



Dharma currents

N E W S L E T T E R

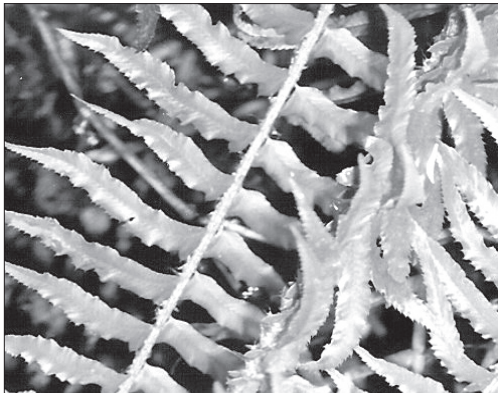
Reflections by Bill Cooper

On Being Ino, or How to Live One Continuous Mistake

A few months ago I was asked, along with others, to begin training in some of the leadership positions at Three Treasures. Lately, you may have noticed that I've been the new ino for some of the recent zenkais. I would like to comment briefly on this learning process in the hopes of warning others about the dangers of becoming too involved in sangha activities.

Prior to my becoming ino, it had seemed the ino was a very advanced student who was imperturbable. As I saw it, the ino appeared to be serene and completely knowledgeable about the sutras, as well as possessing many other magical powers.

As I understood my new duties, the ino was to lead the sangha in sutra chanting, and this is what I would learn to do. Initially, this sounded fairly straightforward—I naively assumed that my primary job would be to hit the mokugyo and chant louder than everyone else. I would also coordinate some of the activities in the zendo, such as meal sutras and so forth.



However, as I prepared for my first zenkai, I realized to my horror that apparently I had been sitting in the zendo for several years without paying the least bit of attention to what I was doing. I would now encounter many situations where I had no idea what was supposed to happen next. Worse yet, to get these answers would require endless unzen questions of a more senior student (usually Rebecca), about such fine points as the following: Do we really

pass the breakfast trays to the left? After the sutra books have been collected, do I hit the inkan once or twice? How do you pronounce "Mitta"?

And as I struggled through the duties of ino in my first couple of zenkais there was an unexpected flip side that I had not anticipated, nor particularly relished: a senior student (usually Nils), would immediately correct everything I had done wrong.

And, as often happens, if I had committed a particularly public offense, I'd get corrected by several senior students, usually by the time I got to the kitchen: "It's "meet a" not "myta" I would

hear in rapid succession. It was like an echo. Needless to say, these comments led to additional delusions, such as shame and mild anger, that I would then sit with in the next period.

The sitting periods became difficult. Forget about working on Mu, or whatever, my real koan became, "How do I deal with my fear of making mistakes, and this incessant thinking about myself?"

Now instead of the ino looking serene, it was the rest of the sangha who appeared utterly tranquil, enjoying their zazen, while I sat and worried.

It was during one of these "worry sesshins" that I remembered Shunryu Suzuki's writing about "one continuous mistake." In *Zen Mind, Beginner's Mind*, Suzuki says, "Shoshaku jushaku means 'to succeed wrong with wrong,' or one continuous mistake. According to Dogen, one continuous mistake can also be Zen. A Zen master's life could be said to be so many years of shoshaku jushaku. This means so many years of one single-minded effort."

At the time this sounded comforting, an abstract pleasantry to get me through the little aches and pains of my life. Now, in the zendo, it was very clear. My life was a continuous mistake, there was no way around it: I am making mistakes, even my sitting is little more than worry. How do I work with this? An answer of sorts was required, a presentation. But what?

Well, I've worked through this as I continue to be ino on occasion. And, truth be told, I'm continuing to work with this during each zenkai that I sit.

The support of the sangha has been instrumental in helping me to gain much-needed confidence.

Another aspect of the solution, has been to simply acknowledge my "continuous mistake": my thoughts and emotions as they arise, especially those of fear or shame. This requires a great deal of acceptance of the present moment. Easy to say, it nevertheless requires endless practice.

The final aspect of practicing with this is to just do the job of ino, with or without mistakes. I can either live in my head, and let the fear or other thoughts be my primary reality, or I can perform the next indicated activity. I consider being ino part of my vows. How do I save all beings? Well, if I'm ino and it's time to chant, then strike the bell.



