

## Introduction – Letters of Chris Pirsig 1977-1979

Chris began practicing Zen with Katagiri Roshi and his family at Minnesota Zen Center. He went to California in early 1976, at age 19, for what became almost four years of study and practice with San Francisco Zen Center.

He began at Green Gulch, spent the summer of 1977 at Tassajara, then was based at City Center through 1979 while enrolled at San Francisco State College. As described in the letters below, he was engaged in the full City Center program and prepared for lay ordination in late 1979. He sat sesshins, including one in October 1979, and mentions taking an Abhidharma course with Reb Anderson that year.

Whenever Katagiri Roshi came to San Francisco, Chris attended his lectures, including one on Abhidharma at Genjoji, Sonoma Mountain Zen Center in fall 1979. He was devoted to Katagiri, who had encouraged him to go to San Francisco and presented him with a calligraphy he made, probably on Chris's 20th birthday.

Chris's letters report on the opening of both Greens Restaurant and the Tassajara Bakery in San Francisco, where he worked. He wrote monthly to his father and me from mid-1977 through 1979. Bob was paying his living expenses and requested that Chris complete a monthly list of expenditures and income large and small. Each letter was thus accompanied by a financial list for the previous month, and they are so presented here. They form a picture of the life of a Zen Center student in the late 1970s.

Arranged by Wendy Pirsig, August 2020





Dad & Wendy,

I'm here in the Zen Monastery,  
reading, working and doing Zazen  
keeps me busy. I'll be sitting tan  
gayo in two days for two days. All  
day with no breaks. And then another  
five when I sit a practice period.

A man from Greece named Diodoris  
has translated Suzuki Roshi's books into  
Greek and might be interested in trans-  
lating your book. I gave him your  
address and he said he would send you  
a copy of his introduction which he has  
written for the Greek edition. He is  
quite ~~scholarly~~ scholarly and might  
do a good job.

Tassajara Zen Mountain Center, in November

It's about to rain here now, I  
go swimming every day and am getting  
quite a tan. It was a hundred  
and three yesterday in the shade,  
and the pool sure was nice.  
Take care of yourself, hope  
you enjoy the Windbell.

Yasho,

Ellis



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SCB16009  
Photo: RB



June 18<sup>th</sup>, 1977

Dear Dad,

Thank you for the check, my expenses are much less this month and will continue to be for the summer. I'm working hard in the kitchen and probably will be all summer. Please do come up if you are this way again during the summer. How was Minneapolis this last time you were there? Enclosed are my grades which are dight except for the D in History which I will work in harder this next semester at school; things are pretty cool here for mid-summer, but will get much better by the end of the summer.

With gas love,  
Cebus

July 1<sup>st</sup>, 1977

Dear Bob,

During this last month I spent more than I expected to, but again, many of these things are one time, or infrequent purchases.

The weather here has been warm, but nice, with the night cool and the days especially warm in the late afternoons.

I went in to Monterey in my car my last day off and did some shopping, ~~my last~~ ~~to~~ it was quite nice, I had a good time.

Take care of yourselves, take it that all is well.

With gasche,

Chris



# Expenses for June

- 95.50 Tuition
- 1- 14.25 Gas
- 2- 3.30 oil
- 13.00 stamps
- 1.90 toothpaste
- 3- 32.87 autoparts
- .50 postcards
- 1.39 stamps
- 1.00 Windbell
- 1.10 envelopes
- 1.29 stationery
- 3.00 Green tea
- 2.39 Co-Evolution Quarterly
- 4- 11.38 autoparts
- 5- 8.00 gasoline
- 3.27 thermos
- 6- 1.37 anti-rust (Du Pont)
- 9.21 Pennies - clothes
- 7- 49.98 auto parts
- 8- 22.72 auto parts
- 1.42 Potato chips and O.S.

Total 278.84  
income .00  
Total needed 278.84

51.67 for the car.



July 21<sup>st</sup>, 77

Dear Bob & Wendy,

Hi. Sorry Wendy for not replying for so long to your letter. The weather here has been very warm, in the nineties and even up into the hundreds here lately, but it is not so bad because it is not so humid. I hope you like your new apartment.

I would like to come down to visit you sometime, maybe this Christmas, if I have time, and you are not sailing somewhere. Hopefully I could drive and stay for a few days before driving back here.

I take it that all is well, am glad to hear you are making progress on the second book. People ask me a lot about what it is going to be about, and I can't really tell them as I don't have a good idea, but I say it's not going to be "Zen in the Art of Sailboat Maintenance". They laugh.

Am looking forward to seeing Katagiri Proshi when he comes out here next month. Am also looking forward to school, and hope it is not too tough, but feel ready for it.

It is sunny here, and I like that. There is the pool but I have been sick lately and haven't



had a chance to use it much. But I plan to  
when am feeling better.

I enjoy your letters, always good to  
hear from you, and hope that I can  
see you around the holidays.

In grassho,

Christopher

July 27<sup>th</sup>, 1977

Dear Bob,

Enclosed is an itemized list of expenses for this past month. Some unexpected expenses such as a new muffler and heavy duty oil pump make it rather high. This next month should be lower than the last.

It's very warm here, but not so humid. I've been taking swims lately and my health has improved. I've changed my schedule by talking to the director here, so that I work a normal work day here and not the eleven and twelve hour days that I have been working. More sleep, more rest makes it so I'm more able to stay healthy.

Am looking forward to seeing Katagiri here this next month.

In regards,

Chris



## Expenses for July

- 55.80 Auto Parts
- 2.10 Auto literature
- 3.75 magazine
- .75 Book
- 36.96 J. E. Whitney
- 3.94 Gaskets - valve cover
- 35.90 L. S. Bean
- 17.90 Auto Parts
- 13.00 Tibet
- .89 toothbrush
- 2.00 incense
- 1.69 shaver
- 2.95 book
- 5.95 book

183.58

Sept. 3<sup>rd</sup>, '77

Dear Bob and Wendy,

How are you? I hope everything is fine. I've started school and find it O. K. I've a lot of studying to do but I find the teachers and courses alright.

I'm sure by now you've heard or read about the Big Sun fire and maybe something of Z.C.'s involvement with that fire. I was living there when we heard about the fire, at first we thought it was nothing to worry about, that if it did come close we would be serving the forest service coffee and refueling. What was hardly the case. We evacuated all of the guests on Tuesday of the fire and stayed organized as a fire camp with six hour shifts, six hours working, six hours sleep, hopefully, with the kitchen working around the clock to have meals ready for crews going on and going off. I helped work on the fire line on what is called a hand crew, we got three hours sleep and went to work clearing a ten or twelve foot break in the underbrush that would be a point of departure for the future backfiring, that is, burning into



2. The oncoming fire, usually up a hill, burning out its fuel and oxygen so that when the fires meet it stops at that point, the burned area is said to be in the black.

We had a general evacuation the next day where everyone left to Jameburg, our house fourteen miles away where we set up camp and proceeded to send people back in to try and save the buildings by setting up a sprinkling system on the roofs, and also bring things out, student personal things, pets, tools, etc.

The fire lasted almost two weeks and cost the state several million dollars to fight. It burned an estimated 150 thousand acres and the damage from fall and spring rains will probably be extensive. We managed to save Tassajara, but all the country surrounding it has been burned and is very surrealistic looking and almost like the moon, quite eerie.

I never fought the actual fire, but stayed at Jameburg and helped take care of vehicles and other necessary jobs i.e. dishes, garbage etc.



We were afraid my car would burn if the monastery went, because I lost the keys and discovered this at the last moment. I subsequently burned out the points and coil trying to hotwire it. Last week I had a locksmith make some replacement keys that work fine, it is running pretty well.

I'm going to be living in the city during the school time and am still planning a vacation. I might be giving a couple people rides to Minneapolis so that would divide the cost between three people, making it almost reasonable.

Kataqin Poshie was here and gave a seminar for ordained and to be ordained priests and several public lectures. It was good to see him. He'll be back in Minneapolis soon.

In gassho,  
Chris



expenses for August 1977

- 1.16 Cook
- 1 - 8.16 Auto Parts
- 2 - 2.50 Oil pressure gauge installation fuel
- 3 - 58.90 Auto parts
- .50 Bus
- .91 Bakery
- 14.38 Alaya Sticker (clothes)
- 1.78 Bennies
- 4.32 Jamesburg (candy, syrite)
- 4 - 55.48 tools
- 3.18 prison Onto medicine
- .25 laundry
- 2.00 Movie
- .80 Coca-Cola Popcorn
- 135.36 Work and Dress clothes
- .25 laundry
- 1.43 lunch
- 5 - 10.00 locksmith
- 6 - 4.97 paints & condenser
- 7 - 14.08 Tail
- 2.53 breakfast
- 1.75 beer
- .92 snack
- 1.52 lunch
- .20 laundry
- 8 - 4.29 Auto part
- 9 - 30 Auto part
- 1.21 lunch
- 10 - 2.11 auto part

345.24



Oct. 2<sup>nd</sup>, '77

Dear Dad,

This month's expenses were much higher than any other month because of ~~us~~ starting school and living in the city and because several things needed replacing on my car. Next month should be much lower.

