be so obvious.

If you know how to extend metta to everyone that you meet, you may find that people respond to your unguardedness and they become unguarded. Even at some risk, you may do it, you may extend it. Walking down the street, without any motive in mind, just to say hello to somebody. You can try it--just walking down the street--some kind of greeting. Try it on a Russian.

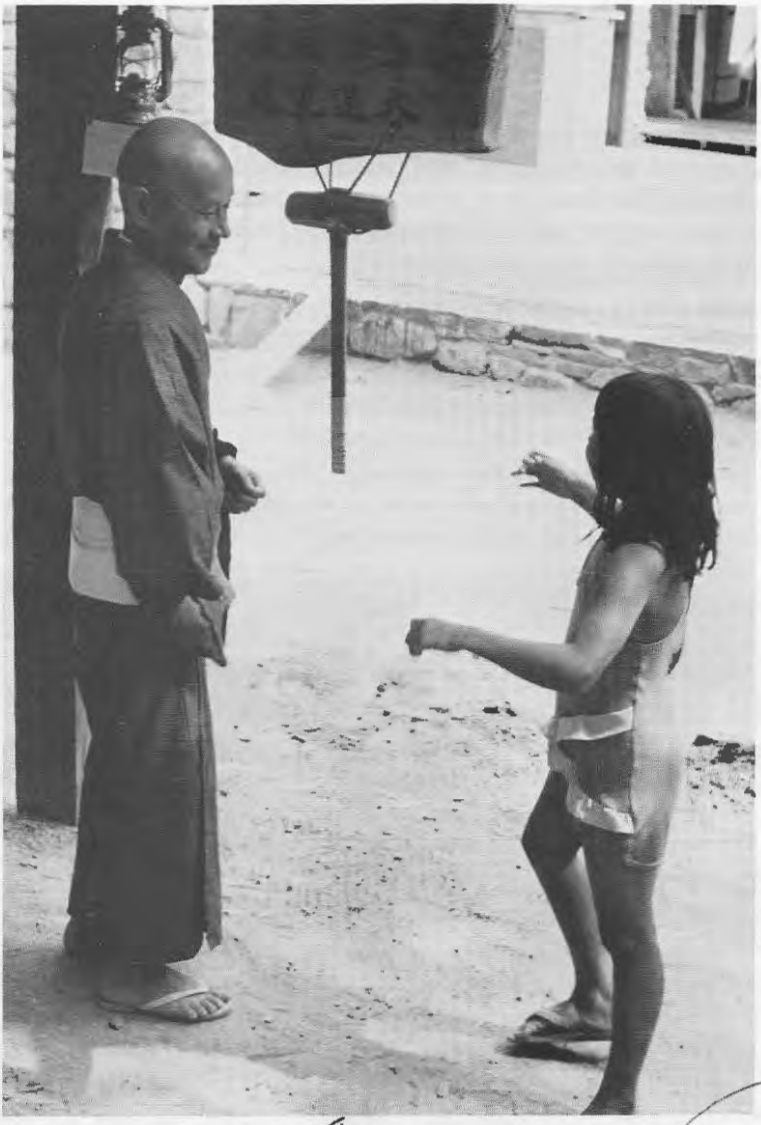
There are systematic meditations on these four, and the meditations are very elaborate. The meditations are pretty much the same for all four categories with minor differences. For metta you start by extending feelings and thoughts of lovingkindness toward yourself until you feel that you can accept it. And when you feel metta toward yourself, you can extend that to others.

So the first thing is to extend feelings of love or goodwill toward yourself and to be able to just settle in it. And when you've settled on that feeling, you can extend that to a friend, someone that you know and like. That's pretty easy, maybe easier than extending it to yourself. Then, when you can do that, you extend it to someone you're indifferent to, someone you don't have any particular feeling about. Then, when you can do that, try to extend metta to someone that you don't like, maybe someone you really can't stand. That's

what's recommended: start with what is easy and work up to the difficult ones until you can completely open yourself. It's called eliminating the barriers. Then you can do the same with compassion, and with sympathetic joy and equanimity. After that you can extend these meditations to everyone, everywhere.

The brahmaviharas appear in their most elaborate form in the Visuddhimagga, but there are other places where the meditations are more abridged. In our daily interactions they can be practiced as an outgoing expression of zazen.