"These many beautiful days cannot be lived again, but they are compounded in my own flesh and spirit and I take them in full measure toward whatever lies ahead." Daniel Berrigan

Reading Essay by Ace Davis

Own It Don't Wear It or Tung-shan's Sixty Blows

The Mumonkan project continues



The first thing I need to own in these further musings on my Mumonkan reading project, is a debt to Rusty. I meant to credit him in the original article as it was his description of reading four different translations/commentaries on the Heart Sutra that planted the seed of trying the same thing with the Mumonkan. Many, many gratitudes.

The first article was an overview of the whole process – this one focuses on a particular case that has been especially resonant for me. It's case fifteen – Tung-shan (or Tozan)'s sixty blows. The

case is as follows: A young monk, Tung-shan, shows up at Yun-men (Unmon)'s monastery, having traveled a long hard way to get there. Yun-men asks him where he's coming from and gets, despite repeated pressings, very literal answers. Then, depending on which translation you might be reading, he either does or does not receive sixty blows for obtuseness.

Not receiving the blows is seen as a more humiliating response – as Yamada interprets it, "I wouldn't dirty my stick on the likes of you."

After a night of "great spiritual distress" (Aitken, p.104), Tung-shan goes back to Yun-men to learn why he was spared the sixty blows, i.e. where did he go wrong with his earnestly polite replies? Yun-men declares, "Oh you rice-bag!" and Tung-shan has a great realization. So far, so good.

But what got me the most in this case was riffing on Wu-men (Mumon)'s verse for the case:

The lion rejects her cub;
she kicks it and dodges away;
the second arrow connected beyond causation;
the first was light, the last one deep.
(Aitken, p.101)

Here's the hook – Aitken has as alternative and more literal translation for the first line: "The education of lion cubs is the art of the lost child" (p.106). The lost child is the rejected, kicked out, perhaps damaged kid who won't let it ride, who has the moxie to ask "why?"

But we must be careful to understand the character of this "why?" It carries ownership; it is not "why

me?" As Aitken has it: "not sulking, not blaming other people, certainly not blaming the teacher, nor... punishing himself. He (Tung-shan) was using his distress by focusing on the question 'Where was I at fault?' rather than falling into the despair of 'What a mess I am!'" (p.104).

One's relationship to the past has some things in common with one's relationship to the red thread – you cannot ignore or stuff it or it will bite you and those in relationship with you in harmful ways. Unexamined, undigested damage tends to be leaky.

Or as the artist Richard Stine wrote, "The irony is this: if you don't go in, you can't find out." Therapy can be useful but it seems quite important that the result of therapy not be abandonment of oneself to one's history.

I like the distinction Emily Fox Gordon makes in her memoir *Mockingbird Years* about not being responsible for our past but rather to our past: "We were not only the damaged products of our histories; we were also the damaged products of the formative influence of psychotherapy, which inculcated in us the belief that we were the damaged products of our histories" (p.226).

However, if you regard this damage as the most salient part of yourself, you fall into another kind of trouble. Upon first meetings such persons introduce themselves as: "Hello. I'm so-and-so, a survivor of sexual abuse." When I was talking with Jack about the proper relationship to one's past, he gave me these great words: "Own it but don't wear it."

So what about all this stuff in the case about being kicked out of the den, pushed off a cliff, etc.? The idea of ownership also relates, I think, to the concept of leaving home, i.e. abandoning your received instructions and going forth to find out for yourself. Reverence or piety is not enough.

As Chao Chou (Joshu) described his kensho experience, you must become "ruined and homeless" (Sekida, p.29). It is the practice of doubt no matter how compelling, dramatic or miserable one's past is – perhaps especially if one's history is compelling, etc. Respect – for the teacher/lion mother and for oneself, for one's practice "lacking or complete" – is essential.

