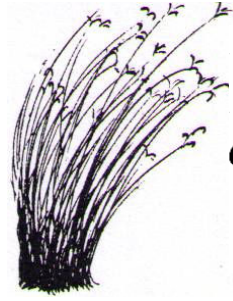


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PAID
Omaha, Nebraska
PERMIT NO. 1370

Address Service Requested



Prairie Wind



*Published by the Order of the Prairie Wind for Nebraska Zen Center /
Heartland Temple and Zen Center of Pittsburgh / Deep Spring Temple*

Volume 24, Issue 3

Winter 2014

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. (OPW)

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 (© 2014 Nebraska Zen Center) is the newsletter for both **Nebraska Zen Center / Heartland Temple** and **Zen Center of Pittsburgh / Deep Spring Temple**.

Cover: Dharma — Calligraphy by **Nonin Chowaney**

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

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@deepspringzen.org

WALKING IN THE MIST

by *Nonin Chowaney*

Most people begin Zen Buddhist practice because of dissatisfaction with their daily lives. Reading about Zen, discussing it with friends, or taking a course in Buddhism at the university comes out of curiosity and is a necessary beginning, but practice comes from a deeper place, from lingering dissatisfaction or, sometimes, desperation.

My Zen practice began this way. Forty-five years ago, I went through a period of severe anxiety and depression due to my inability to handle a lingering illness and a failing marriage. Also, my father died during this period and that added to my distress. I floundered through deep depressions that sometimes lasted days, or weeks; all the classic symptoms were there: crying jags, heart palpitations, inability to cope with daily routine, deep feelings of hopelessness.

I had become interested in Buddhism years before, through the novels of Jack Kerouac and the poetry of Allen Ginsberg and Gary Snyder. I had even flipped through Alan Watts' *The Way of Zen* a few times. I wouldn't recommend this book now, but at the time, it did have an effect on me, if only to spur my interest. It was one of the few books on Zen around. However, I never meditated, or sat zazen. I read books, which is like going to a restaurant and eating the menu. You get some idea of what it's about, but no sustenance.

In the middle of this bleak period in my life, which lasted five years, a friend gave me a copy of Philip Kapleau's *The Three Pillars of Zen*. I devoured this

book and first sat zazen following its instructions. I vividly remember this experience, even though it was so long ago. I sat for ten minutes, in a kneeling posture called "seiza" on a carpeted floor in my bedroom, using the pillows from the bed to prop myself up, and I felt as if I had come home. Thinking of this now, I remember Shakyamuni Buddha's words: "Learning and thinking are like being outside the door; meditation is returning home to sit in peace."

After that experience, I continued to sit for a time. I also still read a lot, about all forms of Buddhism -- Zen, Theravadin, and Tibetan -- but I always returned to Zen. Kapleau-roshi's Zen Center was near my parents' home in Central New York, and I went there once for formal zazen instruction. However, my sitting practice was haphazard and intermittent, and gradually it withered away. I finally stopped sitting all together. Eventually, I ended my marriage, made other changes in my life, and the depression also withered away.

Over the next ten years, I would start sitting when my life fell apart and stop when things got better. I went through this pattern five or six times until I found myself in Minneapolis in the late 1970's, near bottom again, out of work, the latest love relationship over. Once again, I remembered zazen, but a couple of years before, my dog had eaten my sitting cushions. I thumbed through the phone book, thinking, "this is a big city, maybe there's a Zen Center here," and there was. I went over, bought cushions, and began sit-

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Walking in the Mist

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ting at home. A week later, I went back to hear a lecture by Dainin Katagiri. The pupil was ready, and the teacher had appeared. I was irrevocably hooked.

I began a daily zazen practice with Katagiri-roshi and have continued since, practicing at Minnesota Zen Center through lay ordination and priest ordination and later at San Francisco Zen Center and Tassajara Monastery in California with Tenshin Anderson and at Zuioji and Shogoji Monasteries in Japan with Ikko Narasaki. I've now been practicing continuously for thirty-five years and this past Summer, I celebrated thirty years as an ordained Zen Buddhist priest, the last twenty-three as Abbot of Nebraska Zen Center / Heartland Temple in Omaha.