Things are going well here, the car is running well. Classes aren't too hard but promise to be a challenge later on this semester.

Am still planning on visiting you this Christmas, plan for around Jan. 2<sup>nd</sup> tentatively. Is that O.K.?

Hope everything is good with you. We got some rain here, still not enough to make much of a difference after two years drought. Cassajira is figuring out how to prepare for floods ~~in the even event~~ if it rains, and how to keep the road open. Take care, please write.

In gascho,  
Chris



# Expenses for Sept. '77

.35 Treat	1.91 beer
.45 Treat	2.00 key deposit
2.00 transportation	.50 transportation
1.50 transportation	9.05 clothes
.50 fruit	1.00 debt
29.70 boots	.35 cookie
1.00 Coffee & roll	.30 doughnut
.85 pen	.50 transportation
.50 transportation	5.27 supplies
4.41 supplies	1.00 transportation
3.25 lab manual	- 2.00 gasoline
- 35.09 tools	1.75 beer
1.66 lunch	.50 needles
- 29.81 distributor	- .75 bridge toll
16.45 supplies	- .75 bridge toll
1.06 supplies	.35 treat
2.50 toothbrushes	3.50 movie
- 11.42 ignition cables	.50 popcorn
.25 transportation	13.83 alarm clock
.45 laundry	1.00 gasoline
.39 stamps	175.00 Ben Center
.20 laundry	.50 Pop & treat
.25 transportation	.55 laundry
4.50 movie	- 10.00 Gasoline
.55 laundry	5.00 dinner
.50 transportation	1.25 movie
.27 macaroon	1.50 ice cream, apple cider
.24 pop & candy	- 1.00 car wash
.50 transportation	- 1.60 auto parts
.40 ice cream cone	.30 milk
22.83 supplies	11.00 muffler
- 43.07 starter motor	.30 laundry
4.74 supplies	4.19 beer

included

Transpo: 5.50  
 Car: 164.75  
 Rent: 175.00  
 Supplies: 88.86

- .35 Pop
- .25 parking
- .25 fudge/cicle
- 1.35 ~~beer~~ supplies
- 2.35 beer
- 5.00 gasoline
- 2.50 movie
- .35 coke
- .65 popcorn
- 2.30 dinner
- 2.75 beer
- .50 motor oil
- 1.78 lunch
- 1.80 beer
- 12.75 gas
- .25 parking
- .25 candy bar
- .40 phone calls
- .55 laundry
- .40 coffee

512.98

518.02

577.24



Nov. 3<sup>rd</sup>, '77

Dear Bob,

Enclosed is a list of my expenses for October; I can promise you that they will be less this next month. There won't be any dentists bills and no registration as there was this month. The registration fee was for a new car that I bought, a red volkswagen fastback that I plan to rebuild the engine on sometime this winter or spring break, but until then I'll continue to drive my Plymouth which is running quite well and less is going wrong with it as I've been repairing it for awhile now.

My grades seem pretty good with B's for most of my midterms. I'm not failing anything or getting any grades below a high C for that matter.

Please let me know how you are and how Wendy is. I look forward to seeing you this Christmas.

Angela, Chris

# Expenses for October '77

.90 Beer	.55 laundry
2.23 beer	1.40 beer
- 13.24 auto-parts	4.00 books
.30 cookie	1.79 beer
9.50 belt	.67 pencils
14.29 books	3.31 oil
.75 coffee apple bar	1.80 beer
- .75 bridge toll	.25 bag string
1.80 beer	- .75 bridge toll
4.39 personal items	.25 cookies
.42 pencils	2.75 dinners
2.25 movie	.79 ruler
.85 hamburger	6.92 clothes
175.00 rent	- 26.40 J. L. Whitney
- .50 parking	- 3.60 Auto Parts
- 8.40 gas	
1.98 lunch	Total: 434.11
.27 coffee	
.45 laundry	
3.11 Wine	
34.00 Registration fee	
55.00 Dental Bill	
- 10.00 Gas	
5.50 Clothes	
1.80 beer	
.80 bakery	
1.80 beer	
.25 beef jerky	
28.00 dental bill	
6.25 dinners	
3.50 movie	
.30 candy bar	



Dear Bob & Wendy,

Am looking forward to seeing you on the 5<sup>TH</sup> of January. Finals approach as I study vigorously and almost constantly in preparation for them. Am still doing alright gradewise. Thank you for your letter.

Should I take the bus to Masini or to Hollywood? I plan to sit the Prohatsen session in Mpls. this winter, right after Christmas. At this moment people at Cassajima are sitting their 7-day session, so we don't have a winter session here or at the farm.

You'll see from the enclosed expenses sheet that I have been earning some money. I work one day a week cleaning at the bakery in the front, house-cleaning type of work for less than the minimum wage but I do it mostly so that I can have the chance to do physicle work and use my body, but it seems to cut down a lot on the amount of time I have to study. Maybe I will quit it for school next semester.

In Goodby,  
Chris

Expenses for November '77

- 23.43 clothes
- 7.33 pen-knife
- .40 phone
- 1.29 beer
- .50 parking
- .35 laundry
- .32 cookie
- 5.00 gas
- .25 candy
- .25 parking
- 10.00 gas
- .65 coffee & danish
- .50 phone calls
- 1.00 laundry
- 8.00 Parking ticket
- 1.65 book fine
- 1.70 lunch
- 1.85 lunch
- 33.00 Tow charge
- 4.05 beer
- 28.06 auto parts
- 175.00 rent
- .65 laundry
- 48.44 Auto parts
- 1.75 beer
- .55 ice cream
- .40 treat
- .30 phone calls
- 18.50 auto repairs
- 1.95 beer
- 2.10 lunch
- .35 pop
- .25 candy

income : 48.00 work  
10.00 car loan

- .25 parking
- .40 shoe laces
- .65 laundry
- .68 beer

Total:  
323.80



DEPT.	NUMBER	SEC.	COURSE TITLE	UNITS	GRADE	GRADE PTS.
HIST	111	01	HIST WESTERN CIVIL	3.0	C	6.0
ENG	106	29	FIRST YEAR COMP	3.0	C	6.0
PHIL	200	01	INTRO TO LOGIC	3.0	B	9.0
BIOL	200	02	GENERAL BOTANY	5.0	C	10.0
MATH	107	05	PLANE TRIGONOMETRY	3.0	D	3.0
MAJOR = PHIL			CLASS LEVEL = SOPH			

GRADE SYSTEM		TERM
GRADE	POINTS	1. FALL
A. OUTSTANDING	4	2. SPRING
B. COMMENDABLE	3	3. SUMMER
C. SATISFACTORY	2	SESSION
D. Min. Performance	1	4. FALL
F. FAILURE	0	EXTENSION
INC. INCOMPLETE	0	5. SPRING
AUD. AUDITOR	0	EXTENSION
W. WITHDRAWN	0	6. SUMMER
CR. CREDIT	0	SESSION
NCR. NO CREDIT	0	EXTENSION
SP. SATISFACTORY	0	7. INTERSESSION
PROGRESS	0	

TERM AND YEAR 177

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UNITS ATTEMPTED	UNITS COMPLETED	GRADE POINTS	GRADE POINT AVERAGE	
170	170	340	200	CURRENT SEMESTER
330	330	690	209	SFSU CUMULATIVE
330	330	690	209	TOTAL CUMULATIVE

Jan. 21<sup>st</sup>, '77

Dear Bob & Wendy,

Thanks again for the wonderful time on the boat and in and around Miami. I came back here to find it raining, ~~and~~ and it has been raining since I left on vacation. I'm at Green Gulch now for a week. I'm rebuilding my car, and it has been going quite smoothly all things considered. I just cracked the case an hour ago and will take it in on Monday to see ~~so~~ if it needs any machine shop work done. Please write me. Good luck with the next book and in planning your trip for this spring.

In regards,

Chris



# Expenses for December '77

9.80 gifts	.68 beer
.94 coffee & roll	.90 ice cream
.25 coffee	.50 coffee & treat
.25 coffee	.20 catalog
- 10.00 gas	.25 popsicle
1.80 lunch	.10 phone call
.30 soft drinks	3.20 food
.25 coffee	11.00 books
1.70 beer	- 5.00 ticket
1.50 beer	4.00 movie
25.00 clothes	5.00 gas
.30 treat	.60 food
5.60 dinner	.20 phone calls
1.00 laundry	4.50 gift
1.20 beer	- .75 bridge toll
2.50 dinner	36.67 books & class
4.78 school supplies	2.17 apple juice
.81 coffee & danish	.90 aspirin
- 41.85 auto parts	.50 beer
- 10.00 gasoline	3.32 toiletries
- 21.30 auto parts	70.00 session costs
.55 ice cream	2.59 book and magazine
.40 treat	1.17 lunch
.30 phone calls	.99 movie
- 18.50 auto repair	100.00 cost towards
1.95 best beer	flight from Minn.
2.10 lunch	4175.00 rent
.35 pop	
.25 snack	
.25 parking	
.40 shoelaces	
.65 laundry	

\$597.35 Total

597.05

June 31<sup>st</sup>, '78

Dear Dad & Wendy,

This month has gone by quickly, school has started and I'm very busy studying and trying to finish work on my car.

