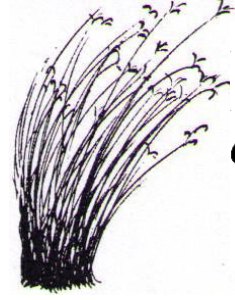


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Prairie Wind



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Volume 23, Issue 1

Spring / Summer 2013

Nebraska Zen Center / Heartland Temple 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, OPW, is NZC's Head Priest. 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 authorized to teach by him and by the Soto Zen Church in Japan. Rev. Chowaney is the founder of the Order of the Prairie Wind.

Zen Center of Pittsburgh / Deep Spring Temple is NZC's sister temple. ZCP also follows the Soto Zen Buddhist tradition established by Zen Master Dogen.

Rev. Kyoki Roberts, OPW, is ZCP's Head Priest and a founding member of the Order of the Prairie Wind. She is the senior ordained student of Rev. Nonin Chowaney and has trained at Hokyoji Monastery in Minnesota, San Francisco Zen Center and Green Gulch Farm in California, and Zuioji and Shogoji monasteries in Japan. Rev. Roberts received Dharma Transmission from Rev. Chowaney and was authorized to teach by him and by the Soto Zen Church in Japan. She was appointed to serve as ZCP's Head Priest in 2001

Prairie Wind (© 2013 Nebraska Zen Center) is the newsletter for both **Nebraska Zen Center / Heartland Temple** and **Zen Center of Pittsburgh / Deep Spring Temple**.

Cover : Avalokiteshvara (the embodiment of compassion)

We **always** need material for *Prairie Wind*. Send us articles, drawings, poems, photos, etc. The deadline for publication in our **Fall** issue is **August 1st**.

Websites for **Nebraska Zen Center** and **Zen Center of Pittsburgh** are at: www.prairiewindzen.org.

Nebraska Zen Center's e-mail address is: heartland@prairiewindzen.org.
Zen Center of Pittsburgh's e-mail address is: kyoki@prairiewindzen.org

UNETHICAL PRACTICES

by Nonin Chowaney

In the light of current sexual scandals that have arisen at Zen Buddhist practice places, people are asking an important question: How can some accomplished Zen Buddhist teachers engage in unethical practices, including, but not limited to, sexual misconduct, when most people, non-practitioners, practitioners, and most Zen Buddhist teachers would not engage in them?

The simplest causes of sexual misconduct are loneliness (especially single people), unhappiness, bad marriages, unfulfilling personal relationships, and thinking that you can get away with it. The three poisons are also causes: greed (I want it, disregarding the other person), hatred (or aversion, discontent with your present situation), or delusion (thinking that the enlightened being (yourself) is above the karmic consequences of your behavior. The list could go on and on.

We need to remember, however, that awakening is not a permanent event, that all of us, even those who have deeply awakened to our true nature and the nature of our relationship to the rest of the universe can fall into delusion in an instant and act badly, causing harm to ourselves and others. We also have to remember that we are all human beings and are all susceptible to human failings. These are the simple answers to the above question.

The more complex answer lies in an issue that has been a part of Zen Bud-

dhism since its beginnings. The best modern exploration of this issue occurs in Robert Aiken's book, *The Mind of Clover; Essays in Zen Buddhist Ethics*. In the first essay, "The Nature of the Precepts," Aitken discusses a famous interchange between the Samurai warrior Musashi Miyamoto and the Zen Master Takuan. Miyamoto asks Takuan how to conduct himself in battle. Takuan replies:

The uplifted sword has no will of its own, it is all of emptiness. It is like a flash of lightning. The man who is about to be struck down is also of emptiness, as is the one who wields the sword. . . .

Do not get your mind stopped with the sword you raise; forget about what you are doing, and strike the enemy. Do not keep your mind on the person before you. They are all of emptiness, but beware of your mind being caught in emptiness.

Well, even though Takuan says don't be "caught in emptiness," he recommends that Miyamoto do so, dwell in the absolute, forget about the relative, and then you are blameless. But what about the first Pure Precept: "A follower of the Way does no harm." And what about the Prohibitory Precept on killing: "A follower of the Way does not kill but rather cultivates and encourages life." Takuan has

continued on page 4

Unethical Practices

from page 3

gone a little off by ignoring these.

Robert Aitken comments on Takuan's statement thusly:

The Devil quotes scripture, and Mara, the incarnation of ignorance, can quote the Abhidharma. The fallacy of the Way of the Samurai is similar to the fallacy of the Code of the Crusader. Both distort what should be a universal view into an argument for partisan warfare. The catholic charity of the Holy See did not include people

verse.

