



Prairie Wind

Volume 11, Issue 1

Published by the Order of the Prairie Wind at Nebraska Zen Center/Heartland Temple

Spring 2002

LIKE A BONFIRE

by Nonin Chowaney

Twelve inches of snow had recently fallen on the monastery grounds. Standing on the veranda with her students, the Zen Master said. "How can we walk across the snow without leaving a trace?"

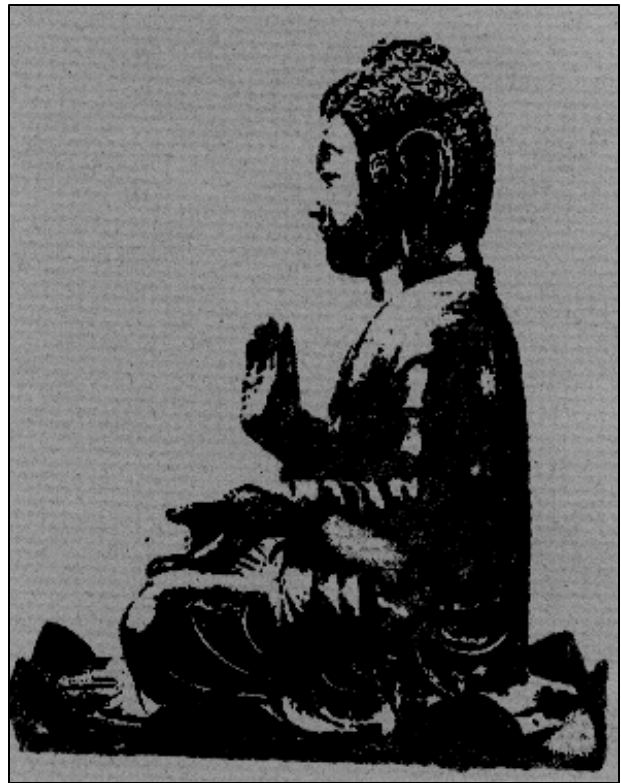
After some discussion, one student asked the teacher, "How would you do it?"

The teacher hiked up her robes and tromped off across the snow. On the other side of the garden, she turned and yelled, "Is that okay?"

In *Zen Mind, Beginner's Mind*, Shunryu Suzuki says, "When you do something, you should burn yourself completely, like a good bonfire, leaving no trace of yourself." Just walk; just stop; just yell; this is how we should live our lives.

We have an opportunity to practice this every moment. The other day when I was reading, the cat jumped up in my lap. When I first brought her home from the Humane Society, she was very skittish. She hung out under the altar in my room all day, hidden by the altar cloth, and I would reach in periodically, pull her out, sit down with her on my chest, and pet her, so she'd get used to me and feel more at home. Now, whenever she wants some attention, usually right after I've sat down, she'll jump up and stretch out on my chest, as she did the other day when I was reading.

I was enjoying the book, however, so I kept on reading while petting her with my free hand, splitting myself right down the middle! Well, this doesn't work too well, so I finally put my book down and devoted full attention to the cat, as I should have in the first place.



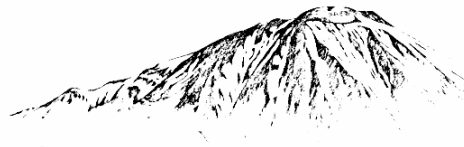
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SHORT SUTRAS

The following short sutras are recited every day in Soto Zen temples throughout the world, sometimes together, sometimes singly, frequently as parts of long ceremonies. These are the translations we use at Heartland Temple. They were done by the North American Soto Zen Translation Conference.

REPENTANCE VERSE

All my past and harmful karma
Born from beginningless greed, hate, and delusion,
Through body, speech, and mind,
I now fully avow.



THREE REFUGE VERSE

I take refuge in Buddha.
May all beings
embody the great Way,
resolving to awaken.

I take refuge in Dharma.
May all beings
deeply enter the sutras,
wisdom like an ocean.

I take refuge in Sangha.
May all beings
support harmony in the community,
free from hindrance.