This cost me a good deal more than I thought it ~~was~~ would, but as the internal condition of the engine was bad, I needed to have the buy the replacement parts for many of the engine's components. I'm almost done reassembling it, but not quite.

My grades were not as good as I had hoped they would be. I will try and work hard this semester to bring them up.

I was overdrawn once at the bank this month but was able to cover it with money from my savings account.

over



Grampa is in town and I'm going to have lunch with him tomorrow as I have an evening class tonight & tomorrow night.

This next month I will try to keep my expenses down, most the large expenses on this list won't be incurred again for some time in the future.

In regards,

Celris

# Expenses for Jan. '78

1.04	magazine	.20	picture book
.35	candy	11.90	books
.50	lockers	70.00	rent
.25	bus	.30	postage
1.40	airports	24.97	clothes
.25	bus	14.06	books
223.00	flight costs	9.80	machine shop
49.60	tools	11.40	Auto parts
7.69	parts	1.00	bridge toll
99.87	towing & storage	10.00	gas
10.00	gas	.55	laundry
414.74	parts & machining for U.W.		
2.07	oil		
.25	auto part	<del>1187.54</del>	Total
.60	beer	1241.99	
1.00	tooth brush		
1.79	lunch		Auto 082.81
4.97	book		
16.00	books		
25.00	clothes		
23.40	auto parts		
.10	phone call		
.55	laundry		
105.50	tuition		
9.98	auto parts		
1.00	bridge toll		
.25	treat		
15.44	M-haul		
10.00	gas		
4.97	auto parts		
1.00	bridge toll		
.30	treat		



March 1<sup>st</sup>, '78

Dear Dad & Wendy,

Your plan as concerns the finances for the future sounds agreeable to me. It will be a cut from what I've been spending, but it's quite clear that I've put an undue amount of cash into my Plymouth. Unfortunately this month I had already spent quite a bit before I received your letter. In fact all the expenses except for the last ten items had already been incurred by about midway through the month.

The major car expense for one hundred and eighty eight dollars and eighty five cents was for a new timing chain and two new gears that had to be replaced. The car wouldn't start and was stuck in the middle of an intersection several blocks away. I felt that as I had one car that was apart, and that I needed to work on at Green Gulch, and that I had my studies to think of that I couldn't spend the time tearing apart my engine to ~~repair~~ get



at what was wrong. The estimate was for one hundred thirty as compared to three hundred and three fifty at two other places I called. The cost was higher <sup>than the estimate</sup> because the gears needed replacing also, ~~plus~~ <sup>that</sup> the fact I live at Ben Center saved me some money as to over what it would have cost. The battery was bad and needed replacing, it had been discharging over a period of time <sup>after parking</sup> and had been the cause of much trouble, as you may well imagine. Hoping that you can pay for this <sup>monthly expense</sup> not out of the <sup>new</sup> arrangement, as that would greatly reduce the amount of money I would have to run the U.W. over the next year which I think will be very economical.

The hospital bill was for a knee examination last November that showed that I had torn cartilage in their opinion. It seems high for one x-ray and five minutes of advice.

Things are going well here with my studies proving quite challenging, and keeping me busy much of the time.

In regards,  
Chris



# Expenses for Feb. '78

1	.30 pop		26.00 Watch repair
2	.75 buses		30 chocolate milk
3	1.00 coffee & treat	35	.50 transpo
4	.50 transpo		2.00 incense
5	24.50 towing		1.00 transpo.
	.35 pop		.40 telephone
	.50 transpo		1.95 oil
	.50 transpo	40	1.79 batteries
	.65 book	35	1.99 flashlight
10	.20 phone call		2.35 dental floss
	.50 bus		1.79 soap
	1.39 cookies		4.74 bath
	.25 treat	5	.41 pop (natural)
	.50 bus		1.45 service charge (beats)
5	.20 phone		<del>1.65 auto parts</del>
	.10 phone		.25 transpo
	1.10 laundry		<del>2.33 liquor</del>
	8.00 parking ticket	50	.50 phone calls
	.20 phone calls		6.35 auto parts
20	175.00 rent		1.85 beer
	1.65 auto parts		188.85 auto repairs
	.25 transportation		4.26 parts
	2.33 liquor	5	39.90 battery
	3.85 dinner		.20 phone calls
5	4.50 liquor		9.00 auto parts
	.50 transpo		8.97 AC. adapter (tape recorder)
	71.42 hospital		11.72 incense
	.50 transpo	60	.50 ice cream
	15.44 books		.50 car wash
	.30 phone calls		.29 pop
30	3.20 book		.30 phone calls
	11.58 school supplies		1.00 coffee

OVER





April 2<sup>nd</sup>, '78

Dear Bob & Wendy,

Please take care and have a safe voyage. I'll be interested to know how you find the English people, and the countryside. England is a country with a very illustrious history, particularly in relation to the United States.

I hope you can enjoy a foggy independent island nation stuck thirty miles away from a busy continent, that once had the attitude that they could produce <sup>all</sup> the goods for the rest of world to buy from them.

This month's expenses are high which I plan to make up for by curtailing my expenses in the days to come and also by working this summer which should cover my expenses and may even go above that for the three months of the summer vacation.

I've been trying to sell the Plymouth but haven't got any buyers as yet, I'm currently running an ad in a free ad newspaper as well as at school and at the Z.C. bulletin board. If I don't get any results soon I might sell it to a gas station attendant who offered four hundred dollars for it, although I think this is a great loss as the car is worth much more than



80  
four hundred dollars as you know in terms of the parts  
put into it alone.

I got my V.W. back together, but am having some  
problems with either the clutch or the front transmission  
mount which I will replace this next weekend. The clutch  
I replaced when I rebuilt the engine but it may not be  
working right so I may have to pull the engine again,  
in any case I'm learning all the stuff one can possibly  
learn about Volkswagen repairs.

My grades will probably of all kinds if the semester con-  
tinues the way it is going. I'm always pressed for time,  
but am trying to do the best I can. I'm thinking  
of taking some science and math courses next semester  
instead of all humanities courses. I'm learning how to  
type, and am enjoying learning this skill. Best wishes to  
you and Wendy.

Best  
Duquashe,  
Chris



# Expenses for March '78

3.28 toiletries	35 ice cream
1.87 service charge	5.88 books
.20 phone calls	2.60 school supplies
.20 phone calls	4.28 auto parts
1.00 auto parts	.29 Coca-Cola
.10 phone calls	21.29 tools
.30 phone calls	.89 coffee & rolls
.55 laundry	1.80 ad for car
10.00 gasoline	5.00 gas
36.00 green gulch	4.42 supplies
2.12 paper	20.18 tools
1.00 bridge toll	.65 laundry
7.45 auto parts	.19 coke
.10 phone call	.45 laundry
12.25 clothes	.25 parking
175.00 rent	3.83 auto parts
267.00 insurance for car	4.78 book
.98 beer	.36 parts
.75 beer	.28 parts
1.00 bridge toll	2.00 gas
.87 ice cream	1.00 bridge toll
.10 phone call	.79 beer
1.80 ad for car	.10 phone
3.00 dry cleaning	7.38 tools
3.13 text	.50 transpo
1.00 bridge toll	.10 cookies
19.20 ad for car	.20 cookies
.60 danish	.19 pop
15.92 typing paper & supplies	12.50 typewriter cleaning & ad-
.25 doughnut	justing, replace snow
5.00 gas	11.66 auto parts
1.00 bridge toll	5.00 gas

1.00 bridge toll  
 1.60 transmission fluid  
 23.82 oil & installation at machine shop  
 1.51 auto part  
 .70 phone call  
 16.48 auto parts  
 .65 laundry  
 .19 pop  
 .10 treat  
 9.38 auto parts  
 7.17 auto parts  
 2.00 gas  
 1.00 bridge  
 1.35 SAE 90  
 2.48 hand cleaner  
 1.18 cake  
 4.95 SAE 90  
 1.05 snack  
 1.20 laundry  
 1.00 bridge toll  
 .35 beer  
 3.50 movie  
 .62 beer

income: 3.55 fan belt  
 4.10 fan belt  
 total income: 7.65

3.48 parts  
 .30 phone  
 4.00 gas  
 1.00 bridge  
 3.72 anti-freeze  
 2.50 lunch  
 .75 parking  
 1.00 bridge  
 .56 cement  
 4.25 parts  
 .30 phone  
 2.20 ad. for car  
 .56 condy. air

total 793.06

total minus income: 785.41

total car: 470.75



March 4, 1978

My

Dear Dad & Wendy,

Things are going well. Hope everything is alright with you. Enclosed is my expenses sheet for this month which is high, but it looks like I'll be getting a job this summer so I'll be able to balance my income over this period.

Please write if you have the time. It is sunny & warm here, with not much rain lately. I hope you like the Bahamas.