The details of my practice over the years are unique, but the pattern is not. People begin to sit when things are rough, and subsequently, their lives begin to smoothe out. Then, they stop sitting, and things get rough again. So they go back to their cushions, and the cycle continues. Years ago in Minneapolis, a woman began sitting regularly after her boyfriend left her. She maintained her regularity for weeks and gradually got her equilibrium back. She then found a new boyfriend, began a relationship, and stopped sitting. We didn't see her again for a year. Then, that relationship ended, and she began sitting again regularly. This pattern continued through three relationships in five years! I've lost track of her now and wonder sometimes where and how she ended up.

Over the years, I've learned the importance of "just continuing," of practicing the Buddha Way as best you can throughout the ups and downs of life, which are always with us, no matter how long we practice. I heard someone say once that the key to life is "showing up every day." I think that this is also the key to Zen Buddhist practice.

The basic instruction Soto Zen teachers give is: sit down in a good posture, allow thoughts to come up without suppressing anything, and let them go without clinging to anything. Things will eventually take care of themselves, and understanding will come. But this takes time and effort. We must be patient. The ups and downs continue, but we continue to practice through them. By doing so, we ground ourselves and are not swept away by highs or devastated by lows.

Now, I'm still in Omaha, trying my best to practice the above, just continuing, day by day. I don't always continue smoothly; sometimes health and age issues get in the way. Sometimes, I get discouraged, but I remember what my teacher, Dainin Katagiri, told me about discouragement years ago: "You're discouraged? So, be discouraged! Welcome discouraged into your house, and please walk it to the door and say good-bye when it wants to go."

Zen Master Dogen said that when we walk in the mist, eventually our robes get wet. And if we walk long enough, they get soaked. If we practice Buddha's Way day-by-day, we eventually become steeped in the practice, soaked. Eventually, our daily lives become Buddha's Way. And then, there's nothing to do but "just continue."

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Walking in the Mist

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When I get discouraged, or when it becomes hard to get up in the morning, or when I fall into negative mental states, I try to remember the importance of "continuing," of just "showing up." Even though I can't always show up due to age and health issues, I try to do my best. Quitting has become out of the question.

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



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NEBRASKA ZEN CENTER SANGHA NOTES

Our **Annual Sangha Meeting** will be held on **Saturday, Feb. 7th at 10:00 a.m.** We will be replacing Board members whose terms have expired and electing Officers for 2015. We will also be reviewing and finishing business from 2014. We encourage all who practice at Heartland Temple to attend this meeting.

Winter Practice Period will begin with **February Sesshin** on the **14th and 15th** and will end with **April Sesshin** on the **18th and 19th**. Practice Period is designed to provide structure for those who wish to **intensify their practice and their sangha connections for a specific period of time** by making specific commitment in three areas: **daily practice at home, regular involvement at the temple, and attendance at special events.** Interested students should write up their commitments and turn them in to Nonin before February 14th. If this is your first Practice Period, **speak to Nonin** before turning in your commitments.

Our insurance company has paid for **replacing our roof** due to storm damage, and the work has been completed using high-impact shingles after tearing off all old shingles and replacing the decking underneath. The insurance company is also paying for **repairing some water damage to the ceiling and one wall** in the spare bedroom. This work will begin shortly.

We hired a painting company to do **the trim on the upper story of our building**, and this work has now been completed. **Many thanks** to the sangha members who **painted the siding two years ago and who painted the trim on the lower story of the building** this past Summer and Fall. There are only some **storm windows** that still need to be done and a small bit of trim on the West side new addition. Now that Winter has set in, that work will have to be done next Spring.

Many thanks to **Rev. Daishin McCabe**, who led our Saturday **One-day Sesshin** in October and gave Dharma Talk on Sunday morning. Daishin practiced here with Nonin for a time many years ago, and it was good to have him back! Daishin and **Rev. Jisho Siebert**, Daishin's wife, will be sitting part of Rōhatsu Sesshin with us and Daishin will be giving Dharma Talk on those days.