FOUR VOWS

Beings are numberless; I vow to free them.
Delusions are inexhaustible; I vow to end them.
Dharma gates are boundless; I vow to enter them.
Buddha's Way is unsurpassable; I vow to realize it.



THE FUNCTION OF A ZEN CENTER

from a talk by Joko Beck

In a general way, we can say that the function of a Zen Center is to support practice. But we have a lot of illusions about Zen Centers, as we do about teachers. And one thing we tend to think is that a Zen Center is a place that should be very nice. It is not the function of a center to take care of your comfort or your social life. By that I don't mean that we should not have social events — I think they're great — but they are not the primary function of a center. A Zen Center's function is not to provide people with a social life. It's not necessarily supposed to make them feel good, and it's not supposed to make them feel special.

A center is primarily a tool to assist us in waking up. As a sangha practicing center, yes, we need to support each other, but the nature of that support may not be exactly the kind of support that is often seen in an office. You know, a girl's boyfriend leaves her — “Oh, you poor thing!” There's a “we're all victims in this together” attitude, which is *not* support. The more we practice well, the less we will meet that false kind of support.

Sadly enough, Zen Centers tend to be somewhat ego-perpetuating; we want them to be bigger, better, more important than the other guy's center. There are very subtle ego currents that can circulate in a Zen Center, as in any other organization, if we are not careful.

In regard to the sangha, one point is crucial: The more senior the student, the more I want their influence to be felt through their practice, through their willingness not to seem important, and through their allowing the newer students to assume some of the outwardly conspicuous positions.

The mark of senior students is to be working when no one else knows they're there. That's a sign of a mature practice,

getting the job done and keeping our own importance out of it. Personally, I'm trying to go that way by downplaying the tremendous importance given to the role of a teacher. And I want this to apply to all of the older students. So if you feel you are not getting to do what you usually do, GREAT! Then you have something nice to practice with.

Another mark of a good Zen Center is that it shakes all of us up; it is not the way we want it in our pictures. So, in our upset, what we get back to, then is *the basis of practice*, which is, as near as I can put it into words, to assume more and more of an *observer* stance in our life.

By that I mean that everything in our life will continue to take place — the problems, the emotional difficulties, the pleasant days, the ups and downs — which are what human life consists of. It is the ability not to get *caught*, however, to enjoy what's happening when it's good, to have equanimity when it's bad, and to observe it all, which is the continuing work.

The mark of maturing practice is simply the ability, more and more, to notice what's going on and not be caught by it. Easy to talk about, but probably fifteen to twenty years of hard practice are needed before we are like that a good part of the time.

Joko Beck is the author of *Everyday Zen and other works*. She teaches at Zen Center of San Diego. The above is printed by permission.

Nebraska Zen Center Officers

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Rev. Nonin Chowaney, OPW **Abbot**



Nebraska Zen Center is a Soto Zen Buddhist Temple established for Zen practice. The center follows the tradition established in Japan by Zen Master Eihei Dogen in the 13th century and transmitted in this century by two Masters, Rev. Shunryu Suzuki, founder of San Francisco Zen Center and author of *Zen Mind, Beginner's Mind* and Rev. Dainin Katagiri, who assisted Rev. Suzuki in San Francisco and later founded Minnesota Zen Meditation Center in Minneapolis. Rev. Katagiri was instrumental in establishing Nebraska Zen Center in 1975.

Rev. Nonin Chowaney, an American Zen Master, is NZC's Head Priest and Teacher. He trained with Rev. Katagiri and was ordained by him. Rev. Chowaney also trained at Tassajara Zen Monastery in California and in Japan at Zuio-ji and Shogo-ji monasteries. He received formal Dharma Transmission from Rev. Katagiri and has been certified to teach by him and by the Soto Zen Church in Japan.