Love,  
Cynthia

Cynthia

# Expences for April '78

.10 phone	.53 O.J.
53.13 tools	.35 Ginger Ale
.56 candy bars	.30 phone
.53 O.J.	.98 O.J.
1.00 bridge toll	6.40 books
36.36 auto parts	11.66 T.I. recharge kit
.30 phone	.56 yogurt
1.69 pens	5.08 tools
.50 bus	1.16 tools
.10 phone	1.00 wedding gift
3.00 class registration	2.50 movie
.10 phone	.40 cookie
1.47 oil	.98 O.J.
.69 thread	10.00 gas
2.68 razor blades	25.00 sleeping bag
175.00 Zen Center	4.00 seminar
25.00 sleeping bag	.35 phone
1.12 coffee & roll	13.90 tools
1.00 parking	.25 phone
.20 phone	5.00 gas
.10 cookie	20.00 auto part
.50 transpo	10.00 machine shop
.10 phone	3.00 cleaners
2.50 show	5.00 gas
.10 phone	.35 laundry
2.55 beer	6.36 text
1.00 laundry	16.24 Oil
5.28 cold medicine	2.61 text
.30 pop	1.00 bridge toll
.45 laundry	.75 beer
3.00 movie	12.38 books
.50 lemons	5.17 book



30.00

.50 swimming

.30 pop

Total: 494.97

income: 20.00 Tods 8.00 Tods

Total income: 28.00

Total expences 466.97

June 6<sup>th</sup>, '78

Dear Bob & Wendy,

I hope you're getting along well in the sunny Bahamas. We have been having fair to great weather here, not much rain, so the hillsides in Marin county and elsewhere are beginning to brown again under the increasingly long sun.

This month I'm working so I'm pretty busy. I started at the bakery working in the back on what they call the bench. It's a long wooden table where we form the Danish and the bread and other pastries too. I'll probably be at the bench this summer until this fall when I go back to school. We are overstaffed there so there are a lot of people there, but we all manage to keep busy somehow.

Take care and write me if you are so inclined. Good luck on the book.

Lu qasbo,

Celine



# Expenses for May

- 1 - .53 parts
- .50 Magazine
- 12.00 Money owed
- 6.00 Money owed
- .43 Fruit Juice
- 2 - 10.50 Gas
- 2.40 School book
- 10.00 owed
- 5.00 owed
- 1.00 Extra ~~trans~~ cards
- .55 laundry
- 3.14 Watch battery
- .30 Coke
- .20 Telephone
- .26 stamps
- .35 Comics catalog
- .30 Coffee
- 3 - 62.84 New Radial Tire + Balancing
- .30 Pop
- .50 cookie cornuts
- 4 - 8.00 Traffic ticket - parking
- 5.00 owed
- .20 phone
- 5 - 7.99 new rim for tire
- 2.00 movie
- 1.25 ice cream
- 1.25 beer beer
- .65 candy
- 1.00 magazine
- .60 ice cream
- 6 - 3.00 resurf and rebalance tire
- 7 - 7.00 new bearing and seal.

- 1.60 Mac Donalds
- .32 Pens
- 2.66 Book
- 1.90 Bear
- .75 Potato chips
- 31.99 Shoes
- .15 Beer Nits
- .25 Beef jerky
- 9.10 Dinner
- .75 cookies
- .75 O.J. & Pretzels
- 1.00 Mother Jones
- 8 - 10.00 Gasoline
- .19 Postcard + stamp
- ~~ETS~~
- 175.00 Ben Center
- 35.00 Gasoline
- 6.00 Food
- 1.23 Deadrent
- 1.45 Meal
- 9 - 4.19 Oil
- 10 - 17.00 Gas to San Diego
- .30 Candy
- ~~20.00 Cash~~
- 11 - .50 Bridgetell
- .45 laundry
- .20 ~~gas~~
- 429.16 Total
- .86.40 misc income
- 336.76 Total needed

income: 6.40 J.C. Whitney refund 30.00 Dermatol. research 25.00 MAYORANO 25.00 For Dinner



July 12, '78

Dear Dad,

Hope things are alright with you, work and practice and other things occupy all my time at present.

My grades at school last semester were two B's, one C, and one D. All semester I'm taking a somewhat lighter ~~course~~ course load so that I may try and get higher grades. I think that I can do it, its a matter of concentration and spending more time on classes than I have been.

The Bakery is a good place if you like to work hard; which I do. Its only a few minutes from Gen Center by car, but the clientele is mainly people from outside the Gen Center; lots of people; tomorrow I'll work for the first time in the front, two hours, I'll see what its like dealing with the public for a change. I really enjoy working making pastries, and bread, and so forth in the back of the bakery.

The Gen Center is starting a restaurant here at ~~and~~ ~~out~~ old army base named Fort Mason



which ~~is being~~ consists of several large buildings and is being converted to public use. Our restaurant would serve, in the beginning at least, as a concession to government employees working nearby. People will be going over to clean and start the renovation this Friday. It has been in the planning stage until now.

I hope that you enjoy Maine while the nice weather is still here. The best of luck with your book, I'm glad to hear it is coming along this far well. The person I work with at the Bakery is from Boston and grew up in Maine and that area. ~~She says~~ I can hear about what it is like out there even though I've never been there.

In gasho,

Chris

# Expenses for June '78

36.51	fuel (dwell-truck meter)	.10	phone
2.00	beer	.75	car wash
2.08	break	.15	cookie
1.29	beer	.25	transport
.55	laundry	6.00	Study Center
4.00	service charge	.35	beer
5.00	gas	.10	phone
2.25	beer	1.00	laundry
95.00	rent	.30	phone
8.10	ad for car	5.24	books
33.50	dentist care	10.00	Session
.20	milk	.30	phone
9.36	books	.75	stamps
1.50	ball game		
.95	beer		
1.20	beer		
.75	postcard		
.50	bridge toll		
5.00	gas		
1.90	beer		
4.00	gas		
.35	O.J.		
19.56	clothing		
1.40	dry cleaning		
1.34	ice cream		
4.50	movie		
2.57	dinner		
1.80	beer		
.40	food		
1.50	bridge tolls		
.30	parking		
6.00	gas		

total expenses: 280.55

income: 208.26

total outflow: 72.29





July 19<sup>th</sup>, '78

Dear Grandma & Grandpa,

Thank you for your ~~love~~ letter and check which I received several weeks ago, but haven't had the time to answer until now. I didn't really need the money, but can always use the cash. Just today I went down to the police station and appealed a number of parking tickets that I had allowed to pile up. The charge was thirty five dollars, reduced from one hundred and fifty. Thank goodness I appealed them and saved one hundred and twenty dollars.

I hope the weather there is nice, it stays pretty moderate here with temperatures above eighty pretty rare. I guess the ocean and bay on either side of San Francisco tend to stabilize the temperature and weather.

I'm working at the Tassajara Bread Bakery now and really am glad to have the opportunity to be able to work hard physically after being inactive during the school year. I'm also participating in the City Study Period which for seven weeks means that I must attend four periods of meditation.



a day, along with other scheduled events during each week, all in all I'm very busy, with no time to do anything but follow the schedule and work.

I hope Nancy's cafe works out alright, I just heard from a friend of mine who was just visiting in Minneapolis at the Zen Center that the food is very good, in fact he said he ate there all the time. When I visit this Christmas ~~per~~ I suppose I'll spend all my time working there to help out.

I've been trying to sell my Plymouth without too much success. The market must not be right. After all the effort I've put into my car I want to try and get a good price for it. I'll keep trying, I guess.

Please take care of yourselves, give Ross and Paul my best wishes if you see or hear from them.

Love

Chris



Aug. 7, '78

Dear Dad & Wendy,

Enjoy yourselves this summer at Maine. I hope that the weather is good there. The weather here has been wonderful with pretty much no rain.

As you can see I've tried earnestly to save money with a mild amount of success. Being busy working makes it a bit quite a bit easier ~~savings~~ to save money, and a bit more wise about spending it, one one experiences how difficult it is to accumulate money.

Would you please send me a copy of my expenses for the month of May '78 as I seem to have lost my copy of it. I need it to try and figure out my long range finances.

I hear that Nancy's cafe is doing well, she must spend much time there and give a lot of effort in preparing three meals a day for many people.



I read so recently in a reliable book on oriental medicine that a preventative device for sea-sickness is to tape an Umeboshi Plum, or salt pickled plum, to ones naval, they are also good for outas acid stomach, headaches etc, I know, I tried them for these later symptoms, and they've worked, just thought I'd report it to you.

Am looking forward to school next month.

Augascho,

Chris

# Expenses for July

1.29 cookies	20.83 tools
.70 beer	8.00 parking ticket
6.14 postage	.35 O.J.
6.00 class	.20 milk
14.38 text	2.25 coffee
.50 transpo	.35 coffee
.15 cookie	.10 parking
.25 tool	10.00 parking tickets
1.75 beer	2.02 tea
.50 transpo	1.20 laundry
1.00 traffic ticket research	.20 cookie
1.00 laundry	.80 transpo
5.00 gas	
3.72 book	374.03 total expenses
.35 Orange juice	-263.40 income
.30 phone	
15.95 clothes	110.63 total outflows
5.00 gas	
.10 phone	
9.25 dinner	
1.75 beer	
.80 ice cream	
.48 index cards	
.55 coffee	
1.25 address labels	
1.00 laundry	
19.00 auto registration	
3.04 Green Clay	
1.18 cookies	
35.00 parking tickets	
190.00 Gen Center (rent)	
.35 laundry	



Dear Dad and Wendy,

Hope everything is going well with you, things are fine here. Started school two weeks ago and I like all my classes pretty well, I'm taking a Formal Logic course and a class in Gen Buddhism in the Philosophy department. I'm also taking Calculus & Zoology. This is not quite a full course load as I'm trying to work harder in each class and get better grades. So far so good.