(continues on page 3)

The five volumes referenced:

- **Sekida, Katsuki:**
Two Zen Classics
(Boston: Shambala 2005)
- **Shibayama, Zenkei:**
The Gateless Barrier
(Boston: Shambala 1974)
- **Yamada, Koun:**
The Gateless Gate
(Boston: Wisdom 2004)
- **Aitken, Robert:**
The Gateless Barrier
(New York: North Point 1995)
- **Gordon, Emily Fox:**
Mockingbird Years. A Life In and Out of Therapy
(New York: Basic Books 2001)



"Better still, I believe that these silences constitute an education for it which cannot possibly have any other equivalent and enable it to grasp truths which otherwise would forever remain hidden from it."
Simone Weil on meditation and the domain of the intellect from *Letter to a Priest* (page 59)

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Own It Don't Wear It or Tung-shan's Sixty Blows

On the other hand, one must return home – Aitken references the Hawaiian expression, "gocomeback" – and take up one's "family practice."

Here's the koan: How do you maintain a self-respecting, non-enabling but nonetheless loving relationship with your alcoholic sister who is back to drinking again and fiercely denying it? What advice do you give to your adult kids about how best to respond to your 20-month old grandson who has started hitting?

Of course, on another level, all this trying to figure out one's proper response to the past is foolish – rice bag city! Explication, no matter how nuanced or useful, can take one far afield.

"The second arrow connected beyond causation. Yun-men's 'Oh you rice bag!' has no cause and effect, and no compassion, for compassion means 'suffering with others' and there is no 'with' here. Beyond intimacy! No inside! No outside!" (Aitken, p.106). Or as Harada Roshi reminds us, "New with every breath!"

Keeping in Touch

Sangha Contact Information

Three Treasures Sangha Membership

If you unsure of your membership status and dues payment record, please contact the bookkeeper, Jan Mikus at 363-9650 or jam2@drizzle.com. Note that reduced sesshin registration rates are offered only to those members whose dues are current.

Contacting the Sangha by Telephone

Call Three Treasures at 206 324-5373. Leave a message on the machine, your call will be returned.

Three Treasures Sangha on the Web

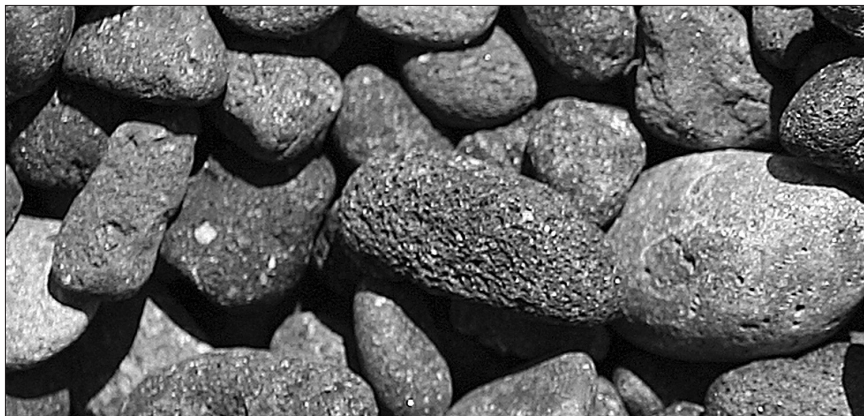
Visit <http://three-treasures-sangha.org> for general sangha news and updated event information. The Orientation series is posted along with current and past issues of *Dharma Currents* newsletter. Contact the webmaster and site editor, Jeff at jeffj@oz.net or 783-3980 with any site additions and questions.

Dharma Currents Newsletter

The newsletter is published three times yearly. E-mail submissions within the message section (*no attachments*) to the designer/editor, Cindy at cindy@w-link.net or call 933-8100 for info. Dharma or practice-related articles are to be previewed by Jana at zeedyk@integraonline.com or Rebecca at rossrm@comcast.com prior to submission.

Sangha Lists: Mail, E-Mail and Telephone

Mail, e-mail and/or telephone are used to contact sangha participants. To add or update your information, contact the list coordinator, Barbara at bbreck@nwlink.com or call 425 775-2715. Schedule revisions are communicated via e-mail or phone.