Many thanks also to **Sozen George Patenode, Shojū Pam Griffin,** and **Bushin Joe Smolsky** for recently **cleaning the temple gutters.**

Nonin gave a talk at **Millard North High School** recently and hosted groups from **Omaha Central High School** and **Creighton University.**

NEBRASKA ZEN CENTER WINTER EVENTS

SESSHIN

There will be two sesshins at NZC this Winter: a **Seven-day Sesshin (Rohatsu)** from **Dec. 1st through 7th** and a **Two-day Sesshin** on **February 14th and 15th**. 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.

DHARMA STUDY CLASS

Nonin will lead a **Dharma Study Class** at the temple this Winter. It will meet on four successive **Saturday mornings, from 10 a.m. till noon** on **February 28th and March 7th, 14th, and 21st**. The subject for study will be announced later. The class is free to sangha members. The fee for others is \$15 per class.

LAY INITIATION — RECEIVING THE PRECEPTS

A **Precept Ceremony** signifying **Lay Initiation** will be offered at Heartland Temple next April. Anyone interested in participating should talk to **Nonin**. He suggests the following for considering this step: firm commitments to **sitting zazen, to practicing with a teacher, to participating in sangha, and to con-tinuing dharma study.** **Rakusu sewing** will begin on **February 22nd**.

WEEKLY ZENDO SCHEDULE — NEBRASKA ZEN CENTER

Morning

Tuesday thru Friday and on 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

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

We are closed on Saturday & 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.deepspringzen.org/list.htm> and register. Or, e-mail ZCP at kyoki@deepspringzen.org. You will also receive our monthly e-Newsletter.

This fall, **Rev. Jisen and Kevin Coghlan** and **Kyoki** traveled to Maryland to attend the wedding of **Revs. Daishin McCabe and Jisho Siebert**. They both have taught at Deep Spring a number of times. Our congratulations to them! They are now living in Ames, Iowa, near Jisho's parents.

We hosted groups from **Grove City University** and **Sewickley Academy** this Fall and traveled to **Butler High School** to present Buddhist teaching to a World Religion class. **Shinku Molly Forrest** and **Kozan Steven Bend** hosted the group from Grove City.

Our thanks to **Rev. Jisen Coghlan**, who led Sunday a.m. practice at Deep Spring on Nov. 16th. Jisen continues to lead **City Dharma** in Pittsburgh on Thursday nights and Saturday mornings. Their website is: <http://citydharma.wordpress.com>. Jisen also offers daily meditation via skype.

Deep Spring continues to search for a new **Head Priest**. As part of that process, **Rev. Kotoku Crivello** will lead this year's Rohatsu Sesshin. He was joined by his wife, **Colleen**. Our Board of Directors will meet to decide whether they'll be invited back.

On a somber note, we mourn the loss of one of America's most respected Zen Buddhist teachers, **Rev. Kyogen Carlson** of Dharma Rain Zen Center in Portland, Oregon. He is survived by his spouse, **Rev. Gyokuko Carlson**, and a thriving sangha.

Kyoki continues to struggle with an **entraped nerve in her left leg** and wishes to offer her deepest thanks to Sangha members for their continued efforts to maintain the schedule and the property. A new drug has helped her condition, and **she continues to consider treatment options**. Many of you are asking what are **Kyoki's plans** if we invite a new **Head Priest**. She hopes to continue living and practicing at the temple as **Resident Priest** under a reduced schedule. She'll join daily work meetings and help out as she is able.

We hope that you will consider **financially supporting** Deep Spring temple, our new teacher (yet to be named), and Kyoki during this transition period. Also, we

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

ZCP WINTER EVENTS

DECEMBER

Nov. 30 - Dec. 5 — Rohatsu Sesshin
led by Rev. Kotoku Crivello of Oakland
(CA) Zen Center
23-27 — Zen Center Closed
31 — New Year's Eve Party, 6 p.m. pot-
luck dinner —12 a.m.