I went up to Mann Ranch a little while ago to attend a seminar given by Katagiri-Roshi. He says to say, "hello" in the letter. The seminar was four days long, and was very good, I felt. He did a good job of explaining Buddhism from a technical standpoint. People there, including



myself, asked many interesting questions.  
It was fairly expensive, but I felt it  
was what I wanted to do. I also attended  
Katajiri's lectures at a Zen Center in Sonoma  
county, and at San Francisco Zen Center. He  
only stayed here for two days this time. It  
was good to see him, and he looked in good  
health, and good spirits too.

Good luck with your book, have  
you decided on a definite title yet? I  
look forward to being able to read it, if only  
the rough draft. Take care.

Au gasho,

Calvin



# Expenses for August

	income	220.51
.10 phone		161.42
190.00 rent		400.00
25.96 clothes		<u>781.93</u>
1.00 O.J.		
1.00 Umbroski plums	5.00 gas	
3.60 Ad for car	.96 beer	
2.90 dry cleaning	10.00 parking ticket	
.25 Xerox	.40 O.J.	
3.50 movie	.65 laundry	
.75 popcorn	1.00 laundry	
.20 phone	2.05 service charge	
20.00 parking tickets	2.95 stamps	
3.14 tools	165.00 seminar	
3.40 tools	4.75 Kenji	
.10 phone	.96 beer	
.30 stamps	.80 beer	
11.60 insence incense	1.50 ferry	
1.10 O.J.	.50 transpo	
.30 stamps	1.00 movie	
2.20 gift	1.00 transpo	
1.70 green clay	9.25 meal	
.67 postcards	.50 transpo	
.30 candy	.25 coffee	
1.70 beer	<del>25.00</del>	
13.00 new needle & cartridge		
1.35 tea		
2.60 beer	total: 528.64	
1.60 beer		
2.00 herb tea	total outflows: gained	
10.65 text	253.29	
.40 phone		
12.75 muffler		

Oct 16, '78

Dear Dad & Wendy,

The school is going pretty well for me here at the present moment. I'm studying logic, among other things, which I find quite intriguing as well as challenging.

Going home this Christmas and would like to spend some time with you and Wendy over the holiday if I have the time for it.

Best of luck with the book you are working on, I and your fans await it anxiously; will Nancy be in this book also? How about Ted & I?

I look forward to experiencing what Maine is like. I think I will like New England, from the descriptions I've heard of it. Lots of luck adjusting to cold ~~the~~ weather again. Keep warm.

In yassho,  
Chris



# Expenses for Sept. '78

- 1.57 auto part
- 2.67 beer
- .74 beer
- .50 bus
- .40 phone
- .98 treat
- 18.88 auto parts
- 5.75 transpo (car rental)
- .50 bus
- .35 parts
- .50 transpo
- 2.20 lunch
- 1.60 beer
- 2.00 show
- 35.74 texts
- 1.10 laundry
- 32.75 texts
- .50 bus
- .59 pen
- .50 bus
- .25 auto part
- .96 apple juice
- .25 bus
- 1.73 lunch
- 1.60 beer
- .65 laundry
- .70 parts
- .98 beer
- .50 bus
- .50 bus
- 2.50 dinner
- 1.50 phone

income: 245.47  
 40.62  
 190.85

- 5.00 coffee
- .55 ice cream
- .90 beer
- .50 bus
- 2.79 beers
- .35 laundry
- 1.00 ice cream
- 10.30 auto parts
- 2.20 beer
- .50 bus
- .25 scottie
- .50 bus
- 1.35 meal
- .25 treat
- .55 laundry
- 12.00 auto repair
- 3.87 supplies
- .50 bus
- 4.15 stamps

339.45 debts  
 -288.09 income  
 73.36 total spent

Total car expenses: 44.05



Dear Dad & Wendy,

Look forward to seeing you next month. Seems pretty good that Ted will be there at the same time. I haven't seen him since before I left for California, three years ago.

Expenses should drop now that I've had the work needed done on my car which included new transmission mounts and professionally rebuilt carburetors.

Got my tickets yesterday, so I'm all booked and will see you on the fourth. It's nice to have this long semester ~~break~~ at school, so that I can do things like this. I'll have a week of break left when I get back from Maine.

Please do send me a copy of your next book when you have it completed. I'm looking forward to seeing it very much.

I'm sure that both Ted and myself will like Maine a lot from what I've seen of it in books etc. It's a lot like Minn. except that hills will be taller and waves bigger, but we're tigger too. Looks like a white Christmas for us both.

In gasps,  
Chris



# Expenses for Oct. '78

.50 bus	.75 transpo
.25 coffee	2.00 copies of Warrants
1.00 laundry	7.50 car repair
.15 3.45 stamps	8.50 towing
7.47 coil	3.75 beer
4.00 school supplies	1.00 O.J.
3.76 toiletries	1.35 laundry
2.02 sewing things	9.82 records
50.96 clothes	.59 ice cream
5.87 magazine	7.50 dry cleaning & alterations
9.69 auto parts	1.00 catalog
1.20 beer	57.51 texts
.90 beer	25.25 tools
4.00 manic	16.01 tools
1.00 transpo	8.75 toiletries
1.29 cookies	29.82 clothes
.50 bus	1.00 ad
.98 O.J.	.75 laundry
3.35 toiletries	.50 bus
10.40 texts	2.50 beer
.55 laundry	1.57 dinner
.79 beer	.25 bus
2.50 dinner	1.95 beer
.25 treat	.25 parking
.29 auto part	.40 coffee
12.73 tea set	.59 auto part
6.09 clothes	1.57 dinner
10.19 clothes	1.50 beer
.50 bus	.80 coffee
2.26 lunch	2.00 gas
23.95 clothes	.40 coffee
20.00 parking warrants	



# Expenses for Nov. '78.

\$1.60 lunch  
 129.73 car repair  
 3.28 postage  
 10.00 session  
 2.07 supplies  
 2.00 beer  
 2.52 auto parts  
 .25 phone  
 3.00 movies  
 5.65 gas  
 1.00 bridge toll  
 .50 popcorn  
 1.65 beer  
 .80 coffee  
 .25 parking  
 .50 treats  
 28.50 typewriter repair  
 .55 laundry  
 90.00 carbs  
 .74 beer  
 5.40 beer  
 19.86 gift  
 9.44 gift  
 .88 supplies  
 13.21 supplies  
 6.32 supplies  
 69.00 parking tickets  
 1.58 beer  
 .91 coffee & danish  
 1.27 cookies  
 .60 frozen yogurt  
 16.50 auto parts

190.00 rent  
 1.54 auto parts  
 3.92 supplies  
 .35 beer  
 2.25 service charge  
 1.50 transportation  
 1.35 beer  
 1.10 laundry  
 .20 candy bar  
 .10 parking meter  
 3.00 coffee

total expenditures: \$829.37  
 income: 27.50 + 28.13  
 total income: 55.63

total after income: 568.74

total car: 311.29  
 total expenses after car: 313.08  
 total expenses after car & income:  
 257.45



.50 parking	income: 11.87
.25 phone	
1.00 toll	
.70 hot dog	
.30 wine	
2.45 beer	
253.00 6-months insurance	
.50 catalog	
190.00 rent	

total expenses: 828.07

total expenses minus income: 816.2

total car: 350.05

Total average expenses from Spring:  
316.45



Nov. 3, '78

Dear Dad & Wendy,

How are you? Hope that everything is fine. Tomorrow we sit sesshin here, some of us that is. It will probably be weeks in the past by the time you get this letter.

Do you and Wendy ever wish to sit sesshin?

There is a group in Suresy Maine headed by Walter ~~Norik~~ Norich who is an American who practiced in Japan for many years until he became a Roshi. I could send you his adress if you became interested in visiting, or practicing with him there.

School is going pretty well, I've been getting some fairly good grades which I account for by having a lightened course load, although not too lightened.

Hope that I can see you again this year,



I'll write as to the dates when I have find  
out when they are.

Love,

Chris



Dear Dad & Wendy,

My trip went well from Mpls. to San Francisco, with the exception of a cold one-night layover in Park City Utah, just east of Salt Lake, high enough up in the mountains so that I was plenty cold that night. I had to stay there because of a flat tire which I had to wait until morning to get fixed. Other than this, my trip was pretty much uneventful.

I enjoy the relatively warm climate, as well as the lifestyle that I am back to. I like all my classes and they seem hard enough, without being too extreme. My grades for last semester were an A two C's and a D. The



last grade in a class that I plan to  
take again sometime, and improve my  
understanding of. It was the calculus  
course.

Please take care of yourselves  
and Kiber, please write, hope  
the Maine winters remain every day  
as pleasant as when I was there.