. . . If there is no sword, no swing of the sword, no decapitation, then what about all the blood? What about the wails of the widow and children? the absolute position, when isolated, omits human details completely. Doctrines, including Buddhism, are meant to be used. Beware of them taking life of their own, for then they use us. Nirvana, the purity and clarity of the void, is the name we give to the total peace one experiences in

Your beliefs don't make you a good person; your behavior does.

it called pagans. The vow of Takuan Zenji to save all beings did not encompass the one he calls the enemy.

Later on in his book, in the chapter on the precept against killing, Aitken re-examines Takuan's statement:

The Buddha-nature view is summed up in the Heart Sutra. "There is no old age and death, and also no ending of old age and death." It is important to see into this passage clearly. The first point is that in the world of nirvana, the real world of empty infinity, there is nothing to be called death. From this point of view, Takuan Zenji is right: there is no one killing, no killing, and no one to be killed. The peace of infinite emptiness pervades the uni-

deapest realization. But that is the same sea that we experience rising and falling in samsara, the relative world of coming and going. We cannot abstract depth from surface, nor surface from depth. Killing, even in an exalted state of mind, cannot be separated from suffering.

Nor can stealing, lying, cheating, improper sexual conduct, or any of the other unethical behaviors covered by the Sixteen Bodhisattva Precepts. We have to remember that one's beliefs, title, or spiritual status do not make one a good person. One's behavior does. And negative behavior, that which causes suffering, is negative behavior, no matter who commits it, and we reap the consequences of negative behavior.

continued on page 5

Unethical Practices

from page 4

One of the earliest examples of how we can go off if we only dwell in the absolute and neglect the relative and the precepts occurs in a Zen Buddhist text called *The Dialogue of the Contemplation Extinguished*. The text is sometimes attributed to Bodhidharma, but there is no historical evidence of this. The dialogue is between a master called "Attainment" and his disciple called "Gateway" and is a brilliant exploration of the absolute side of existence. However, the following passage was pointed out to us and examined by my master, Dainin Katagiri, when he and his disciples studied the text (trans. Gishin Tokiwa) with him many years ago:

Part VI

1. Gateway asks, "Does the Way lie only in the spiritual body? Or does it also lie in grass and trees?"

Attainment says, "The Way has no place where it does not pervade."

2. Asked, "If the Way is so pervasive, why is it that to kill a man is criminal whereas to kill grass and trees is not criminal?"

Answered, "to speak of crime and non-crime follows the discriminative mind, and is based on particularity; neither is the right Way. Only because men [and women] of the world, not having attained the Way, falsely set up their own [and other] selves, is

killing intentional. The intention bears fruit of karma. Hence the speaking of crimes.

Grass and trees, having no discriminative mind, originally accord with the Way. Since they are free from ego-centeredness, their killer engages in no calculation. Hence no arguing about crime or non-crime.

Now the one who is free from ego-centeredness, who thus accords with the Way, looks at his body as at grass or a tree, and suffers the cutting of his body with a sword as trees in a forest do. Therefore, Manjusri's grasping a sword against Gautama [Buddha] and Angulimalya's holding a dagger against Sakyauni are all in accord with the Way. Both attain the No origination, and completely realize the mirage-like transformation of what are hollow and vacant in their identity. That is why there is no arguing about either a crime or a non-crime."

However, as Robert Aitken has said, "What about the blood? What about the wails of the widow and children?"

Whenever we try to justify our behavior by citing the absolute and deluding ourselves by thinking that we can abide there and ignore the relative, we go off, as Zen Buddhist teachers do when they ignore the precepts — which are meant to guide us as we make our way in the relative world — and engage in unethical practices.

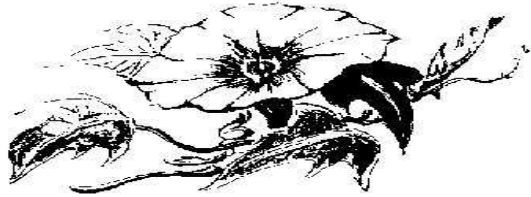
continued on page 14

NEBRASKA ZEN CENTER SANGHA NOTES

Sangha members **Jose Correa** and **Pam Griffin** are sewing rakus in preparation for a Precept Ceremony signifying **Lay Initiation** at the temple on Sunday, March 31st at 10:00 a.m. **All are invited** to attend the ceremony. There'll be a pot-luck lunch afterwards, so please bring a dish to share.