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NEBRASKA ZEN CENTER — SANGHA NOTES

Our **ANNUAL FUNDRAISING DRIVE** has been very successful. We raised over \$12,000, which will allow us to begin planning an addition to our building that will double the capacity of our zendo. **Thanks to all for your generosity!**

Our **Annual Sangha Meeting** brought some changes. **Mark Prideaux** and **Hal Holoun** were newly elected to our **Board of Directors** and **Carolyn Hadsell** was re-elected. **Jeff Graef's** term expired, and he chose not to run again because of an impending move out of state. **Jay Pashalek** resigned due to increased work pressures. **We thank them both for serving.** Our **Officers** for the coming year are: **President — Ryoshin Joe Marshall; Vice-president — Heishin Ken McClure; Secretary — Chuko Jean Bailey; Treasurer — Kido Albert Lickel.** A complete list of Board Members appears on page three. **Thanks to all for serving!**

Mark Prideaux and **Greg Petitto** are sewing rakus and will be lay ordained at the temple on March 3rd. **Congratulations to you both.**



Nonin giving a calligraphy demonstration at Clouds in Water Zen Center during the St. Paul Art Crawl — Photo by Rebecca Pavlenko

Nonin continues to travel to lead **seminars, workshops, and retreats.** He recently returned from **Ann Arbor, Michigan,** where he led a Study Seminar in **Zen and American Poetry** at the **Zen Buddhist Temple.** In late March, he'll lead a **two-day sesshin** at **Deep Spring Temple** in **Pittsburgh** and will travel to **St. Paul, Minnesota** in April to lead a workshop in **Soto Zen Ritual** at **Clouds in Water Zen Center.** Later in the year, he'll return to **Deep Spring Temple** for a **month-long retreat in June** and will lead a **Dogen Study Seminar** at **Empty Hand Zendo** in **Rye, New York** next Fall. For information about any of these events, call NZC at **(402) 551-9035** or e-mail us at **heartland@prairiewindzen.org.**

NZC will be closed over Memorial Day Weekend. There'll be no sitting on Friday, May 24th. The temple will re-open with evening sitting on Tuesday, the 28th.

SESSHIN

There will be three sesshins at NZC this Spring, a **One-day sitting** on **Saturday, March 16th,** a **Two-day sesshin** on **April 13th and 14th,** and a **One-day sitting** on **Saturday, May 18th.** Fees: \$30 per day for members; \$40 for non-members. Lower rates may be arranged for those with limited income. Please call **(402) 551-9035** or e-mail **heartland@prairiewindzen.org** to

BUDDHA'S BIRTHDAY

We'll celebrate **Buddha's Birthday** this year with a special ceremony on **Sunday, April 7th** at **10:00 a.m.** Afterwards, there'll be a **pot-luck lunch** with **birthday cake** and **ice-cream.** Everyone is invited to attend.

REMEMBRANCE SERVICE

A service dedicated to deceased Sangha members, relatives, teachers, and friends will be held on **Sunday, May 12th** before dharma talk. Either **bring photographs** of those you would like to remember or **write their names on small cards** to place on the Buddha hall altar (cards will be available at the temple). You will have an opportunity to read the names and make an offering during the service.

OTHER SPRING EVENTS

Mar 3	Lay Ordination
27	Ryaku Fusatsu
Apr 24	Ryaku Fusatsu
May 5	World Peace Ceremony
	Group Discussion
29	Ryaku Fusatsu

ZEN CENTER OF PITTSBURGH – SANGHA NOTES

ZCP WINTER EVENTS

MARCH

- 1 — Dainin Katagiri's Memorial Day*
- 3 — World Peace Ceremony
- 22-24 — Sesshin with Nonin Chowaney
- 26 — Ryaku Fusatsu

APRIL

- 6 — Rakusu Sewing Begins
- 18, 25, May 2, 9 — Intro to Zen (Special four-week course)
- 27 — Ryaku Fusatsu

MAY

- 5 — World Peace Ceremony
- 12 — Remembrance Day
- 24-30 — ZCP Closed

JUNE

- 1-30 — OPW Practice Period
- 2 — Lay Ordination

*special morning service

The **Lay Ordination** process will begin with a **Two-day sesshin** led by **Nonin Chowaney** on **March 22nd-24th**. Nonin will give his dharma talks on the **Sixteen Bodhisattva Precepts**, which form the basis for the ordination ceremony, to be held on **June 2nd**. **Rakusu sewing** in preparation for the ceremony begins on **April 6th**. Those interested in participating should **speak to Kyoki** well before then.