In gasbo,  
Chris

# Rec. Expenses '78

513.00 Airlines Ticket

2.25 beer

.20 postcards

30.00 gift

4.28 beer

48.47 boots

.95 stamps

.50 bus

.75 treat

3.25 beer

.75 stamps

2.50 tool

3.24 supplies

1.44 salad

.50 bus

.40 coffee

2.78 beer

.78 beer

.48 beer

.20 candy

1.28 beer

5.83 beer

.50 bus

.20 catalog

.55 laundry

.50 bus

1.47 lunch

.40 coffee

.39 beer

23.50 gift

1.00 transpo

.50 supplies

.84 beer

13.12 gifts

106.00 tuition

total: 772.80

total car: 2.50



Dear Dad & Wendy,

Hope you are well. Things are fine here. It's been in the sixties and raining some. Hope your greater works without a hitch.

We are busy building our restaurant which is about done being roughed out and will take about as much time to do the finishing of. We are busy with a large scale mailing (the stamps alone cost over a thousand dollars) which you will no doubt receive a copy of and in which we are trying to raise funds for our restaurant and ongoing expenses i.e. paying stipends to people involved with the restaurant.

I asked a friend of mine that I know from San Francisco who lives in Minneapolis if he knew of housepainters who could paint your house this spring. He and his girlfriend paint houses and are looking for work. They helped George Peterson paint his house, and they said the cost was under \$3,000.00, and his house is much larger than yours. If you're interested, I could write George a letter and ask him if they are good workers. If you painted the house this spring and didn't wait, it would cost less, taking less work. Perhaps Scott could submit a bid. Anyway, here are their addresses if you want to contact them. Scott is caretaker in the building Nancy used to live in.

Scott Hoehenga  
1465 W. 33<sup>rd</sup> St.  
Mpls. Mn. 55408 825-2654



Expenses for Jan. '79

.30 postage  
8.35 shoes  
5.00 beer & movie  
.35 pop  
2.80 pencil  
.40 stamps  
.25 toll  
.47 beer  
3.50 movie  
.79 popcorn  
.20 stamps  
7.40 phone  
1.20 laundry  
4.74 text  
8.63 text  
23.86 text  
7.95 lunch  
.50 bus  
62.00 rent  
18.66 texts  
4.53 text  
.57 treat  
41.29 texts  
.50 bus  
1.00 beer  
7.05 drinks  
.50 bus  
.35 laundry  
8.29 text  
12.58 insurance  
28.12 texts  
16.25 texts

2.22 postage  
.50 bus  
1.95 lunch  
1.69 goggles  
.25 bus  
.45 stamps  
.50 bus  
112.55 tools

Total: 392.49  
total spent on car 112.55  
total after car 279.94



Mar. 3, '79

Dear Dad & Wendy,

Here is the book you wanted, hope you enjoy it. Hope everything is well with you and that the weather is not too cold, or too rough out there. Am very busy with my studies, and so will only write a short letter, hope the books are coming along well. Katagiri is here for a couple of weeks, and is giving lectures every night of the week, the lectures on Tuesday and Thursday are for the priests only.

Chu gasho, Chis

# Expenses for Dec. '79

.50 bus  
.70 laundry  
.43 food  
.15 stamp  
1.00 beer  
25.06 clothes & tools  
.80 ice cream  
1.91 photos  
.50 bus  
.30 stamp  
2.00 gift  
8.81 record  
4.89 book  
.15 stamp  
.25 bus  
8.58 pillow  
2.72 pillow cases  
.50 bus  
.25 treat  
.50 bus  
.55 ice cream  
4.91 taxes  
11.31 record  
.50 bus  
.35 coffee  
.30 stamps  
.75 laundry  
.30 treat  
2.74 beer  
.45 beer  
.50 bus  
11.89 clothes  
.50 bus

.50 bus  
.50 bus  
1.00 coffee  
10.00 turning  
.80 food  
.75 bus  
1.35 cookies  
.25 stamp  
2.00 lab equipment  
2.10 lab manual  
.25 parking  
64.74 auto repair  
2.56 herbal tea  
5.95 food  
4.05 toiletries  
9.71 clothes  
.25 parking  
190.00 rent  
7.40 book

total: 399.21  
total car expenses: 75.24  
total expenses  
after car: 323.97



Malpail 6, '79

Dear Dad and Wendy,

Thank you for the photograph of the Bodhisattva. It's a very beautiful print. Am glad to hear you like the Telesny brothers' translation of the Blue Cliff Record, it's definitely more readable than the R. L. M. Shaw translation which was the only English version available for so long. Did you know that at one time all copies had supposedly been destroyed, as monks in China spent too much time working with the stones, and neglected their everyday practice, and thus couldn't distinguish between the lotus and the mud, and keep on asking about the mud. However the night before Dogen was to sail back to Japan, he found a copy that had been hidden, and stayed up all night copying it, (quite a job) and later translated parts of it into Japanese. Thus we have him to thank for the Blue Cliff Record, as his is the only known copy to have come to Japan.

In past years Katagiri has lectured mainly to the priests, but asking him if he would give a seminar for us laymen, and he agreed he would. It seems you are perhaps right about Japan developing an elite sort of Zen, as it's true that they have two separate Zendo's; one for advanced



students and another for less advanced, or beginning students. However in Minneapolis Katagiri has said in his lectures that the truth of Buddhism is not in any way limited to those who become priests, and that indeed anybody and anything can attain the highest goals of Buddhism. That is why he has placed himself in the midst of a lay community, I believe, to encourage and help develop the practice of lay people practicing in the context of fairly traditional American setting. We surely don't expect everybody there to become priests. So if he tends to foster elitism here in California perhaps it's the other side of his training showing through, which he cannot manifest in anyway in Minneapolis. Anyway he talks to a lot of people when he is here, and I believe he really enjoys being here and loves what we are doing. Actually, the way of Zen is to find out the deepest truth of human life, and this pursuit leaves behind all traces of self and other, and all dualities of inclusion and exclusion; although right now we can say that we are quite different from usual people in America.

Dzogashe,

Chris



# March '79 Expences

261.83 tires  
 10.60 book  
 21.54 autoparts  
 .65 laundry  
 18.05 wheel locks  
 25.35 clothes  
 .86 food  
 .05 Xerox  
 1.22 postage  
 1.35 beer  
 8.00 gift  
 2.00 donation  
 .74 beer  
 16.70 dinner  
 190.00 rent  
 5.25 gas  
 .75 car wash  
 .85 soup  
 .53 Blue Books  
 .75 parking  
 .35 laundry  
 .25 parking  
 1.00 oiyaki cloth  
 4.00 service charge  
 .75 bridge toll  
 1.00 auto part  
 5.50 eggs  
 3.78 text  
 .50 coffee  
 4.34 auto parts  
 2.81 skin cream  
 .75 auto part

1.45 coffee  
 1.10 laundry  
 .15 auto part  
 1.79 beer  
 11.00 books  
 .55 laundry  
 .40 coffee  
 1.30 Xerox  
 .75 toll  
 8.46 rear view mirror  
 13.31 calculator exchange  
 8.81 record  
 1.00 clothes

total: 640.67

income: 1.00 found  
 27.85 work on autos

total: 28.85

total expences after  
 income: 611.82

car expences: 329.62

expences after car & income:  
 282.20



May 2<sup>nd</sup>, '79

Dear Dad & Wendy,

Glud to hear that your scanner and heater are working well, and that you won an award. I bet Maine is getting warm about now. I guess that means more lobsters, and more tourists.

I'm anticipating lower expenses for May what with no car repairs needed, and no other anticipated expenses forthcoming.

Our restaurant will open this month on the 15<sup>th</sup> for Gen Students, and on the 22<sup>nd</sup> for the public, or so its planned. I was at the site recently, and it looks impressive. Red-wood trees 15 feet in diameter have been made into complete tables and benches in one ~~piece~~ unit, and into a salad bar with bowls carved into the structure in another. Orig-



CP, 105  
inal artwork adorns the walls which Edward Aridiesian did for us, a New York based artist, and friend of Poshis. Anyway, it's almost completed.

My school is done the end of this month, and I'll work at our bakery this summer. They'll now work two eight hour shifts in the back with a greater output, although man hours (woman hours) haven't increased.

I'm in the City Study Period which requires ~~more~~ a greater commitment to practice here, four periods of Jazen daily, lectures and teas etc., this lasts through June, and ends with session, so I'm very busy.