JANUARY

1 — ZCP closed
4 — World Peace Ceremony —10 a.m.
11 — One Day Sesshin —6:30 a.m. —4 p.m.
18 — Katagiri-roshi B'day Service —10 a.m.
25 — Zen Master Dogen B'day service —10a.m.
2

FEBRUARY

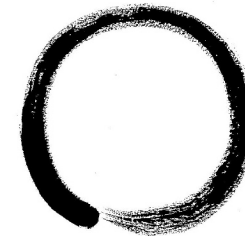
7 — One Day Sesshin—6:30 a.m.—4p .m
8 — World Peace Ceremony —10 a.m.
15 — Buddha's Parinirvana Service —
10 a.m.

[Sesshin is an intense period of practice consisting of sitting/walking meditation, services, work and dokusan (private interviews with teachers). You must sign up for this event.]

ZCP DAILY SCHEDULE

Due to Kyoki's current physical disability, we are only open on these days at these times:

Tues. & Thurs: Zazen and Service, 6:30 a.m.
Wednesday: Zazen, 6:00 - 7:15 p.m.
Sunday: Intro to Zen, 9:30 a.m.
Zazen, service, and dharma
talk, 10:00 a.m. till 1:00 p.m.



WHITE LOTUS SANGHA NOTES

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.**

Everything Is The Way It's Supposed To Be

by Zenryu Vicki Grunwald

A few years ago, a parolee who had been practicing at Nebraska Department of Corrections reoffended. The response from others at the prison went something like this. "That guy was in for a crime similar to mine. If someone like him didn't succeed, maybe the parole board will deny me." Others thought that if he didn't make it, maybe I won't. Still others did not understand how someone who finally got freedom could give it up by re-offending and thought that if they got parole, recidivism would be unthinkable.

The day after I found out about the re-offense, I was sitting a retreat (sesshin) at Nebraska Zen Center in Omaha and spoke to a visiting priest about the situation. Her response shocked me. She said, "He is exactly where he is supposed to be." My first response was anger. Was she actually saying that he deserves a life behind bars, as if the universe or fate somehow dictated that he should be incarcerated? Then she asked something even more shocking. "Who is to say that a life outside of prison is better than a life inside?" I sat in utter disbelief and replied, I suppose I am.

She reminded me that the universe did not care about the value judgments I was making regarding good and bad and life being better out here. Those ideas are in my head. They have been conditioned by society and my culture. I was upset that he was not going to be leading the life that I wanted him to lead, and that is not about him, but about me, my expectations, my judgments, and my wants.

My conversation with the priest reminded me about a movie I saw when in high school. The movie, whose title I can't recall, was about a woman with a prodigal daughter. She arranged for her to have an Ivy League education and had many hopes and dreams for this wonder child. At her sweet sixteen ball, the girl started acting out in completely inappropriate ways. After several tests, she received the

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TENDING THE OX ZENDO SANGHA NOTES

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 doug@windstream.net (402-783-2124). Zazen Instruction is available for newcomers if arranged in advance.

Tending the Ox will offer three **One-day retreats** on the following **Sundays:**

December 14th

February 22nd

March 15th

April 26th

These retreats will run from 9:00 a.m. till 5:00 p.m., and a **mid-day meal** will be served. Attendance is limited to **10 participants**, and the fee is **\$30 per day. Advance registration is required.**



Cows at Branched Oak Farm

ON TEACHERS & DISCIPLES

by Jack Kornfeld:

Some teachers are rascals and coyotes who trick and surprise their students; some are harsh taskmasters trying to whittle down ego and pride; others teach more through honoring and encouragement, nurturing the best in a student; some teachers lecture like a professor; others can melt us open with their love and compassion. The greatest and simplest power of a teacher is the environment of their own freedom and joy.

by The Monks of New Skete:

What about those of us without formal teachers, without the benefit of a discerning spiritual director, roshi, or guru. The principle still stand firm: if you don't have a teacher, you need to look for one, and you won't find one unless you look.