We have finished the **West side** of our **temple addition**, which includes two ADA bathrooms, shoe racks, coat pegs, and a small sitting area (see pictures on pgs. 20 & 21). Many thanks to sangha members **Kyosai Sarah Nepl** and **Nonin** for insulating the space, to **Nonin**, **Toze Hal Holoun**, and **Kyosai Sarah** for painting, to **Kanho Doug Dittman** for laying the tile and wood flooring, and to **Rob Bailey** and **Kanho Doug** for staining and applying the wood trim.

It's been many years since we began planning both sides of our **temple additions** project, and we're all enjoying our new spaces! **Many, many thanks** to all who participated in the planning and the work, and **many, many thanks** to those whose donations financed the project.



April Sesshin, on the **13th and 14th** will be led by Nonin's dharma brother, **Dosho Port**.

Nonin and **Kanho Doug Dittman** are working toward **Lay Entrustment**, by which Nonin will authorize Kanho Doug as an independent **Lay Teacher**. The ceremony will be held sometime this Spring, and further info will follow. Information about **Branched Oak Zendo**, an affiliate of Nebraska Zen Center / Heartland Temple that Kanho Doug will be responsible for appears on **pg. 13**.

ZEN CENTER OF PITTSBURGH / DEEP SPRING TEMPLE IS HOLDING A FOUR WEEK INTENSIVE PRACTICE PERIOD FROM JUNE 1ST—30TH LED BY REV. KYOKI ROBERS. YOU MAY REGISTER BY CONTACTING: kyoki@prairiewindzen.org.

NZC SPRING / SUMMER EVENTS

SESSHIN

There will be two sesshins at NZC this Spring and Summer: **Two-day Sesshins** on **April 13th & 14th** and on **June 22nd & 23rd**. Fees: \$40 per day for members; \$50 for non-members. Lower rates are available for those with limited income. **E-mail** us at heartland@prairiewindzen.org or call **402-551-9035** to register.

BUDDHA'S BIRTHDAY

We'll celebrate **Buddha's Birthday** with a special service on **Sunday, April 7th**, at **10:00 a.m.**, after regular 9:00 zazen. Afterwards, there'll be a dharma talk, and then, there'll be birthday cake and ice-cream. **Everyone in invited** to attend.

Please Note: the temple will be closed over Memorial Day Weekend from Thursday evening, the 23rd, through Tuesday, the 28th. We will re-open with morning sitting and service on Wednesday, May 29th.

WEEKLY ZENDO SCHEDULE — NEBRASKA ZEN CENTER

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

6:00 - 8:30 — Classes as scheduled

Friday

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

We are closed on Monday.

If you are new to the temple, you must have zazen instruction before joining us. Please arrive by 8:30 on Sunday morning for instruction.

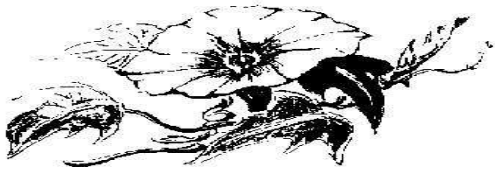
ZEN CENTER OF PITTSBURGH SANGHA NOTES

If you want to receive monthly schedule updates and last-minute changes to events. Join our e-mail list. Go to <http://www.prairiewindzen.org/zcp/list.htm> and register. Or, e-mail ZCP at kyoki@prairiewindzen.org. You will also receive our monthly e-Newsletter.

We sadly announce the death of ZCP member **Christina Radzilowitz**. Just before she died, she was able to take the precepts with Jisen and Kyoki. She received the dharma name of **Shin'yu (Truth Companion)**. To her family and friends, we express our deepest sympathy for the loss of a dear wife, mother, friend, and activist.

On **January 6th**, **Dave Belako** and **David Pettersen** formally accepted the Sixteen Bodhisattva Precepts in a **Lay Initiation Ceremony** at Deep Spring Temple. They each **sewed a rakusu** in preparation for the ceremony and were given **dharma names** by Kyoki. Dave's is **Zenetsu (Zen Joy)**, and David's is **Gendo (Subtle Way)**. Thank you both for taking this important step in your spiritual lives.

Doshu Port returned to Deep Spring to lead February sesshin. **As always, we are deeply grateful for his teaching and guidance.**



Monday, February 25th, **Dinky**, the little black cat, who was already in residence when ZCP purchased our current property, **died at the age of 22**. He received the dharma name of **Dai-un (Great Cloud)**. His quiet presence is deeply missed.

Finally, **best wishes** and a very **deep bow** of gratitude to **Zenshin Steven Caraor**, who recently left ZCP to pursue further education at Penn State University. Steven was in residence at the temple for the past year-and-a-half.