In gassho,

Chris

# April '79 Expenses

221.00	insurance	.65	laundry
.57	phone	.97	cookies
5.25	gas	43.67	clothes
14.21	records	26.01	clothes
.30	coffee	4.12	tool
8.10	front wheel bearings		
4.50	seals	9.67	clothes
9.96	photos	1.76	lunch
190.00	rent	4.95	record cleaner
.05	xerox	1.00	wine
6.45	service charge	3.50	movie
.70	beer	.39	beer
1.00	bridge toll	.85	beer
6.60	library fines	6.75	gas
2.00	auto	.25	coffee
.65	gas	.65	laundry
2.40	beer	1.00	bridge toll
.75	bridge toll	.75	beer
9.62	bearings	15.96	clothes
.70	stamps	.60	ice cream
1.12	beer	4.24	sanding discs
7.60	gas	1.00	toll
24.82	books	2.57	beer
1.55	laundry	3.00	gas
3.00	clothes	1.00	auto part
.25	coffee	1.00	beer
16.76	dinner		
2.00	shoe repair	total:	686.92
1.23	beer	total car expenses:	281.58
1.69	beer	income:	103.66 tax refund
5.48	food	total after income:	5.00 labor
.30	treat	\$ 578.26	108.66
		total after car and income:	296.68



June 5<sup>th</sup>, '79

Dear Dad & Wendy,

I'm busy adjusting to a different mode of life right now. I started working at the bakery last week, and haven't yet made a complete transition from a meditative, somewhat sedentary way of life, to a busy, activity oriented way of life. It's the old problem of taking your zazen practice out into the community, while retaining the peace and quiet of the mind found in the Zendo. In practice it's quite a challenge, but not impossible; ~~and~~ for in order for zazen to be really effective, it must penetrate every aspect of your life. So am busy with activity, not thinking for the time being. Enjoy my job where am Dandymon and, mouse catcher and production worker.



Hope the boat is doing well, and you  
too. Please send some of the books if you  
would like to for me to read it, I could  
~~co~~ give you my comments which could  
prove more valuable than the comments I  
gave you on the first books; because of my  
older age, as well as my separateness from what  
you are now writing. ~~Which~~<sup>I</sup> could give  
you ~~also~~ a more critical perspective on your writing.  
Of course noone can be totally objective,  
least of all me, being your son, but feel free  
to try me.

In grassho,  
Chris



# Expenses for May

.05 Xerox  
 1.50 gas  
 1.86 clothes  
 .25 coffee  
 4.25 beer  
 2.00 meal  
 .10 cookie  
 200.00 rent  
 .45 phone  
 .65 laundry  
 6.00 gas  
 2.74 paint polish  
 1.14 food  
 .65 laundry  
 .20 treat  
 25.00 headlight parts  
 2.29 beer  
 5.30 headlights  
 14.29 auto parts  
 .15 treat  
 1.64 oil  
 1.48 candle  
 .15 treat  
 3.00 cleaning  
 .50 ice cream  
 .45 beer  
 4.79 book  
 .20 catalog  
 6.62 record  
 .05 salt plum  
 10.00 parking ticket  
 1.59 beer

6.50 test fees  
 .65 treat  
 106.00 tuition  
 3.00 beer  
 6.40 dinner  
 1.00 coffee  
 .39 beer  
 .75 strawberry tart  
 .50 ice cream  
 1.70 beer  
 .65 laundry  
 1.00 toll  
 5.50 leather care cream  
 2.20 key ring acc.  
 .74 beer  
 2.35 service charge  
 2.50 movie  
 1.00 key  
 3.50 soup  
 2.29 beer  
 .85 gas  
 .89 beer

11.50 income (books)

total: \$449.70 total after income: 438.2

total automotive: 68.32

total after auto: 369.88



July 8<sup>th</sup>, '79

Dear Dad & Wendy,

Greetings from sunny California, hope the weather is well where you are, as it is here most all the time, although it has been hot here of late, and it rained once last week; very rare for July. San Francisco is in general a place which is neither hot nor cold, a place where one can practice, an



2.

ideal setting within which the lotus may bloom in all its life splendor; muddy water is human activity which is all around the lotus, but in no way detracts from its glory, it is the rich source, a manure field in which the seed of bodhi can, indeed must, rely upon for its own coming about. Phenomina is within the absolute and

is not contrary to it, but rather makes up a part of it which is not to be rejected, but embraced and revered as a manifestation of, and a part of, the whole which we can call Dharmakaya Buddha. —

So everyday life is the way of entering the path and as such is very important, and must not be treated lightly, but should be lived thoroughly



so that we can perceive clearly what is happening around us, as it is, and not through the many veils which obscure, cloud, and delude men's thinking.

So become one with everyday life. This is practice; this is life. This is Buddhism.

Please enjoy England, I sat session last week so am feeling pretty unclogged. Am interested in what England

S.

is like, please send a detailed description, and photos of the countryside in summer.

Don't take any wooden nickles.

Inqasho,  
Chris



# Expenses for June

.55 laundry  
7.40 insurance  
.35 laundry  
.65 Xerox  
1.00 coffee  
5.00 beads repaired  
.25 pamphlet  
1.24 beer  
2.00 clothes  
.25 ride  
.55 laundry  
2.12 beer  
1.05 phone bill  
.96 beer  
.55 laundry  
6.00 gas  
.90 beer  
.98 beer  
4.76 beer  
1.00 toll  
31.00 clothes  
35.51 radio  
98.00 clothes  
3.00 tools  
28.00 unpaid car loan  
7.00 gas  
.42 yogurt  
.65 laundry  
.83 record  
.98 beer  
1.01 mail insurance  
.50 food

1.00 laundry  
.98 beer  
200.00 rent  
445.84 total

income: from driving  
for Bakery: 38.90

found: 11¢

work: 282.68

total income: 318.69

total outflows after

income: 127.15

total car expenses: 17.00



August 8, '79

Dear Dad & Wendy,

Good to hear from you. I hope your passage by sea goes smoothly. Keep a stiff upper lip as the British say. I'm working long days at the Bakery where I do all kinds of work getting all kinds of jobs where I'm a plumber, or an electrician, or a carpenter, or a painter, or a tinker, and so on. I find it pleasing to be able to use what little skills I have in each of these areas. I am no doubt building up a reserve of over all ability and gumption which results from being able to begin, endure, and complete any kind of job. Builds confidence no doubt as well.

I tightened down the head on my V. W., a routine maintenance <sup>job</sup> after a rebuild; and found one stud <sup>abit</sup> loose that torqued less the more I turned. I put in a self tapping stud which



the head tightened up alright all around  
did the trick, however, the green (oil)  
light came on a lot next time I drove my  
car. I changed the oil and cleaned the oil  
strainer as soon as possible. I found some  
aluminum chips, although not very many;  
I suspect some of them may have lodged  
in the oil cooler. So now my engine  
makes more noise than it did, the  
green light doesn't come on, but it idles  
rough even though I've given it a complete  
tune-up of late. Next tune-up in 1500  
more miles, compression checks time.  
I'll keep hoping for the best.

Our restaurant is now open and growing  
fast. Too soon to say what it will shape  
up as, only serving lunches now. Expect  
the best; terrific designing, a light and  
airy feeling, pictures of clouds by Mike  
Hixon, Redwood tables, Espresso bar, the list  
goes on & on.

Love,  
Chris



# Expences for July '78

.35 laundry	.98 beer
1.95 service charge	.24 ginger ale
10.00 session	12.11 records
5.00 gas	21.00 Mao Co. Evolution
8.81 record	Quarterly subscription
12.38 books	200.00 rent
32.00 watch repair	
14.00 ginseng and tea	total: 406.53
6.25 ginseng	
.88 beer	total income: 338.36
1.10 laundry	1.20 dining
1.28 auto parts	135.18 work
2.80 auto parts	18.00 living
14.21 auto parts	.43 laund
2.65 auto parts	183.55 work
7.05 gas	
4.00 dinner	total expences
3.10 combination lock	after income: 68.17
2.40 laundry soap	
.55 laundry	total car: 49.58
2.00 beer	Expences 356.95 after car.
.05 Xerox	
.54 spring water	
.75 coffee	
9.63 personals	
2.18 beer	
10.84 auto parts	
5.00 sailing ticket	
.20 candy bar	
2.50 incense	
.75 toll	
7.00 Buddha statue	



Sept. 4, '79

Dear Grandpa,

Was saddened to hear that grandma passed away, and hope that you are taking it well. I'll mention this in a letter to Dad which I'm writing today.

My classes started today at state. I'm looking forward to a good semester, what with two history classes, and two philosophy classes, and some others. History is that of the traditional far east, and of traditional China. Philosophy is the philosophy of mind, and of history of philosophy. I haven't been to these later two classes yet. Did I tell you my grades last semester? I had three B's, two of which were B+'s and an F, in Chemistry which I never really took ahold of. This semester hopefully there'll be no F's and I'll have something like a B+ average. I'm also studying Buddhist Psychology (Abhidharma) here at Zen Center with Reb Anderson as the teacher. We call him Tenshin sensei now more & more. Tenshin is one half his ordained name & sensei means teacher, and is our honored title here at Zen Center.

I'm going to be lay ordained here in a couple of



CP, A Feb

weeks. This is called lay initiation, and it is a ceremony where I will receive a Buddhist Dharma, which is a kind of halter and a type of Buddhist Robe, a Buddhist name, and will take certain kinds of vows, such as not to kill, etc.

Tomorrow Tatsuzen Roshi will give a lecture here, but went to three of his lectures last week at a nearby Zen temple near Santa Rosa. His lectures were about Abhidharma.

Please take care of yourself, I hope to hear from you sometime soon.

Love,

Chris

*[Faint, mostly illegible handwritten text, possibly bleed-through from the reverse side of the page.]*



9/10

Dear Dad & Wendy,

Thank you for your letter, am glad that you survived the bad weather, and I bet you're glad you own a tough sailboat. Plan for the worst sounds like a good maxim when you're planning on going sailing.