From Ace Davis, Sesshin Coordinator

Sesshin Fees News

At the September 10th sangha meeting, sesshin fees came up for discussion. The last 5 out of 7 sesshins have had deficits - the most recent sesshin lost \$1,500. Traditionally, sesshin costs have been subsidized by dues. However, this trend of always losing money is eroding our reserves and ability to respond to unexpected events.

Raising sesshin fees to a probable "break even" point would require raising fees by 30-40% - the actual adjustment amount depends on attendance. Since this was seen as being too large an increase, consensus was reached to continue to subsidize sesshin from dues but to increase fees by 15%.

Emphasis was made that we don't wish anyone to be prevented from attending sesshin by financial restraints - the logistical challenges seem quite formidable enough. Folks who need either scholarship help or wish to establish a payment plan should contact the sesshin coordinator Ace Davis.

The newly adjusted rates are: full time members \$322; full time non-member \$380; part time member per night \$46; part time non-member per night \$58. Remember that to qualify for the member rates, your dues must be current. If you need to verify your dues payment status, please contact Jan Mikus. Many gratitudes, Ace Davis



"Anxiety is the mood of ignorance... The aim of wisdom is to gain freedom from the bondage of ignorance by clearly discerning the suchness of ourselves and the world, concealed by the distortions of ignorance." Stephen Batchelor in Alone With Others

Member Profile by Kay Peters

Interviewing: Mike Melancon



Poetry by Mike Melancon

Stairs

**One stair at a time.
With purpose;
Deliberate.**

**An infinite number
of stairs.
Each moment
A step
A breath.**

**On each stair
I show you my mind.**

Instead of reporting about the Center and Garden, I want to feature a very remarkable Bodhisattva in our midst, Mike Melancon. Mike is largely responsible for our center being in as good a shape as it is because he works around the center for 5 hours every Thursday. He attends most sitting events of TTS and MCPS. I interviewed Mike to learn more.

KAY: Mike, how did you come to this practice?

MIKE: *Do you want to put anything in here?*

You spend about 5 hours every Thursday at the Center. What is that about?

I really love being at the Practice Center! I see taking care of the place as a way of giving back. I would like others from both traditions to join me—take a day off sometime to come be with us mindfully all day. If this isn't possible I encourage each person to take a job, notice something that needs doing. Adopt that thing that needs doing.

I used to clean the refrigerator, now Lillian does the fridge so I go outside and weed the walking path and clean the dojo among other things.

I wanted to join the Order of Interbeing, begun by Thich Nhat Hanh (TNH), which requires one to do 60 days of mindfulness a year. I began practicing this at the Center in 2004 before being ordained in March 2005 by Eileen and then in September 2005 by TNH. So, Thursday is my dedicated day.

When I started I didn't know what it would mean. I had spent the previous 3 years sitting a half-hour each day. When I began sitting longer I reached 45 minutes and said "Oh my God!" Now I sit an hour each morning. Because I am pretty much retired I have the luxury of sitting longer and more often. At home I enjoy working around the house and stopping anytime and place I want to read. I have stacks of books in each room!

At the Center I find joy in cleaning. The method of cleaning leads to simultaneously cleaning myself inside. I'm a tactile learner: sorting, grouping, polishing. With each sweep I see my own mind. As I still myself, spending time in the moment, I see the pressure and clutter that I make in my life. It's not really there, I just make it. When I see things as messy outside, it means I need to clean up inside, and that happens when I become mindful.

When we studied the Eightfold Path two years ago it was an amazing gift to me, but I got hung up on "right effort." What did it mean? I spent an entire year looking at it, studying it. Everything I read had to do with it. All my life I have maximized my time and effort. I'd worked 14-16 hour days, 7 days a week. I was a perfectionist, and now asking myself what was/is right effort. My reading said right effort was "just enough," to which Jack Duffy added "and a little bit less," so I could back off! There was no need to be perfect. What freedom this gave me.

How does this mindfulness work at the Center carry over to your daily life outside the zendo?

I'm still working this out. I practice being mindful when I am able to deliberately guide my day. This practice then enables me to be more mindful during the periods of my life, my day, when I have little control over what comes up next.

How has this practice changed your life?