Zen Center of Pittsburgh / Deep Spring Temple, 124 Willow Ridge Road,
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website: www.prairiewindzen.org

ZCP SPRING / SUMMER EVENTS

MARCH

- 1 — Katgiri-roshi Memorial
- 3 — World Peace Ceremony
- 9-16 — Closed for Naikan Retreat *
- 24 — Annual Sangha Meeting
- 27 — Precept Renewal Ceremony

APRIL

- 6 — Difficult Conversations Training *
- 7 — World Peace Ceremony
- 28 — Precept Renewal Ceremony

MAY

- 5 — World Peace Ceremony
- 19 — Vesak, UU Northside, 2 p.m.
- 24 — Precept Renewal Ceremony

JUNE

- 1-30 — June Practice Period*
- 1-4 — Sesshin with Myozan Keegan*
- 2 — World Peace Ceremony
- 7, 14, 21 — Precept Renewal Ceremony
- 28-30 — Sesshin*

JULY

- 1-5 — Zen Center Closed
- 7 — World Peace Ceremony
- 20 — Ikko Narasaki Memorial
- 24 — Precept Renewal Ceremony

*Please register for this event

ZCP DAILY SCHEDULE

Closed Mondays

- Tuesday — 7-7:40 a.m. DST
6-7:15 p.m. DST
- Wednesday — 5:30-7:15 a.m. DST
6:00-7:15 p.m. DST & FMH
- Thursday — 5:30-7:15 a.m. DST
6:00-7:15 p.m. DST
- Friday — 5:30-7:15 a.m. DST
6:00-7:15 p.m. DST
- Saturday — 5:30-7:15 a.m. DST
- Sunday — 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. DST

DST — Deep Spring Temple, Bell Acres
FMH — Friends Meeting House, Oakland

WHITE LOTUS SANGHA NOTES

by Zenryu Vicki Grunwald

Currently at our White Lotus Sangha meetings we are discussing sections from *Buddhas Behind Bars*, a book by Tonen O’Conner, Head Priest Emeritus at Milwaukee Zen Center.

Tonen has been visiting groups in Wisconsin prisons for many years, and in this book, she’s compiled and edited the stories of three prison inmates, recounted in their own words. They tell how they grew up, and how they went wrong; they talk about their crimes, and tell how their lives changed within prison as they encountered the teachings of the Buddha and the Tao.

Normally, I hate testimonials, especially religious ones, because religion is not a magic cure. Also, Zen Buddhism is not a means to an end, such as peace of mind, parole, etc. Ideally, we practice with no gaining idea, which means that we practice for the sake of practice, because it is intrinsically good, not because we think we are going to get something out of it down the line.

However, the stories in *Buddhas Behind Bars* are very interesting and offer many insights into practice, not only in prison, but also into everyday life anywhere. During our White Lotus Sangha meetings, we read passages from the book, some

where the men offer their insights, and we discuss them. Or, we talk about the dharma issues that arise in their narratives.

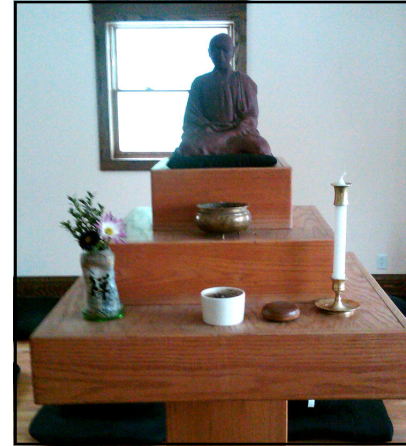
During Practice Periods at Heartland Temple in Omaha, we write in a journal and turn it in to our teacher, Nonin, who comments about dharma issues that arise in our writings. For example, I might write that a co-worker made me angry because he is

WHITE LOTUS SANGHA

The **White Lotus Sangha**, a group affiliated with NZC, meets on Friday evenings in four Nebraska prisons, **Nebraska State Penitentiary** and **Lincoln Correctional Center** in Lincoln, **Tecumseh State Correctional Institute** in Tecumseh, and **Omaha Correctional Center** in Omaha. For further information, see **the Religious Coordinator** at either of the above institutions, e-mail heartland@prairiewindzen.org, call **(402) 551-9035**, or write **Nebraska Zen Center, 3625 Lafayette Ave., Omaha, NE, 68131-1363**.

stupid. Nonin will write back something like, “your co-worker did not make you angry; anger arose in you. He is not stupid; he acted stupidly.” These ways of seeing things are very helpful when trying to live the Buddha Way in our daily lives. Hopefully, reading sections from this book and

AROUND THE TEMPLE



Zendo Altar



Nonin and little Margot Neppi



Kanho Doug Dittman and Buddy, working on West addition



Study Group

In Memoriam – Sammy 1998-2012

One of our beloved temple resident dogs — my dear, longtime companion Sammy — passed away last December. He was fifteen years old and had been fading for quite some time. One morning, he lay in his bed whining and struggling to get up. I had



to help him up and guide him down-stairs so he could go outside and do his business.