Once we actually find a teacher whom we can commit ourselves to and trust, we can still easily be tempted to turn our backs on him [or her] when the teacher fails to be "perfect;" that is, when the teacher fails to live up to our unrealistic expectations, when we dislike what the teacher says or how he or she says it — and this happens more frequently than we care to admit. Examples about of the disciple who turns away from the teacher simply because the teacher told him or her a truth the disciple could not accept.

Through hardly infallible, the true teacher suffers no compromise on matters he or she understands; the teacher is radically committed to truth, with an integrity that mocks our ambivalence. It is true that we appreciate the teacher when we are not in his or her line of fire, when the teacher's eloquence serves our interests. We are the first to accord him or her tribute and respect. But how we squirm when the teacher highlights our own duplicity, calling us to task as well. Then our smiles vanish; consternation is written all over us, and we resist accepting it. It is all so basic; change is for the other person, not me.

by Brother Lawrence:

The phony disciple is like a dried sponge, a sponge that is so old, that has sat around collecting the dust and grime of life, that when you throw it into a bathtub it simply floats! It doesn't absorb water.

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.

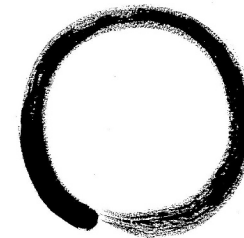
If you are interested in becoming a member, please speak with the appropriate person at either temple after Sunday services.

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.



GEOLOGY AND PERSPECTIVE

by Zuiko Redding

A while ago I was reading John McPhee's *Basin and Range* on a plane from Denver to Los Angeles. McPhee gives a fine account of the relationship between the history of life and the history of the planet. Earth is about four billion, five hundred million years old, he says. The first three billion years or so are marked by basalt, a very hard, gray or black rock. The next billion are marked by red sandstone.

Multicellular animals have been around only for about the last five hundred million years. With the beginning of life there are limestone and shale. These are deposited on the basalt and sandstone. Then there's us human beings. We came on the scene three or four million years ago, a mere blink of an eye in the Earth's reckoning. Maybe not that long, even. Beings that we might easily recognize as other humans are perhaps only 200,000 years old. We started cultivating crops seven to ten thousand years ago and we began building cities only seven thousand years ago.

There at thirty thousand feet, as I had just finished reading about planetary history with its basalt, sandstone, and limestone and had gone on to the relationship between silver deposits and hot springs, the captain casually mentioned that we were flying over the Grand Canyon. Never having seen this wonder, I turned my eyes from geology to real rock. It was truly worth paying attention to. Fascinated, I watched the cliffs and the huge space between them passing beneath us. Then one cliff

caught my eye. The bottom three-quarters or so were gray. The next three eighths were dark red, the color of Shakyamuni's robe. Then there was a layer of nondescript stuff that was whitish, like buttercream frosting on a cake, topped off by a fuzz of vegetation.

"Oh." That rock had just clarified reality for me. I don't know if my understanding of what I saw was correct, but it doesn't matter here. Reality had just pointed out how we fit into it.

It's very easy to get lost in our lives and forget reality – the miles of basalt and sandstone on which we exist. We forget how they are lived out on a thin film of stuff that supports life – the soil that's a gift from the basalt, sandstone, and previous generations of living things. A single human life is probably not even one *kshana* in the time scale of the planet, but we don't notice. We move through our lives like ants through grass - seeing only grass, thinking the whole world is grass, assuming that we are very important beings going about very important business. The vastness of the reality in which we live doesn't show up if we don't stretch ourselves up above the level of the grass.

We also don't see that we are expressions of a vast Universe, part of the vast functioning from the very beginning. We are necessary and we are connected. We make carbon dioxide and breathe it out. Plants take the carbon dioxide, strip off the carbon to make carbohydrates, and return the oxygen for us to use to soak up more carbon. Together we are a little carbon and oxygen circulating system. We would

Geology and Perspective

from previous page

likely not exist without each other. Nor could we exist without all that basalt and sandstone on which to build life. I'm not sure what the basalt and sandstone get out of all this, but I'm sure there's something.