'Een always says, "Don't assess the impact of your practice until you've been practicing 5 years." But I have been changing in every moment since before I was born. It's hard to say which changes are the result of practice. I can say frankly that there have been few changes to my core character; who I am and who I perceive myself to be.

But what I am aware of is that I have a great deal more acceptance of that person, Mike. What used to bug me or even embarrass me about him, I often find humorous now. I used to brood about things in the past. I would often punish myself over things I said or did, feeling bad or humiliated long after everyone else had forgotten that moment, if they had even taken note of it when it occurred! I also used to obsess a lot about the future, an odd kind of worry about details. If planning something, I'd keep rehearsing every minute detail in my every waking hour. Now when I start to do this I catch myself: 'Oh, there you are again. You're so predictable!' And then I let it go. One thing that is very clear is that I sleep longer and more soundly than I did before I began practicing in earnest. Sleeping well was also coincidental with establishing a committed relationship with my partner, Glenn, and moving to Seattle, so everything inter-is and works together to create this moment.

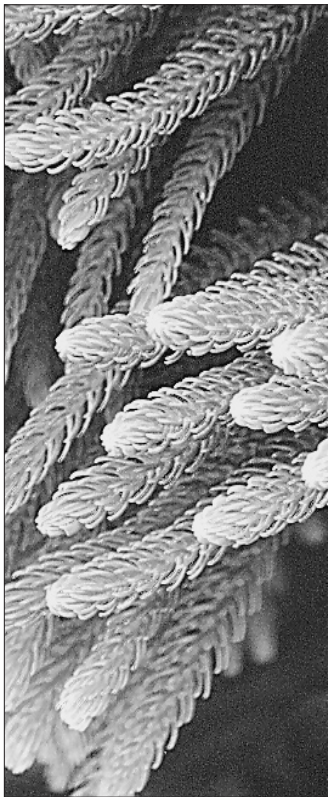
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"Life is all memory, except for the one present moment that goes by you so quickly you hardly catch it going."
Tennessee Williams

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Interviewing: Mike Melancon



I'm also very conscious now of how I spend my time. I'm really able to enjoy my life, I enjoy my day. Even when my life is not fun I don't want to miss it but be present for it. Most changes are not what I came to this practice for. I actually thought I would soften, but I'm actually just as intense. Now I practice for freedom. My mind knows that I have set this time aside for practice so tends to settle down for it. Even though I like some selves better than others, I like who I am and don't expect myself to change.

While Glen sees me as more calm, I'm aware of agitation. Crises I can handle—it's the little problems that are hard, like where is the stapler? Practice has created space for so much. I notice that I make my own reality—none of this is continuous and permanent, though the elements are. They told 'Een to share the Dharma not expecting anything in return. This has been a wonderful model for me.

You are a member both of TTS and MCPS. What highlights do you experience of each practice?

I see the practices as quite similar and in response I would like to focus on these similarities...

Our Practice Center: I am very grateful to those with the foresight and courage to buy it. We are so fortunate to have our space available all the time, always ready, when so many other groups must resort to living rooms and rented spaces. The dedicated space gives us the opportunity to be in contact with other practitioners in our traditions.

Our Teachers: Having teachers, 'Een and Jack, with such depth in practice is also a gift, and they make themselves so available to us. They are the real deal. When I was choosing to work 16 hour days they were choosing to sit and we all should take greater advantage of their availability to further our own understanding. They are real people leading by example.

Our Sangha Members: Individuals are so rich. I appreciate knowing members within each group and spending time together. I learn a lot through their sharing of their practice, especially apparent in the discussions on Thursday and Friday mornings.

I look for ways to be together and want to expand opportunities for practice. For example. some of us sit for peace at noon on Tuesdays in Volunteer Park. It would be wonderful to have more folks join us, and we could even have lunch together.

Since it is available, perhaps we should use SPC every day of the week. I'd like to see sitting every morning and evening. We could make better use of the library, reading the books and listening to tapes.

And taking responsibility for doing something for the Center creates a stronger connection to it and to those who use it. I invite you to look around for a chore to adopt and make it your own. If you are unsure of what to do, just ask me. When MCPS gets new people we tell them what they can expect from MCPS and the Center. And then we ask them for help. We need to remind all members—both old and new participants—that we need everyone's "right effort."