I decided that he'd suffered enough and that it would only get worse, so, with Ryoshin Joe Marshall's help, I took him to the vet who'd treated him his whole life and had him put down. I

cried and cried, and then Joe and I took Sammy to a pet funeral home, did a chanting and bowing service for him, placed him in a casket, and returned to the temple. The next day, the woman from the funeral home took Sammy's body to be cremated. When the process was finished, she took his ashes back to the mortuary, and I picked them up later. Most of Sammy's ashes are now in an urn on my personal altar at the temple. The rest I intend to spread at the places outdoors where we loved to walk over the years.

Sammy came to live at the temple with me when he was ten months old. I loved him very much, and I miss him.



SANGHA MEMBERSHIP AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT NEBRASKA ZEN CENTER / ZEN CENTER OF PITTSBURGH

Membership

While no one needs to formally join either temple to share in our practices, we invite you to become a member of either Nebraska Zen Center or Zen Center of Pittsburgh. Members are people who feel that Zen Buddhism is an important part of their lives and who wish to express that feeling by joining a community of practitioners.

If you are interested in becoming a member, please speak with the appropriate person at either temple after Sunday services.

Financial Support

Buddhist communities have always relied on the generosity of their supporters. For income, we depend on those who believe in the good of what we do and wish to nourish it.

No one is refused temple membership due to an inability to pay. We do, however, encourage members to commit to our financial support through monthly pledges. We also encourage members to exhibit this support through participation in work projects.

The amount of your pledge is your personal decision. We ask you to support the temple at a level appropriate to your means. For those who participate regularly, we suggest a monthly pledge that reflects one hour of your earnings per week, or four hours per month. Because we are non-profit religious corporations, all donations are tax deductible.

BRANCHED OAK ZENDO

A group affiliated with NZC meets weekly on **Thursday evenings at 7:00 pm at Branched Oak Farm, 17015 NW 70th St, Raymond, NE 68428-4041**. For further information, e-mail or call **Kanho Doug Dittman at dougd@windstream.net (402-783-2124)**. Zazen Instruction is available for newcomers if arranged in advance.

Unethical Practices

from page 5

The law of cause and effect governs all our actions. No one can escape it, even the Zen Buddhist master who foolishly thinks that he or she is beyond it. In more recent Zen Buddhist literature, the Wild Fox koan speaks to this issue:

Every day when Zen master Baizhang spoke in the hall, there was an old man who would attend along with the assembly. One day when the congregation had departed, the old man remained.

Baizhang asked him, "Who are you?"

The old man said, "I'm not a person. Formerly, during the age of Kasyapa Buddha, I was the abbot of a monastery on this mountain. At that time a student asked me. 'Does a great adept fall into cause and effect or not?' I answered, saying, 'A great adept does not fall into cause and effect.' Thereafter, for five hundred lifetimes I've been reborn in the body of a fox. Now I ask that the master say a turning phrase in my behalf, so that I can shed the fox's body."

Baizhang said, "Ask the question."

The old man said, "Does a great adept fall into cause and effect or not?"

Baizhang said, "A great adept is not blind to cause and effect."

Upon hearing these words, the old

man experienced unsurpassed enlightenment. He then said, "Now I have shed the body of a fox. I lived behind the mountain. Please provide funeral services for a monk who has died."

When Zen Buddhist masters ignore the law of cause and effect and fail to live ethically according to the precepts, they have manifested negative actions. They then create suffering not only for themselves but also for others, for as I mentioned earlier, "karma" means "action." The law of karma is: positive actions have positive results, negative actions have negative results, neutral actions have neutral results. No one is above this law, no matter how long one has practiced or how deep their understanding.

Nonin Chowaney is the Abbot of Nebraska Zen Center / Heartland Temple.



SANKON ZAZEN SETSU

The Three Personalities in Training

by Zen Master Keisan Jokin

Those who do zazen naturally have no interest in such matters as how Buddhas appear in this present world, nor do they consider truths that are un-transmittable by even the Buddhas and Ancestors. They do not doctrinalize about all things being expressions of the self, for they are beyond enlightenment and delusion. Since they never consider anything from a dualistic point of view, nothing ever enslaves them, even when differences show themselves. They just eat when they are hungry and sleep when they are tired.