The **Order of the Prairie Wind Practice Period** will be held again this year at **Deep Spring Temple** from **June 1st - 30th**. Members may participate in all or part of the practice period.

ZCP member **Dustin Misosky** is now practicing at San Francisco Zen Center. **We wish him well** and look forward to his return.

Many thanks to **Katherine Brown** for daffodils, our neighbor **Walter Gregg** of Snuggery Farm for the snake fence bordering our driveway, and to **Dr. Alice Greller**, another neighbor, for working with us to secure a grant for replacement windows from the History and Landmarks Commission.



ZCP DAILY SCHEDULE

Monday - Zen Center Closed

Tuesday - Saturday Mornings

- 5:30 a.m. - Zazen
- 6:45 a.m. - Morning Service

Tuesday - Friday evenings*

- 6:00 - 7:15 p.m. - Zazen
- *We no longer sit Saturday evenings.

Sunday

- 9:00 a.m. - Zazen Instruction
- 10:00 a.m. - Zazen
- 10:40 a.m. - Work Practice
- 11:30 a.m. - Service/Lecture
- 12:30 p.m. - Tea
- 1:00 p.m. - Closed till Tuesday a.m.

Sangha members have been busy this Winter. **Mary Rapaport** and **Eden McNutt** have been working on a **cookbook**, which they hope to print this Spring, and **Melodie Stewart** and **Jane Harter** are working on a **quilt** incorporating **Nonin's calligraphy**. Both of these are fund-raising efforts. **Mark Shefsiek** has passed on overall **Building Maintenance** responsibilities to **Belden Ham**. **Melodie**, **Pam Harting**, and **Leslie Hopodar** are **stripping wallpaper** from the hallways, and **Tom Persinger** tuck-pointed the chimney. Tom has also been working on our **new website**. **Thank you all for your efforts!**

Margaret Coghlan represented us at an **Interfaith Prayer for Peace** at the **Sister of St. Francis's** church in Millvale, and **Mimi Jong** spoke at an interfaith gathering in Mt. Lebanon. **Kyoki** led **communications workshops** at **Mt. Equity Zendo** in Muncy, PA and at **Magnanimous Mind Temple** in Asheville, NC. She also facilitated **visioning processes** for **Zen Center of Asheville** and the **Shambala Group of Asheville**.

Zen Center of Pittsburgh / Deep Spring Temple is located at 124 Willow Ridge Road, Sewickly, PA 15143
tel: (412) 741-1262 e-mail: kyoki@prairiewindzen.org website: www.prairiewindzen.org

Like a Bonfire

from page 1

Everything we do in life deserves our full attention; we must "burn ourselves completely with out leaving a trace" moment by moment. My teacher, Dainin Katagiri, used to say, "Just do it, that's all; just do it!" One activity; no thinking; full concentration, without attaching to the result. Then, go on to the next event.

These days, life can be very busy; we get involved with so many things. We buy a newspaper and want to read it, but we also have to eat and then get ready for class, so we spread out the paper on the table and read while we eat. At Tassajara a few years ago, a new student brought a copy of *Time* magazine to the lunch table and begin reading it while spooning soup into his mouth. One of the teachers gently said, "Our practice here is to do one thing at a time."

Sometimes we get so wrapped up in our busy lives that we end up bouncing from one thing to another, trying to cram it all in and subsequently end up not fully participating in anything. In this way, we leave unburned particles of ourselves all over the place.

How often when we're working on something do we turn the music on in the background? Can we truly hear it and participate with it while washing the dishes, or sewing? Can we "just sew" while also listening to music? Can we just drink tea in between sentences while talking to a friend? Can we fully participate in and fully appreciate the life of the tea and our life in that way?

Life is basically very simple: Just do what is in front of us moment by moment. But we complicate it by trying to cram too much in, by holding on to past events, by not finishing one thing before going on to another, by savoring the results of an action, or thinking of how poorly we did, or how it didn't turn out the way we wanted.

I was riding on a train once in Japan with Ikko Narasaki, the abbot of Zuioji monastery. I had wanted to talk to him about something and his attendant motioned to me to approach him, but I was reluctant because he was reading, and I didn't want to disturb him. However, I knew that this was probably my only chance, so I interrupted.