"So," you say, "what does this have to do with my life?" It's just this: being awake to the big picture, as the geologists call it, is the way out of *dukkha*. Knowing our place in the reality of things, we understand that we do not exist alone and we are not separate. We exist together with and are supported by all other beings including all that basalt. Our role is to support and contribute to the wellbeing of all things. When we wake up to this, we lose our sense of self-importance and just do what reality asks of us. Then our lives and all things prosper and we have peace.

We wake up, then we forget and we're back in the grass. We think this bit of life that has become us is of great import and must be foremost in all things at all costs. We think we are separate from the rest of reality. We consider only ourselves, forgetting that our actions have consequences for all of reality. We don't see that harming others is harming ourselves. We do a lot of harm and we become deeply unhappy and discontent. Our unhappiness and discontent lead us to expend more energy uselessly, do more harm and be even more unhappy.

So looking up above the grass and seeing reality is the way to peace for

ourselves and all things.

Siddhartha Gautama, when he looked up and saw the morning star, basically said, "Oh. I get it." Seeing the vastness and interconnection, he exclaimed, "I and all living beings have attained realization together." Then he spent the rest of his life showing others how to look up and get it, too. When Kaundinya, the first person to understand the teaching, expressed his joy, Shakyamuni said, "Kaundinya's got it." We can get it, too.

Rev. Zuiko Redding is the Head Priest at Cedar Rapids Zen Center in Cedar Rapids, IA.



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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 watercolor 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.

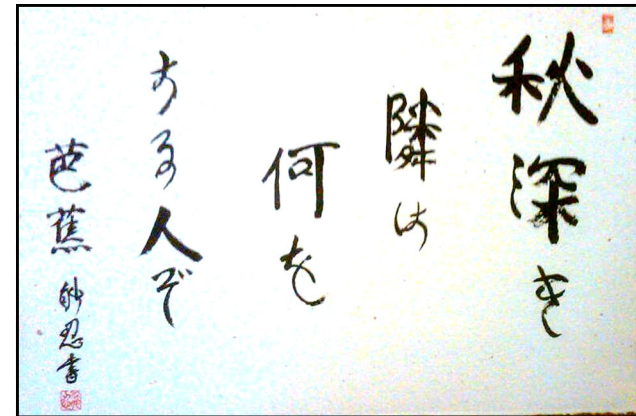
Everything Is The Way It's Supposed To Be

from page 10

diagnosis of schizophrenia, which commonly manifests in the teenage years. As the disease became more severe, it became clear that not only would she not receive an Ivy League education, but she also would have to be institutionalized. The last scene of the movie shows the mother watching her daughter through an observation window perform the mundane work of sorting hangers. The mother's friend commented about how hard this must be to see her child go from Ivy League to sorting hangers. The mother replied that this is not the life she would have chosen for her child, but since this is the life she has, she wants her to be happy. "Do you think she looks happy?" she asked her friend. She then matter-of-factly answered her own question: "I think she is happy."

Like the mother in this movie, I needed to drop my judgments and expectations. The practice is the same on the inside or the outside. When someone re-offends, I remind them that their life can be rich and full whether they are in or out of prison.

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



Deep into autumn; I wonder how my neighbor is doing.
Haiku by Basho — Calligraphy by Nonin Chowaney

SOANKA

Song of the Grass Hut

*I've built a grass hut where there's
nothing of value.*

*After eating, I relax and enjoy a
nap.*

*When it was completed, fresh weeds
appeared.*

*Now it's been lived in — covered by
weeds.*

*The person in the hut lives here
calmly,
not stuck to inside, outside, or in-
between.*

*Places worldly people live, he
doesn't live.
Realms worldly people love, she
doesn't love.*

*Though the hut is small, it includes
the entire world.
In ten feet square, an old man illu-
mines forms and their nature.*

*A Mahayana bodhisattva trusts
without doubt.
The middling or lowly can't help*

wondering;

*Will this hut perish or not?
Perishable or not, the original
master is present,*