Bathing of the Baby Buddha at the birthday ceremony



SANDOKAI LECTURE VI
by Shunryu Suzuki-roshi

VII 6/13/70 — No - it's 6 repeated

Note: this lecture covers the following lines of the "Sandokai": **Shidai no sho fukusu, ko no sono haha o uru go gotoshi. Hi wa nesshi kaze wa doyo. Mizu wa uruoi chi wa Kengo.**

As we now have a big blackboard, I want to explain these characters. They are of course Chinese, but the Japanese people read them in Japanese without changing their original order. The Japanese order of the characters is different from the Chinese and they add many extra words to the original Chinese. We call these words which

are peculiar to the Japanese language, **Okurigana.** So when we read the Chinese scriptures in Japanese, our eyes go back and forth, sometimes to a character two or three lines ahead and then come back to the next character. It is rather complicated, but the Japanese people have always read the Chinese language in this way.

"Shidai no sho onozukara fukusu, ko no sono haha o uru ga gotoshi." **Sho** is the subject, and **no** makes **shidai** a modifier of this noun **sho; shidai no sho,** "the nature of the four elements." **No** means "of." **Onozukara** means "naturally." **Fukusu** means "to resume." **Gotoshi** means "like or as" and **Ko** means "child." **Uru** means "to home" or "to obtain," and **sono** means "that" or "this." **Haha** means "mother": "the four elements resume their nature as a child has its mother."

Hi wa nesshi, Kaze wa doyo. Mizu wa uruoi chi wa kengo.
"Fire is hot; wind blows; water wets; and earth is solid."

We Buddhists have the idea of the four elements, fire, water, wind, and earth. This is not a perfect description, but tentatively we say that these four elements have their own nature. The nature of fire is to make things pure. By heating things they will become more reduced and perfect. Wind brings things to maturity. I don't know why, but wind-nature encourages things to be more mature. Air has a more organic activity while fire has a more chemical activity, and the nature of water is to contain things. Wherever you go there is water; water contains everything. This is rather opposite to the usual way of thinking about it. Instead of saying that there is water in the trunk of the tree, we say that water contains the trunk of the tree as well as the leaves and branches. So water is some great being in which everything, including ourselves, exists. Solidness is the nature of earth. This "earth" does not mean land, but is the solid nature of material. So, according to Buddhists, if you divide a thing into the smallest piece imaginable, that final piece is called **Gokumi.** It is not 'atom' because atom is not the final piece. So we say that this final piece, **Gokumi,** has these four elements.

That is the Buddhist understanding of being. It looks like we are talking about something material, but these elements are not just material. They are both spiritual and material. So when we speak of emptiness, it includes both material and spiritual; thinking mind and its objects and the objective and subjective worlds. And emptiness is the final being which our thinking mind cannot reach.

So, **Shidai no sho onozukara fukusu kono sono haha o uru ga gotoshi:** "the four elements resume their nature." It means to come to empti-

ness, just like a child to its mother. Without a mother, there can be no child. That emptiness is here, means that the four elements are here; even though the four elements are here, they are nothing but a tentative formation of the final emptiness. It is the same as, "a child has its own mother."

In the "Sandokai" Sekito is explaining reality in two ways. These four lines are the first of ten which are talking about the truth of "independency." Although there are many elements, those elements naturally resume their original nature. And although it has its own source, its own mother, a child is independent. So fire is independent with its nature of heat, as is wind with its nature of moving, water with its nature of moisture, and earth with its nature of solidness. Everything is independent in the same way that the four elements are independent.

I want to read the lines for the next lecture so that you can understand the previous lines better.

"Eyes to see, sounds to hear, and smells;
the sour and salty taste on the tongue.
But in each related thing,
as leaves grow from roots,
end and beginning return to the source,
'high' and 'low' are used respectively."

Those six sentences mean the understanding of independency. Things exist in two ways; one is independency, and the other is dependency or interrelatedness. Each one of you is independent, but you are related to each other. Even though you are related to each other, you are independent. You can say it both ways. Do you know what he means? Usually when we say independent, we have no idea of dependency. But that is not a Buddhist understanding of reality. We always try to understand things completely so we will not be mixed up. We should not be confused by 'dependency' or 'independency'. If someone says, "everything is independent," we say: "okay, that is so." And if someone else says, "things are interrelated," that is true also. We understand both sides. So whichever you say, that is okay. But if someone sticks to the idea of independency only, we will say to him, "no, you are wrong." And if someone sticks to the idea of dependency only, we will say to him, "no, you are wrong." There are many koans like this. For example: "If the final karmic fire burned everything up, at that time will the Buddha nature exist?"[1] That is the question; and sometimes the teacher will answer, "Yes, it will exist." But some other time he will answer, "no, it will

[1]From Blue Cliff Record, Case number 29.