It was immediately clear that he didn't want to be interrupted, but he placed the bookmark, closed the book, and then turned to me so completely that I was struck by the totality of it; just stopping, just closing, just turning, just responding. No book; no abbot. Total burning down to ash. I understood then what it meant to die in every moment.

In Japanese monasteries, these lines from an old poem are frequently quoted: "When the wooden block sounds, it's the Dharma hall; when it's the bell, the Buddha hall." Each instrument signals

How often when we're working on something do we turn the music on in the background? Can we truly hear it and participate with it while washing the dishes, or sewing? Can we "just sew" while also listening to music? Can we just drink tea in between sentences while talking to a friend? Can we fully participate in and fully appreciate the life of the tea and our life in that way?

an event, and monks are taught to *immediately* stop what they are doing when they hear the signal and go. In this way, they learn not only to set aside their personal agenda and respond to calls from the universe but also to leave the last and go on to the next without leaving a trace.

Brother David Steidl-Rast, a well-known Benedictine monk, told a story at Tassajara once about a Catholic abbot who had a very close relationship with one of the young monks at his monastery. In fact, the abbot had been heard saying how much he loved the young man.

WHITE LOTUS SANGHA

The **White Lotus Sangha**, a group affiliated with NZC, meets in three Nebraska prisons, **Nebraska State Penitentiary** and **Lincoln Correctional Center** in Lincoln and **Tecumseh State Correctional Institute** in Tecumseh. For further information, call (402) 551-9035, e-mail heartland@prairiewindzen.org, or write **Nebraska Zen Center, 3625 Lafayette Ave., Omaha, NE, 68131-1363**.

Well, word got around, people began to talk, and a delegation confronted the abbot with what they had heard. The abbot's response was to take the delegation down to the young man's room so they could all

talk.

When they arrived, the abbot knocked on the door. From within, they heard shuffling papers, a book closing, a chair scraping on the floor, and then footsteps approaching the door. It opened and a young man said, "Yes?"

But it was not the young man in question. The abbot said, "Sorry, wrong room."

At the next door, the abbot knocked again. Almost immediately, footsteps were heard, the door opened and a young man said, "Yes?" The abbot said, "Excuse me" and led the delegation into the room and

*The mind is Buddha
how crude!*

*No mind
no Buddha
no deliberation*

*Straw sandals trampling snow
on barrier mountains*

*Everywhere the smell of winter
plums*

*Jakushitsu
trans. Arthur Braverman*

Like a Bonfire

from page 6

over to the young monk's desk. On top was a piece of paper with a half-drawn circle on it, and next to the paper was an uncapped pen. The abbot pointed to the desk, and said, "Wouldn't you love him too?"

Our practice is to live our lives totally and fully moment by moment. As Suzuki-roshi said, to burn ourselves "completely, like a good bonfire, leaving no trace." In this way, as in the life of the young monk and the Zen master tromping through the snow, there is no monk, no master, only walking, writing, stopping, talking. Only activity. Only life.



Floating Clouds — Calligraphy by Nonin Chowaney

UNIVERSALLY RECOMMENDED INSTRUCTIONS FOR ZAZEN

Known in Japanese as *Fukanzazengi*, this work was written by Zen Master Dogen in the thirteenth century. It is chanted in Soto Zen temples throughout the world at the end of evening zazen. The following translation is the one we use at Heartland Temple. It was done by the North American Soto Zen Translation Conference.

The Way is originally perfect and all-pervading. How could it be contingent on practice and realization? The true vehicle is self-sufficient. What need is there for special effort? Indeed, the whole body is free from dust. Who could believe in a means to brush it clean? It is never apart from this very place; what is the use of traveling around to practice? And yet, if there is a hairsbreadth deviation, it is like the gap between heaven and earth. If the least like or dis like arises, the mind is lost in confusion. Suppose you are confident in your understanding and rich in enlightenment, gaining the wisdom that knows at a glance, attaining the Way and clarifying the mind, arousing an aspiration to reach for the heavens. You are playing in the entrance-way, but you still are short of the vital path of emancipation.