*Not dwelling south or north, east
or west.*

*Firmly based on steadiness, it
won't be surpassed.*

*A shining window below the
green pines —
jade palaces or vermilion towers
can't compare with it.*

*Just sitting with head covered all
things are at rest.
Thus, this mountain monk doesn't
understand at all.*

*Living here he no longer works to
get free.
Who would proudly arrange
seats, trying to entice guests?*

*Turn around the light to shine
within, then just return.*

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Soanka

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*The vast inconceivable source
can't be faced or turned away
from.*

*Meet the ancestral teachers, be
familiar with their instructions,
bind grasses to build a hut, and
don't give up.*

*Let go of hundreds of years and
relax completely.
Open your hands and walk, in-
nocent.*

*Thousands of words, myriad in-
terpretations,
are only to free you from obstruc-
tions.*

*If you want to know the undying
person in the hut,
don't separate from this skin bag
here and now.*

*Poem by Shitou Xiqian (Sekito
Kisen; 700-790)*

Trans. by: Tanahashi & Leighton



Buddha Mind
Calligraphy by Nonin Chowaney

SANGHA LIFE

by Dainin Katagiri

According to Zen Master Dogen, there are three aspects to functioning in the Buddhist community we call the sangha. We practice (1) to benefit others, (2) to develop the sangha, and (3) to follow the ways of the Buddhas and ancestors.

First, the sangha is not a place to practice Buddhism just for ourselves; we practice to do something for others. Our practice is not to enhance our personality or deepen our character but to express our deepest gratitude for all beings, by which our lives are already supported and helped. If we don't practice in this way, our practice is consciously or unconsciously based on egoism.

Yesterday, I received a journal from Eiheiji Monastery. In it, a professor of education wrote of his impressions when he visited Eiheiji. From the monks' attitudes he felt very deeply how strict their life was. On the other hand, he found something completely different, a sense of arrogance. A monk showed him all the buildings, explained their functions, and described the strictness of daily life, but this monk never expressed his gratitude for all beings.

Monks cannot practice at Eiheiji without the help of all beings. Many people work in order to support the monastery and the monks – growing vegetables, working at jobs, and serving society. To create just one grain of rice takes a lot of effort. Without expressing our deepest gratitude for these people and these things, we cannot practice. That is why the professor said that he found a sense of arrogance. This is really egoism. Though we practice very hard, if we don't express our deepest gratitude for our lives, we cannot practice as Buddha taught. Practice must go on very quietly, not showing off, with humility, gracefulness, even shyness sometimes, with nothing to say, no comment, very quiet.

So remember the real meaning of practice. Particularly in the Buddhist sangha, we have to practice not for ourselves but for others first. Otherwise, egoism and self-centered ideas will always come up. "For others" means not only for human beings but also for all living beings, for a piece of toilet paper, our clothes, our cushions, vegetables, pans, everything. Help all living beings. This does not mean to give them something material or psychological. Giving lots of material things to others isn't necessarily helpful. To help all living beings means to deal with them wholeheartedly whenever we encounter them. Show them compassionate, kind attention. This is the way to help others and all things around our lives: vegetables, books, tables, floors, lights, water – all things, visible or invisible.

Once I had an experience at Eiheiji. We had electricity there just as we have here, so everything was very bright. One day, we had a severe thunderstorm during morning service. One hundred and fifty monks were chanting sutras in the Buddha hall when the lights went out. It was completely dark, yet the chanting continued. It was beautiful; all the monks were chanting in the dark. I was very impressed. Then, a monk who

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Sangha Life

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took care of the Buddha hall carried in two candles, one for the practice leader and one for the leader of the service. Only two candles for the whole hall, which was very large. The light was very soft and created shadows of the monks on the floor and walls. I was very impressed by these shadows and the light of the two candles. I felt truly grateful for the light. Usually, we don't have a chance to feel grateful for light, because we are always soaking in it. We forget how wonderful the light is. Wherever we live, our lives are supported by all beings. We should express our deepest gratitude for this support, but at home and at work, we often are too busy, and we don't pay attention to things and express our gratitude. That is why sangha life is very important and why we have places to gather and practice. In them, we try to take care of everything with compassionate, kind attention, and with gratitude.