Guardian figure in the Buddha Hall

not exist." Both are true. Someone may ask him, "Then why did you say it will exist?" That person will get a big slap. "What are you talking about? Don't you understand what I mean? Buddha nature will not exist is right, and will exist is also right."

From the viewpoint of independency, everything exists with Buddha nature no matter what happens to this world. But even so nothing exists when seen from the viewpoint of "utter darkness" or the "absolute." That which exists is nothingness, or darkness, in which many things exist. This is just an explanation. The kind of feeling you have and the way your understanding is different from the usual understanding should be discussed more. As events happen, you will be able to see and appreciate, one by one, each thing. There you have pure gratitude. Even though you are observing just one flower, that one flower includes everything. It is not just a flower; it is the absolute; it is Buddha. We see in that way. But at the same time, that which exists is just a flower, and there is no one to see it and no thing to be seen. That is the feeling we have in our practice and in our everyday activity.

Wherever you work, you can have this kind of feeling; a continuity of refreshed, pure gratitude. So the various things can be treated as Buddha's equipment for us. We understand in this way.

But, even when we think about something intellectually, in dualistic terms, we do not stick to those ideas. That understanding should be improved day by day by our pure thinking. We do not stick to the same old tree stump (we sat at yesterday).[2]

We say, "You cannot catch a fish twice in the same place." Today you fortunately could catch a big fish at some certain place, but tomorrow you should fish in some other place. Or we say, "to cut a mark on the boat to remember where you are." The boat is moving so even though you mark the rail of the boat to remember the place, it doesn't help. "Oh, there is something beautiful and we should remember it." It doesn't help because the boat is moving. But usually we do this kind of thing. We say, "Oh, that was very good," and we cut a mark on the railing in order to remember it.

Guardian figure in the Buddha Hall

This kind of teaching is a good example of the thinking mind. It suggests our foolishness and shows us what Buddhist life is. We should not wait here sitting on the same stump. They will not come to the same place, so sitting on the same stump with a gun is foolish. We should appreciate what we see right now. "Oh, a beautiful flower." We should have full appreciation of it but we should not mark the railing of the boat. We should not wait for her to pass by, standing at the same place. Sometimes she may come by at this time of day, but sometimes she may not. I have had some experience like this. I would sit waiting for her to come; sometimes she may not. If she comes, we are lucky. If she doesn't, we shouldn't complain.

[2]Referring to an old Chinese story of someone who returns to his old hunting ground.

Questions

Student A: Last week you said that if we understand our closeness, our dependence on other things, then we are independent. Are we independent even if we don't understand this?

Suzuki-roshi: Actually, it is so, but the point is that you don't feel that way, so you don't understand in that way. Even though you don't have an actual close feeling toward others, if you know this fact, even intellectually, you will not make too big a mistake. Anyway, you will not stick to one side only, or you will not be so arrogant.

There is something here which is very important. When we talk this way, it means that I am talking about things as if I am a completely enlightened person. For an enlightened person, this is very true, but for people who are not enlightened, it is just talk. When our practice follows this understanding, that is true Buddhism. Our practice should not be just intellectual. But even if you practice hard, without this kind of understanding, your practice is still involved in the idea of somethingness and doesn't make much sense.

Student B: You said that for an elightened person that's very true. And for a non-enlightened person it's just talk?

Suzuki-roshi: What's missing? Practice is missing. Only when you practice zazen hard is this true. At the same time, even though you practice hard, your practice will not always be complete. There may be a big gap between the truth and your understanding or actual experience. Your intellectual understanding may be high, but your practice may be low. Just to have an intellectual understanding is easy, but, actually, our emotional practice is difficult because we easily stick to something emotionally. So, to destroy the intellectual understanding of something is easy, or, to have an understanding of nothingness is easy; but, we say, emotional difficulty is as hard as splitting a lotus in two. Long strings will follow and you cannot get rid of them. The strings are still there. But with intellectual difficulty, it is as easy as breaking a stone in two. Nothing is left.

Student C: Roshi, I've observed that our emotions seem to be independent of our intellectual understanding and have a life of their own that has nothing to do with what you know or understand. What is the source of emotion in our body or mind? Where does that emotion come from?

Suzuki-roshi: Mostly it comes from a physical source. Maybe it is a physiological thing. And thinking mind which ignores those physi-

cal things is a more universal river. When we think, we think the more universal river way, ignoring various conditions or else we cannot think.