Those who do zazen completely, seamlessly, give up everything and cut all ties. Since throughout the entire day they are never idle, every moment of life, every breath, is a meditation upon truth; as an alternative to this, they may concentrate on a koan with eyes fixed on one place, such as the tip of the nose. The considerations of life and death, or going and staying, are not to be seen upon the face. The discriminatory mind can never perceive the highest truth of the eternal, nor can it comprehend the Buddha mind. Since there is no dualism in their thought, they are enlightened. From the far past to the present day, wisdom is always shining clearly and brightly. The whole universe in

all the ten directions is permeated suddenly by the illumination from their heads; all phenomena are seen separately within their bodies.

Those who do zazen single-mindedly consider everything from all angles before freeing themselves from good and evil karma. Their minds express naturally the true nature of all the Buddhas, for their feet stand where the Buddha stands; thus are evil ways avoided. The hands are in the position for meditation, holding no scripture. The mouth being tightly



shut, it is as if a seal were upon the lips, for no word of any doctrine is ever uttered. The eyes are neither wide open nor half shut; in no way is anything considered from the point of view of differentiation, for the voice of good and evil is not listened to. The nose takes no cognizance of smell as either good or bad; the body relies upon nothing, for all delusion is suddenly ended. Since there is no delusion to disturb the mind, neither sorrow nor joy is to be found. As in the case of a wooden Buddha, both material and form are one with the truth. Although worldly thoughts may arise,

CALLIGRAPHY FOR SALE ON OUR WEBSITE



Mu (nothing)

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

There are **over fifty items for sale**, one and two-character pieces, longer phrases, and specialty items. All are **signed and stamped originals** and are written on high-quality paper, either Canson water-color paper, Rives BFK, or archival matboard.

Nonin also accepts **commissions** to write temple names, individual dharma names, and specific characters or Zen phrases. **For further information**, contact him directly at the following e-mail address: heartland@prairiewindzen.org.

We sell and ship the calligraphy unframed. **Each piece can be mounted and framed by a good framer using traditional methods.**

All profits from website calligraphy sales go directly to Nebraska Zen Center / Heartland Temple.

Winter Prayer

Brooklyn NY
February 1999

*Let the winters here become cold again
beset with cold winds and bitter snows.*

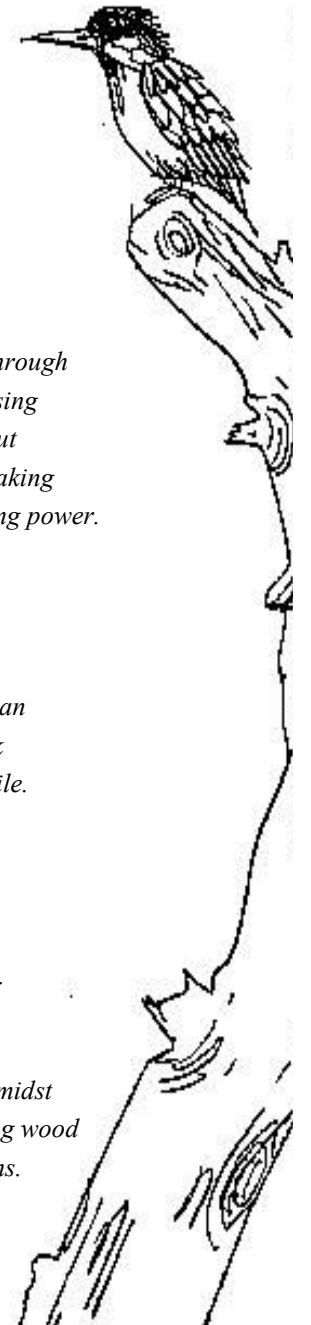
*Let a blustery arctic wind come blowing through
the streets and into the alleyways, not missing
a nook or corner, and let it chill the hell out
of everything and everyone to the bone, making
us all shiver and stand in awe of its piercing power.*

*Let the snow cover and blanket everything
in the city, and let the skies be full of slow
moving billowy clouds, so that when night
arrives, a steel blue, speckled with stars, can
come peeping through, making a man look
and think of nothing else but that for a while.*

*Let these winters make him think of only
the cold, giving birth to a thankfulness for
what he has; warm clothing, the coziness
of a warm house, family, friends and work.*

*And then let it snow some more, so that he
can walk along the quiet lamp lit streets amidst
the little houses spewing aromas of burning wood
and among the trees sprouting ice blossoms.*

Marvin Blaustein





Moon — Calligraphy by Ikko Narasaki

White Lotus Sangha

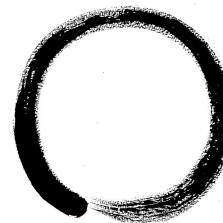
from page 10

discussing them with the men will serve the same purpose.