An Essay by Barbara Breckenfeld

Dinging and Donging... on Becoming an Ino

It tickled me to be invited to become a chantleader. The vibration of sound through my body make sutras my favorite part of our ceremony. Perhaps there was some delayed gratification around never having been an altar boy—here was my big chance!

Jack's training got us started, but I knew it would take hands on practice to be ready to sit on the ino's cushion. Attending sesshin made the chants very familiar, but detailed instructions and patient training with Rebecca on the day of the zenkai prepared me to understand not just the ino's responsibilities, but how they coordinated with the other in leaders of the zenkai. That was the tricky part.

We approached it in sections. The first evening, all I had to know was when and how to do Four Great Vows. That was manageable. After sitting that night, we rehearsed what I needed to do for the tea service and breakfast—a bit more, but still doable. That left the work period after breakfast to get ready for the sutra service.

It happened that on that first day, the new sutra books were being assembled so we had adventures with page numbers as I led the service from the old sutra book while everyone else had new ones.

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"Solitude, though it may be silent as light, is like light, the mightiest of agencies; for solitude is essential to man (sic). All men come into this world alone; all leave it alone." Thomas De Quincey (1785-1859)

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Dinging and Donging... on Becoming an Ino

It didn't seem to matter much, since most people know the sutras and the order of the service. Once the sutra got started, everyone chimed in.

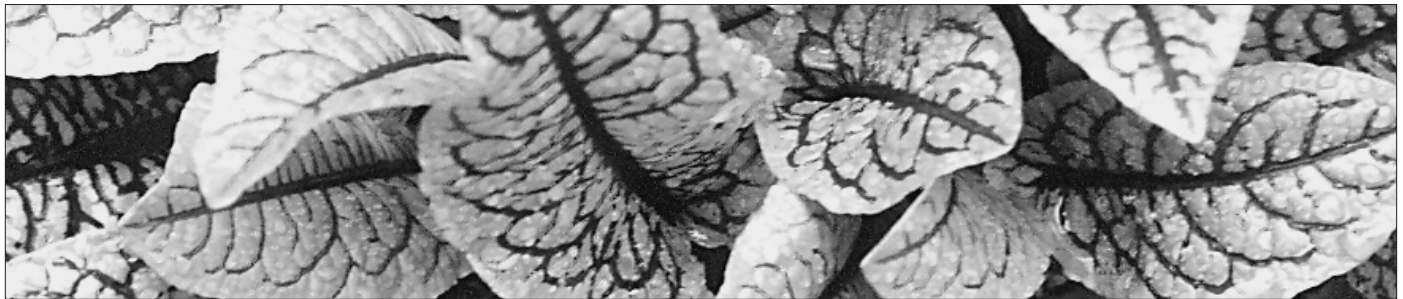
When I was feeling brave and logical—that was before the zenkai—I knew that our sangha is just about as safe a place to do this as could be imagined. I had done much scarier things in public in the past, I reminded myself.

That first day my butterflies were the size of eagles, but it helped to just focus on the next thing I had to do. Did I mention that I had everything written down? Even though I didn't refer to the notes, it helped just knowing I had them. I survived the

first zenkai and lived to lead chants at the next one. It was very useful to do it two times in a row. It all became more familiar.

I was prepared for (apparent) catastrophes—getting lost or forgetting something altogether. But they didn't arrive—yet. Nobody seemed to mind an extra ding here or a missed dong there.

It's a lot like walking and chewing gum at the same time—not really hard, but something that requires practice and attention. I'm looking forward to getting more comfortable with the role so that I can begin to play with the nuances of tone and timing that I enjoy so much when others ring the bells.



Recurring Throughout the Year

Sangha Activities

Orientation to Three Treasures Sangha

Introductory orientation is offered monthly to all those new to zazen and/or new to our sangha to overview our meditation practice and sangha customs—all followed by a period of sitting. Contact one of those listed for *Orientation* under Sangha Contacts or call 324-5373 to leave a message.