Particularly in the Buddhist sangha, we have to practice not for ourselves but for others first. Otherwise, egoism and self-centered ideas will always come up. "For others" means not only for human beings but also for all living beings, for a piece of toilet paper, our clothes, our cushions, vegetables, pans, everything. Help all living beings.

This is an important aspect of our practice. Sangha is not a place to build ego or promote self-centered ideas. Instead, we should do something for all beings, not only human beings but all beings. For this, we have to give life to a vegetable as it is, to water as it is, to our clothes as they are, whenever we encounter them.

Second, to practice in the sangha we have to develop the Buddhist community. How can we do this? To help all living beings is to develop the sangha. This is not a matter for discussion. Day after day, from moment to moment, when we encounter a piece of paper, we should deal with it with kind, compassionate attention and with gratitude. This is a great way to develop the sangha.

Third, practicing in the sangha, we try to follow the way of the Buddhas and ancestors. After hearing about the practice of the Buddhas and ancestors, you probably complain, saying that their circumstances were completely different from ours, that we can't live that way. But sometimes, we need to read about the lives of great people – spiritual leaders, politicians, or philosophers. It is important for us to read about and study their lives. Then, if we really want to create our lives and reach what they reached, consciously or unconsciously, we have to follow their examples.

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Sangha Life

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Sometimes it is impossible to repeat or follow their ways exactly because their circumstances were so different from ours. I don't mean that we should follow them exactly but that we should live according to their spirit. There are many ways to give life to these great people of the past right now, right here. We shouldn't forget to follow the example of these people; we should try to approach their lives as much as possible.

Day-by-day, as we live our lives, we practice with the sangha. As we do, we should always remember to follow Zen Master Dogen's way of functioning: benefitting others, developing the sangha, and following the ways of the Buddhas and ancestors.



Sangha
Calligraphy by Nonin Chowaney

NEBRASKA ZEN CENTER 2015 PRACTICE SCHEDULE

Jan 1-14	NZC Closed	Aug 2	World Peace Ceremony
19	Katagiri-roshi's Birthday*		Group Discussion
26	Zen Master Dogen's Birthday*	5	Precepts Ceremony
Feb 1	World Peace Ceremony	Sep 2	Precepts Ceremony
	Group Discussion	6	World Peace Ceremony
4	Precepts Ceremony		Group Discussion
14-15	Two-day Sesshin	12-13	Two-day Sesshin
	Winter Practice Period Begins		Fall Practice Period Begins
22	Rakusu Sewing Begins	29	Zen Master Dogen's Memorial Day*
		30	Precepts Ceremony
Mar 1	Katagiri-roshi's Memorial Day*	Oct 4	World Peace Ceremony
	World Peace Ceremony		Group Discussion
4	Group Discussion	17	One-day Sesshin
	Precepts Ceremony	18	Bodhidharma Day*
14	One-day Sesshin	28	Precepts Ceremony
Apr 1-4	Lay Initiation Week	Nov 1	World Peace Ceremony
5	Lay Initiation		Group Discussion
12	World Peace Ceremony	18	Precepts Ceremony
	Group Discussion	26-28	NZC Closed
18-19	Two-day Sesshin	Dec 1-7	Seven-day (Rohatsu) sesshin
	Practice Period Ends	23	Precepts Ceremony
May 3	Remembrance Day	24-26	NZC Closed
6	Precepts Ceremony		
10	World Peace Ceremony		
	Group Discussion		
21-26	NZC Closed (Memorial Day)		
Jun 7	World Peace Ceremony		
	Group Discussion		
20-21	Two-day Sesshin		
Jul 1	Precepts Ceremony		
5	World Peace Ceremony		
	Group Discussion		
20	Narasaki-roshi's Memorial Day*		

***Special services commemorating these days will be held before dharma talk on the Sunday nearest the date indicated.**

Precepts Ceremonies follow evening zazen.

World Peace Ceremonies precede monthly Group Discussions.