Speaking of this book, Brad Warner, author of *Hardcore Zen*, says, “Told with sometimes shocking honesty, these stories bring to life a struggle to build a life of positive action within the sea of negativity that surrounds them ‘inside.’ Vivid pictures of prison life illustrate the ups and downs of men slowly finding a Way that offers them stability. Described in their own words, their encounter with the teachings offered by the prison program of the Milwaukee Zen Center over a period of more than ten years offers a window into the lives and struggles of members of the prison sangha.”

I highly recommend this book.

Zenryu Vicki Grunwald serves as a Lay Minister for White Lotus Sangha.

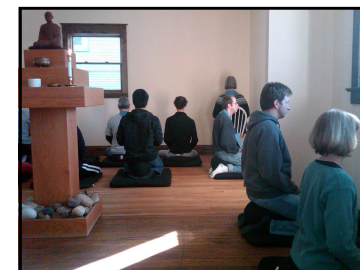


Sankon Zazen Setsu

from page 15

they are not disturbing, for the mind is a bright mirror in which no shadows move. From zazen, the precepts arise eternally, whether they are the five, the eight, the great precepts of the bodhisattva, the precepts of the priesthood, the three thousand manners, the eighty thousand beliefs, or the highest law of the Buddhas and ancestors. In all training, nothing whatsoever compares with zazen.

Even if only one merit is gained from doing zazen, it is greater than the building of a hundred, a thousand, or an uncountable number of temples.



Just do zazen forever, without ceasing, for by so doing, we are free of birth and death and realize our own latent Buddha nature. It is perfect and natural to go, stay, sit, and lie down; to see, hear, understand, and know are natural manifestations of the True Self; between first mind and last mind there is no difference, and none can make an argument about either knowledge or ignorance. Do zazen with your whole being; never forget and lose it.

trans. by Jiyu Kennett



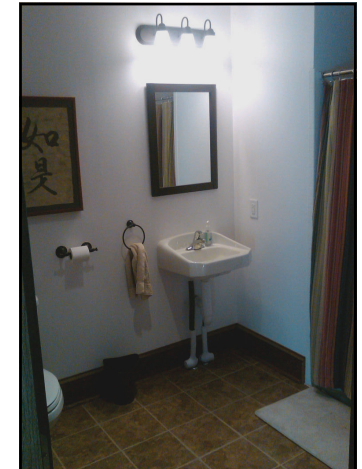
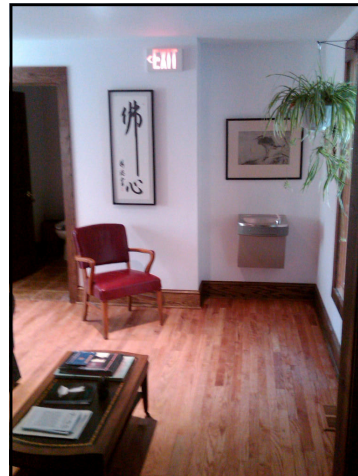
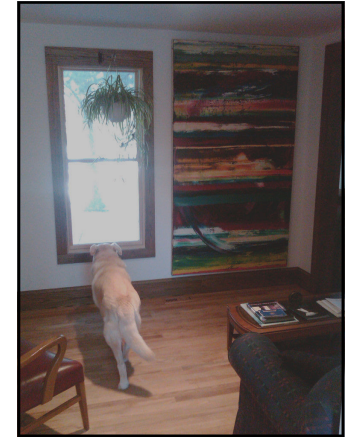
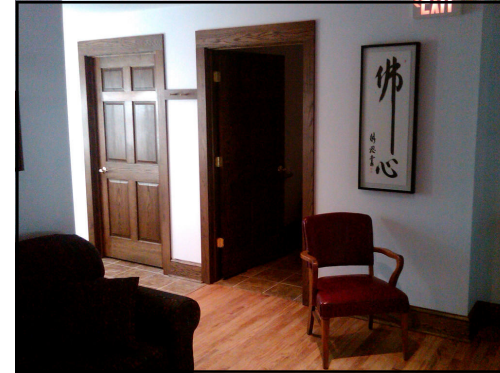
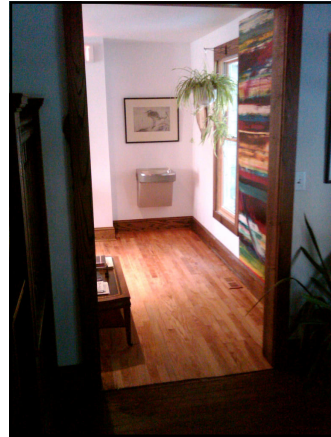
*Meditation Workshop
at
Nebraska Zen Center*