If we count the various conditions, five, ten, twenty, one hundred or more conditions, it is not possible to think. The characteristic of the thinking mind is to ignore all the conditions and follow its own track. The thinking mind doesn't fit with each case we face, so the tendency of a man is just to think and go on; whatever happens it doesn't matter. "What are you talking about? We should do this!" That is a man's way. But women attend to various conditions, carefully observing them and they figure out what to do one by one. Our actual practice is more physiological; just to sit on the black cushion. Here there is a similarity between thinking mind and emotional practice. When we practice zazen we ignore almost all the conditions which we have. Emotionally and intellectually we ignore things. So in zazen it is easier to have emotional practice and thinking practice.

Student D: Roshi, I have some difficulty in listening to the lecture. For example, when I used to chant the "Sandokai" knowing nothing about what it meant, I was able to concentrate on nothing but my breathing and my voice coming from my hara. But now I start thinking about what Zen means and I lose touch with my activity. I know it is because I get attached to words and the ideas that there is the dark side, the ri side becoming the ji side. Now when I chant the "Sandokai" the intellectual, the bright side, is strong and I don't enjoy the chanting. Maybe you can give me some advice on how to avoid this kind of difficulty.

Suzuki-roshi: You cannot avoid it. That is why I am talking to you. You have to polish your understanding.

Student D: You said the other day that in the morning we should just get up. Usually I just get up, but this morning when I woke up I didn't get right up. I waited until the wake-up bell came back again, and then I started to think about what was said in the lecture.

Suzuki-roshi: That was not just because of the lecture. That was not my fault (laughing).

Student D: My question is, can we have subjective understanding of our practice without having some kind of objective or right understanding, or do we have to balance them, have both of them? Can we practice Buddha's way without know Buddha's way intellectually?

Suzuki-roshi: If you can, you are very lucky. But, unfortunately, we cannot practice without intellectual understanding.

Student D: When we sit zazen and have correct posture and follow our breathing, do we have to have these kinds of concepts or ideas about Buddhism or about the four elements?

Suzuki-roshi: No, at that time we should forget.

Student D: I mean, do we have to understand the idea of Buddhism to practice?

Suzuki-roshi: You have to because you tend to look at things in that way. So, back and forth we have to polish our understanding so that we will not be intellectually mixed up--that is important I think.

The garden at Green Gulch Farm, Spring 1985

SCHEDULE

	SAN FRANCISCO	GREEN GULCH
ZAZEN AND SERVICE	MONDAY through FRIDAY: 5 - 7:10 am (2 zazen periods & service) 5:30 - 6:30 pm (1 zazen period & service)	MONDAY through FRIDAY: 5 - 7 am (2 zazen periods & service) 5 - 6 pm (zazen & service) 8 pm (zazen only)
	SATURDAY: 5 - 7:10 am (2 zazen periods & service) 9:10 - 9:50 am (zazen only) SUNDAY: No schedule	SATURDAY: 7 - 8 am (zazen & service) SUNDAY: 6 - 7 am (zazen & service) 8 am / 9:20 am (2 zazen periods & service)
LECTURE	SATURDAY: 10 am	SUNDAY: 10:15 am
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 and October. *(Please phone to confirm)*	ONE-DAY SITTINGS: usually the third Saturday of each month except during months in which a 7-day sesshin is scheduled. SEVEN-DAY SESSHINS: usually in April and August *(Please phone to confirm)*
ZAZEN INSTRUCTION	SATURDAY: 8:30 am	SUNDAY: 8:45 am
ZEN MOUNTAIN CENTER	Retreat Month: October 28 to November 28 Spring Practice Period: January 10 to April 10 Guest & Summer Practice: May 5 to Labor Day	

ZEN CENTER OFFICE — 300 Page Street, San Francisco 94102 (415) 863-3136
GREEN GULCH FARM — Star Route, Sausalito, 94965 (415) 383-3134
ZEN MOUNTAIN CENTER — Carmel Valley, California 93924

Wind Bell, Volume XIX, Number 1, Summer 1985. Copyright © 1985 Zen Center

WIND BELL STAFF: EDITORS: Peter Bailey, Tom Cabarga, Yvonne Rand Michael Wenger / DESIGN and LAYOUT: Perer Bailey / PHOTOGRAPHERS: Robert S. Boni (pp. 26, 33), Rob Lee (p. 30), Al Tribe (p. 44); all others Barbara Lubanski.

Printed on 100% recycled paper