Consider the Buddha: although he was wise at birth, the traces of his six years of upright sitting can yet be seen. As for Bodhidharma, although he had received the mind-seal, his nine years of facing a wall is celebrated still. If even the ancient sages were like this, how can we today dispense with wholehearted practice?

Therefore, put aside the intellectual practice of investigating words and chasing phrases and learn to take the backward step that turns the light and shines it inward. Body and mind of themselves will drop away and your original face will manifest. If you want such a thing, get to work on such a thing immediately.

For practicing Zen, a quiet room is suitable. Eat and drink moderately. Put aside all involvements and suspend all affairs. Do not think "good" or "bad." Do not judge true or false. Give up the operations of mind, intellect, and consciousness; stop measuring with thoughts, ideas, and views. Have no designs on becoming a Buddha. How could that be limited to sitting or lying down?

At your sitting place, spread out a thick mat and put a cushion on it. Sit either in the full-lotus or half-lotus position. In the full-lotus position, first place your right foot on your left thigh, then your left foot on your right thigh. In the half-lotus, simply place your left foot on your right thigh. Tie your robes loosely, and arrange them neatly. Then place your right hand on your left leg and your left hand on your right palm, thumb-tips lightly touching. Straighten your body and sit upright, leaning neither left nor right, neither forward nor backward. Align your ears with your shoulders and your nose with your navel. Rest the tip of your tongue against the front of the roof of your mouth, with

teeth and lips together, both shut. Always keep your eyes open, and breathe softly through your nose.

Once you have adjusted your posture, take a breath and exhale fully, rock your body right and left, and settle into steady, immovable sitting. Think of not thinking. Not thinking - what kind of thinking is that? Nonthinking. This is the essential art of zazen.

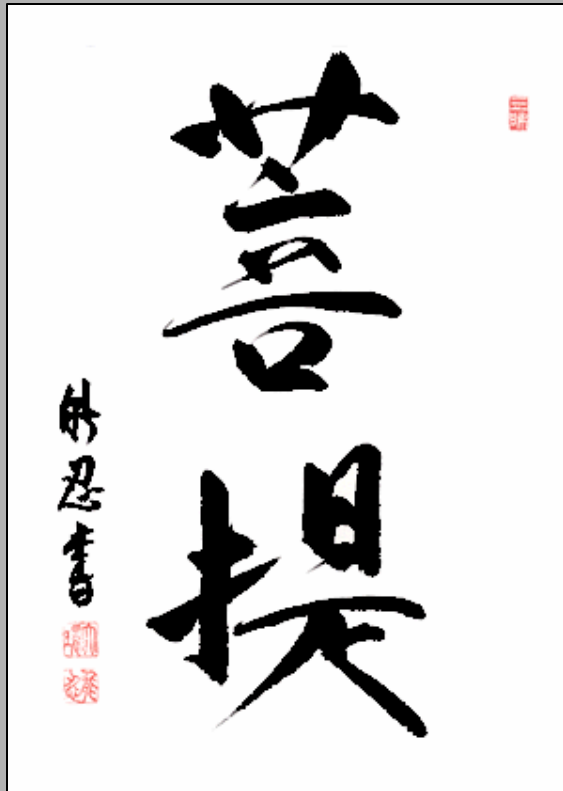
The zazen I speak of is not meditation practice. It is simply the Dharma gate of joyful ease, the practice-realization of totally culminated enlightenment. It is the koan realized; traps and snares can never reach it. If you grasp the point, you are like a dragon gaining the water, like a tiger taking to the mountains. For you must know that the true Dharma appears of itself, so that from the start dullness and distraction are struck aside. When you arise from sitting, move slowly and quietly, calmly and deliberately. Do not rise suddenly or abruptly. In surveying the past, we find that transcendence of both mundane and sacred and dying while either sitting or standing, have all depended entirely on the power of zazen.

In addition, triggering awakening with a finger, a banner, a needle, or a mallet and effecting realization with a whisk, a fist, a staff, or a shout — these cannot be understood by discriminative thinking, much less can they be known through the practice of supernatural power. They must represent conduct beyond seeing and hearing. Are they not a standard prior to knowledge and views?