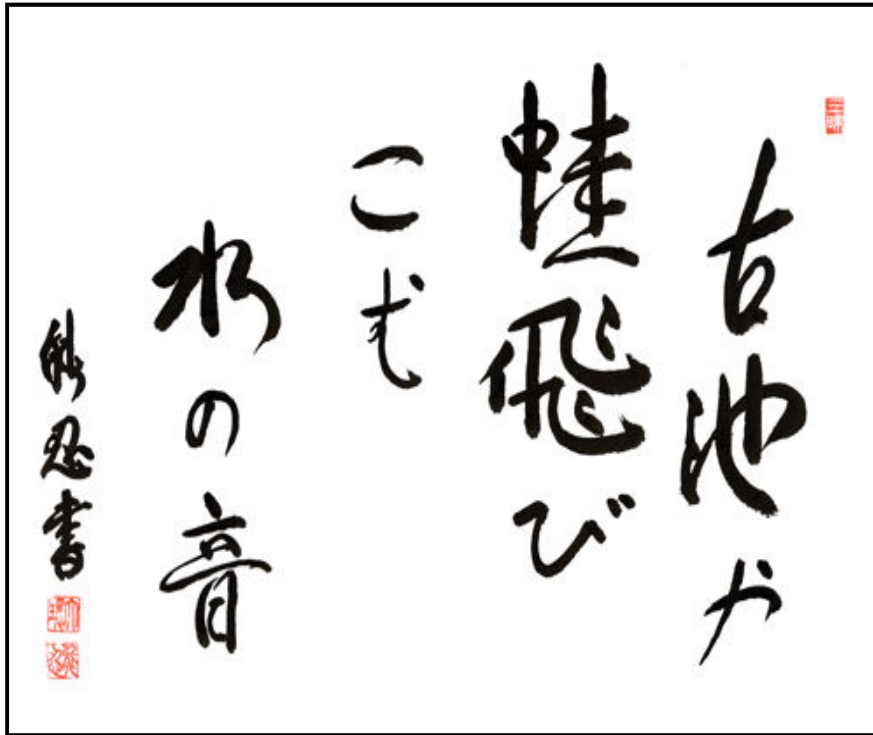
A **three-hour workshop** in Zen Meditation for the beginner, including instruction in **sitting and walking meditation that harmonizes body, mind, and breath.**

Taught by **Rev. Nonin Chowaney**, abbot of Nebraska Zen Center / Heartland Temple, at 3625 Lafayette Ave, Omaha, NE 68131 on Saturday, March 23rd, from 10 a.m. till 1 p.m. Fee: \$20

For further info or to register, either e-mail heartland@prairiewind.zen.org or call 402-551-9035.

NEW WEST ADDITION





*Furu ike ya
kawazu tobikomu
mizu no oto*

**Ancient pond
Frog jumps in
sound of water**

**Haiku by Basho
Calligraphy by Nonin Chowaney**

WISDOM AND COMPASSION

The practice of zazen (sitting meditation) cultivates wisdom and compassion, which are primary in Zen Buddhism.

Wisdom is seeing — not with the eyes but with our whole being — things as they are, not as we think they are. We see who we are and what our relationship is to the rest of the universe. We see the truth of impermanence, that all things come to an end, and the all things are constantly changing moment-by-moment. We also see that all things are interdependent and only exist in relationship with other things, that nothing stands alone. We then function in our daily lives from this understanding.

Compassion literally means to “feel with,” and this means to feel or experience the suffering of another being. However, feeling another being’s suffering is only half of Buddhist compassion. The other half is wanting to do something about it. Sometimes all we can do is empathize, maybe hold someone’s hand; sometimes we can offer a kind word, give a hug, feed the birds in the winter, volunteer in a shelter, or water the flowers. Compassion ultimately means to forget yourself, and just be there. If someone is suffering, just listen. Hear what the person is saying; honor what he or she is feeling. Hold the person’s hand; give them a tissue to wipe their tears. Try to be a calm, soothing presence, but most important, just be there, fully.

When we manifest wisdom and compassion, we become Buddha, which is our true nature.

Nonin Chowaney