By your old address do you mean the Southwest Harbor address? Because as you can see the letters I wrote to you at your publishers address didn't go through.

Grandma passed away on August 31<sup>ST</sup>, I didn't know if news reached you some other way, so I thought I'd tell you. A group of the family and close friends are gathering on Sunday the sixteenth at the house. I'm leaving Friday and arriving back on Monday so that I will be in Mpls. for this gathering. Nancy is paying for the tickets, and I'm only missing two class meetings.

Take care of yourselves, hear from you soon.  
Love, Le-his

# August

## Expenses for March '79

26.63 text  
 1.43 auto part  
 2.25 service charge  
 1.20 phone bill  
 200.00 rent  
 13.51 clothing  
 2.24 beer  
 .65 laundry  
 .20 phone  
 .95 food  
 2.50 gas  
 .40 beer  
 3.18 grease  
 11.26 lunch  
 1.00 gas  
 5.15 beer  
 150.00 donation  
 1.10 laundry  
 6.80 gas  
 1.00 patch cord  
 .05 Xerox  
 1.55 laundry  
 20.03 tools  
 .65 ice cream  
 .75 potato chips  
 5.30 tools  
 1.90 beer  
 .15 beer nuts  
 34.06 records  
 .98 beer  
 1.00 auto parts  
 1.00 laundry

1.00 coffee  
 4.04 booze  
 1.59 lunch  
 .83 coke  
 4.95 trans fluid  
 .75 lunch  
 5.00 gas  
 .45 ginger ale  
 3.00 dinner  
 .50 lunch  
 3.50 gas  
 1.00 toll  
 10.00 donation  
 1.72 S.T.P.  
 .74 mail clips  
 4.28 fan-belt  
 1.00 toll  
 1.00 toll  
 8.00 gas  
 9.87 record  
 5.00 donation  
 1.90 owed  
 2.29 beer  
 5.61 liquor  
 .35 laundry  
 22.64 shoes  
 26.69 clothes

total: 626.07      car: 71.69  
 income: .10 found      60.47 car work  
 4.60 refunds  
 201.85 work  
 15.90 dining      total: 282.92  
 total outflows: 343.15



Oct. 24, '79

Dear Dad & Wendy,

I hope that you are both safely back and well in England. Too bad about the house, but I guess that it means one less thing you have to worry about. This letter is late because I've been busy and sat a 7-day session last week which was pretty good, only thirty five people, usually we have upwards of sixty five people. But as you probably just arrived back you wouldn't have been able to read it anyway.

Last month I spent too much money, but that won't happen again as I'm just plain running out of funds. I lost my checkbook and wallet, I don't know how, and got a new check-



ing account. I suspect that I left these items in my car inadvertently and that they were stolen, anyway my account has been closed so no one can pass bad checks.

The car is running well, investing my own labor and care has paid off well in a good running, safe car. I bought a Honda CB 450 '72 motorcycle with almost 30,000 miles on it which I plan to have the transmission and clutch fixed on, approx. \$200.00. The bike cost 300.00. The savings account that I had is about empty.

I enjoyed seeing you, as well as the rest of the family, and Gen friends, in N.Y. in Sept. I'll let you know if I can get myself abroad in Dec or more likely Jan.

On garsho,

Levin



Sept. '79 expenses

1.38 beer  
 2.76 battery cleaner  
 5.60 dinner  
 2.44 beer  
 3.20 drinks  
 .10 phone  
 .60 food  
 2.17 food  
 5.50 gift  
 2.00 phone bill  
 1.25 auto parts  
 1.20 laundry  
 1.00 O.S.  
 2.35 beer  
 .25 snack  
 10.00 sailing  
 2.00 show  
 1.00 coffee  
 4.88 record  
 2.00 food  
 6.00 insurance  
 1.00 catalog  
 1.75 airport bus  
 12.00 gift  
 11.35 stereo equipment  
 .50 service charge  
 5.00 gas  
 10.00 gift  
 .89 record  
 1.96 beer  
 .50 coke  
 5.00 gas

3.14 Tea ceremony stuff  
 .80 carol milk balls  
~~4.81~~ gift  
 3.75 beer  
 .75 beer  
 7.50 gas  
 200.00 rent  
 58.25 clothes  
 .30 stamps  
 16.77 Texts  
 .25 parking  
 17.95 clothes  
 40 Xerox  
 56.80 Texts  
~~1.00~~ test  
 1.44 lunch  
 .25 coffee  
 3.00 registration  
 25.00 dental  
 3.18 beer  
 1.00 toll  
 .45 coffee  
 15.30 stamps  
 2.61 beer  
 1.32 food  
 3.00 lunch  
 2.20 Xerox  
 2.00 gas  
 3.40 beer  
 3.28 beer  
 2.35 beer  
 5.44 Tools

11.61 books  
 .39 soft drink  
 1.65 lunch  
 .35 laundry  
 2.00 cleaning  
 1.10 laundry  
 4.63 antennae  
 2.67 beer  
 inc. 3.60  
 misc. 15.00  
 car wash 32.00  
 Sym Center  
 Total inc 50.60  
 total expenses 591.70  
 Total expenses after inc. 541.10  
 total car 30.20  
 expenses after car 510.92



Nov. 8, 79

Dear Martin & Nancy,

Glad everything is well with you, part way into a rainy November things are alright here. Thank you for the package.

Classes are getting on alright; I've been sick some though. It's hard to make up for what you miss, but I'm trying hard.

Say hello to Katagiri Roshie for me, and sign me up for session too when the list goes up. I'm planning on visiting Boulder, Cahuch in particular, and then taking a bus to Minneapolis arriving either Christmas day or Eve. I'll leave the day after session for New York, and go to London from there if everything works out. Please tell<sup>me</sup> what your



plans are going to be. I look forward  
to seeing you by and by.

Please remind Scott that he prom-  
ised me a list of lecture tapes which haven't  
arrived.

The car is running well, I have  
to rebuild the master brake cylinder soon  
as the brakes drag, probably this week-  
end if I get time. It doesn't die at stop  
signs anymore after its warmed up, maestro  
mechanic did it himself with a tune-up,  
always knew I could. Am putting in  
an AM FM radio <sup>stereo</sup> tape deck, talk about class!

Take care & write.

Love,

Chris

4.50 dinner license  
 .55 laundry  
 .30 Loke  
 17.14 cycle-gloves  
 1.25 beer  
 4.63 oil  
 1.85 trans oil  
 2.59 beer  
 1.00 O.J.  
 2.75 liquor  
 240.00 insurance  
 10.00 cycle garage space rent  
 5.00 gas  
 .45 coffee  
 1.10 treat  
 1.00 O.J.  
 3.98 rear brake shoes (2)  
 .55 laundry  
 4.75 food  
 1.57 cookies  
 .65 laundry  
 5.00 ticket  
 2.55 beer  
 5.60 oil  
 4.26 car parts  
 2.70 beer  
 3.00 gas  
 200.00 rent  
 42.86 clothes  
  
 571.58 total

total car: 304.96  
 & cycle  
 expenses after vehicle: 266.62



Nov. 11, 79

Dear Dad & Wendy,

Glad to hear you're alive and well and back on the boat again. Time goes by quickly in one sense, slowly in another; but I'm almost 23, which to me seems like a far distant point that I thought I'd never reach at one time. On the other hand I'm still real young, my life is in front of me, what I'll do remains open, but for now I'll do school, studying what I'm most interested in, and what I think can help mankind best, in the long range. This last point for me means keeping abreast of the sciences which some people may see as cold, detached and not relevant for deeper understanding; but I see no cold, detached, aspect as being inherent in the sciences, rather it's in the



eye of the beholder.<sup>it seems</sup> Understanding scientific outlook is important for knowing what lies ahead for us, as well as knowing what is possible; and science penetrates every aspect of our lives, so how can we ignore it and bury ourselves in ignorance; the ignorance of not knowing sciences' role in our lives, of refusing to know.

Science is doing, or becomes important when we do something, thus it will always be important.

So I'll keep trying, keep studying hard, and keep learning, knowledge which I'll keep, not just knowledge, something deeper, something which I can have a feeling for, and which becomes a part of me, because it is a part of me, of my being, penetrating all the ways to my bones.

Love,

Chris



Chris died on November 17, 1979  
Robert Pirsig's letter (transcribed from a handwritten draft)

Dear Richard Baker Roshi and other good friends of Christopher Pirsig at the San Francisco Zen Center,

I have just heard of Christopher's death and am in great pain. But in the center of the sadness is a welling up of gratitude to all of you for making the last years of his short life such good ones.

The last words he said to us concerned zazen, which, as you know, was the center of his life. He said, "When the pain comes don't try to work around it, work through it. If you try to work around it you can't make it." It is standard advice but the way he said it, with his whole being, made it original. It was a summation of something he had solved in his own life.

So we are working through the pain now and will honor him by continuing the Buddha way as best we can. This morning at zazen I felt for a moment that we were sitting together again, as we often had in the past.

There are new Christophers being born all the time and they need all of you so badly. Please continue to be as kind to them as you were to this one when they present themselves at your door.

Thank you,  
Robert M. Pirsig