This being the case, intelligence or lack of it is not an issue; make no distinction between the dull and the sharp-witted. If you concentrate your effort single-mindedly, that in itself is wholeheartedly engaging the Way. Practice-realization is naturally undefiled. Going forward is, after all, an everyday affair.

In general, in our world and others, in both India and China, all equally hold the buddha-seal. While each lineage expresses its own style, they are all simply devoted to sitting, totally blocked in resolute stability. Although they say that there are ten thousand distinctions and a thousand variations, they just wholeheartedly engage the way in zazen. Why leave behind the seat in your own home to wander in vain through the dusty realms of other lands? If you make one misstep, you stumble past what is directly in front of you.

continued on page 9



Enlightenment (Bodhi)

Calligraphy For Sale

Nonin's calligraphy is for sale over the Internet.

All are originals signed and stamped by him and are written on high quality paper, either watercolor or printmaking paper or archival matboard.

We sell and ship them unframed. Each piece can be mounted and framed using traditional methods by any good framer.

The calligraphy can be viewed and purchased through our website, at www.prairiewindzen.org. Click on the **Nebraska Zen Center** website and go to Nonin's **calligraphy pages**.

Instructions for Zazen

from page 8

You have gained the pivotal opportunity of human form. Do not pass your days and nights in vain. You are taking care of the essential activity of the Buddha Way. Who would take wasteful delight in the spark from a flintstone? Besides, form and substance are like the dew on the grass, the fortunes of life like a dart of lightning — emptied in an instant, vanished in a flash.

Please, honored followers of Zen, long accustomed to groping for the elephant, do not doubt the true dragon. Devote your energies to the way that points directly to the real thing. Revere the one who has gone beyond learning and is free from effort. Accord with the enlightenment of all the Buddhas; succeed to the samadhi of all the ancestors. Continue to live in such a way, and you will be such a person. The treasure store will open of itself, and you may enjoy it freely.



COMMUNICATION WORKSHOP

Rev. Kyoki Roberts, Head Priest of Zen Center of Pittsburgh/Deep Spring Temple, has developed a **Communication Workshop** especially for **Buddhist Sanghas**. In it, she leads participants through **skill development in Active Listening, Speaking Up, and Managing Difficult Conversations and Conflict**.

This **one or two-day workshop** begins and ends with **zazen** and has as its foundation the **Sixteen Bodhisattva Precepts** and the recognition that **each of us is Buddha**.

Kyoki has over **ten years** of hands-on mediation experience and was formerly a **mediation trainer** for the State of Nebraska. She has also worked professionally as a mediator with **church and sangha groups**. Kyoki also can provide this workshop to facilitate **visioning** and **decision-making** processes for the Sangha.

If you or your sangha are interested in these workshops, **call (412) 741-1262** or **e-mail kyoki@prairiewindzen.org** for details.

ON ENLIGHTENMENT

from the writings of Zen Master Kosho Uchiyama

People have a misconception about attaining enlightenment that someone who has been deluded becomes enlightened through some kind of sudden experience, and they will never be deluded again. This is not true. When you sit and let go of thoughts right now, you can certainly do it. At that moment, all restraints which bind you hand and foot disappear at once. This is attaining enlightenment. However, on the next day, the woman's face appears again. It will appear again and again not on the next day, but today or even the next moment. So it is not true that if you attain enlightenment once, you finish the great matter and you need not practice any more. As long as there is life, a kind of ready made enlightenment does not work. Dried, frozen, or preserve enlightenment is not good. The enlightenment you attained yesterday has already passed away today. Consequently, when you practice continuously, right here, right now, moment by moment, you actualize enlightenment. To practice this attaining enlightenment until the end of the world is vital.

.....

Zazen is not a means to gradually attain enlightenment. We sit zazen that is dropping off body and mind right now, right here. Practice and enlightenment are not something different. We should not separate practice and enlightenment into two. Since zazen is itself enlightenment, there is no way to think that I become enlightened as a result of zazen practice. To sit zazen is to be in the profound sleep of enlightenment. Therefore, to think that I am enlightened is the same as to think that I sleep well within sound sleep. This is sham sleep. When we sleep really well, we cannot think that we sleep well. In the same way, within zazen, we cannot see if we are enlightened or not. Sometimes we feel clear in zazen, sometimes not; certainly we don't feel clear more often than not. In either condition, zazen is zazen. We sit right in that place where we can look at both enlightenment and delusion equally.

.....

Some people say that we should gain satori [enlightenment] in order to experience dropping off body and mind. However, dropping off body and mind should not be misunderstood as a kind of enlightenment experience in which our body and mind disappear. In the latter part of *Hokyoki* [a work by Zen Master Dogen], it is said that dropping off body and mind is zazen. This is clearly mentioned. Just to sit wholeheartedly is dropping off body and mind. When we sit, letting go of all thoughts which reify abstract concepts, all things fall off. This is dropping off body and mind.

.....

There is a group of people who try to put pass and fail into the world of zazen through enlightenment. If you attain enlightenment, you succeed. If not, you fail. This attitude has nothing to do with the Buddhadharm. It is *samsara* [everday life]. . . . It is not necessary to visit a Zen master to ask if one is enlightened or not. That is really a stupid question.

ZEN AND THE THEATER ARTS WORKSHOP

at Zen Center of Pittsburgh / Deep Spring Temple, July 10 — 20, 2002

No other art form asks its participants to so deeply engage the life and death issues of being human than the theater arts. This July a select group of 12 actors will meet for ten days at a secluded Zen retreat center outside of Pittsburgh to explore the connections between our chosen avocation and what it means to be a human being. To this end, Zen practitioner Keith Hale, actor, director, and faculty member at University of Albany (NY) Theater Arts Department and Rev. Kyoki Roberts, Head Priest at Deep Spring Temple will lead a workshop/retreat that will give experienced Zen students an opportunity to explore their art and will introduce Zen practice to actors seeking a spiritual dimension to their work.

At the core of Zen is a meditation practice that asks “What is this moment?” — the very question the actor must ask as s/he steps on-stage. Your instructors will also include certified movement teachers Margaret Coghlan (Alexander Technique) and Mark Shefsiek (Feldenkrais Technique) — both experienced Zen practitioners.

The culmination of the ten days will be an outdoor workshop performance selected to allow retreatants to respond to life by creating art.

Accommodations: Dormitory or camping on site and vegetarian meals **Cost:** \$750 (includes room, board, and tuition)

Applications: Due by April 15. Please include Bio, Acting experience, 2 acting references w/phone or e-mail, Zen experience. Please mail or e-mail to Zen Center of Pittsburgh, 124 Willow Ridge Road, Sewickley, PA 15143, kyoki@prairiewindzen.org.

Sample schedule: 5:30 AM Wake Up, 6:00 Zazen, 7:00 Service, 7:30 Breakfast, 8:30 Voice and Movement Workshops, 11:30 Zazen, 12:00 Lunch & break, 1:30 - 4:30 Rehearsal, 6:00 Supper, 7:15 Dharma Talk / Q&A
8:00 Zazen, 8:40 End of Day

For further information: (412) 741-1262 or kyoki@prairiewindzen.org



From the editor:

We **always** need material. Send us articles, drawings, poems, photos, cartoons, letters, etc. The deadline for publication in our Spring issue is **May 15th**.

NZC's Website Address is:
www.prairiewindzen.org

Our E-mail address is:
heartland@prairiewindzen.org

WEEKLY ZENDO SCHEDULE

Morning

Tuesday — Sunday

**6:00 - 7:00 — Sitting Meditation
(Walking as Needed)**

7:00 - 7:30 — Service

7:30 - 7:45 — Cleaning

Sunday Only

8:30 — Zazen Instruction

9:00 - 9:25 — Sitting Meditation

9:25 - 9:35 — Walking Meditation

9:35 - 10:00 — Sitting Meditation

10:00 - 10:10 — Service

10:10 - 11:00 — Dharma Talk

Evening

Tuesday — Wednesday

**7:00 - 8:30 — Sitting Meditation
(Walking as needed)**

Thursday

**7:00 - 8:30 — Zazen Instruction
(by appointment; call 551-9035)
— Classes as scheduled**

Friday

**7:00 - 8:30 — Sitting Meditation
(Walking as needed)**

We are closed on Monday