Weekly Zazen Opportunities

AT THE PRACTICE CENTER. Sittings during the week: Wednesday evenings 6:30-8:30pm (dokusan is available when Jack Duffy is present which is usually the last Wednesday of each month)

Friday mornings 6:30-7:30am (followed by coffee as well as dharma discussion on first Fridays)

UP NORTH. Daily sittings at Mountain Lamp 6:30-8:30am with dokusan at 7am followed by breakfast on Fridays at 8:45am. (contact 360 592-5248)

DOWN SOUTH. Regular sittings are held at the Open Gate Zendo in Portland. (contact 503 225-1390)

Monthly Zazenkai (zenkai)

Single or multi-day retreats including meditation, teisho and dokusan with teacher Jack Duffy.

Interviews (dokusan) with Teacher Jack Duffy

Private interviews available during zazen in zenkai or sesshin to discuss any practice-related topic.

Semi-annual Sesshins

Week-long intensive retreats including meditation, teisho and dokusan with teacher Jack Duffy.

Quarterly Sangha Meetings

Meetings of the sangha members and the Board are held regularly at the Seattle Practice Center, 1910 24th Avenue South. For schedule, leave a message at 324-5373; your call will be returned.

Leadership Training

Instruction in the various jobs that contribute to the smooth operation of the dojo and retreats. Leave a message at 324-5373 for information.

Mindfulness Community of Puget Sound

The group with whom Three Treasures shares the Practice Center—MCPS—meets at the Center on Monday and Thursday evenings 6:30-8:30pm for sitting and discussion, and Thursday mornings 6:30-7:30am (followed by coffee). Led by Eileen Kiera.

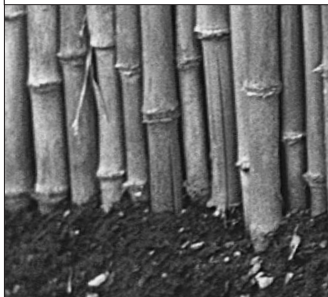


"Hope is a state of mind, not of the world. Hope, in this deep and powerful sense, is not the same as joy that things are going well, or willingness to invest in enterprises that are obviously headed for success, but rather an ability to work for something because it is good." Vaclav Havel

Opportunities to Participate
2006-7 Calendar of Scheduled Events



Appreciations to **Eric Ervin** for handling the library duties so skillfully this past year; thanks much to **Geoff Cole** and **Christine Campbell** for now assuming these responsibilities for our sangha.



Key Contacts within the Sangha
Coordinators, Committees and Board Members

- SEPT 30 Gardening Day 11am-4pm (flexible)
- OCT 25 Zazen and Dokusan 6:30-8:30pm (with Jack)
- 28 Gardening Day 11am-4pm (flexible)
- NOV 3-10 Sesshin at Indianola: Walking Rain
- 16-19 Retreat in Spokane (Ellen Cote 509 534-2617)
- 29 Zazen and Dokusan 6:30-8:30pm (with Jack)
- DEC 9- Zenkai Saturday 6:30-8:30pm (with Jack)
- 10 Zenkai Sunday 6:30am-1:30pm
- 27 Zazen 6:30-7:30pm Sushi & Sake (with Jack)
- JAN 6- Zenkai Saturday 6:30-8:30pm (with Jack)
- 7 Zenkai Sunday 6:30am-1:30pm (with Jack)
- 27- Zenkai Pt Townsend (Kathryn Hunt 360 379-0817)
- 28 Zenkai Pt Townsend (with Jack)
- 31 Zazen and Dokusan 6:30-8:30pm (with Jack)
- FEB 10- Zenkai Saturday 6:30-8:30pm (with Jack)
- 11 Zenkai Sunday 6:30am-1:30pm (with Jack)
- 21 Zazen and Dokusan 6:30-8:30pm (with Jack)
- 22 Dharma Currents Newsletter Deadline
- 28 Retreat Spokane starts (Ellen Cote 509 534-2617)
- MAR 4 Retreat Spokane ends (Ellen Cote 509 534-2617)
- 28 Zazen and Dokusan 6:30-8:30pm (with Jack)
- APR 6-13 Sesshin Branching Moon (Ace Davis 206 632-8889)
- 21-22 Retreat In-City: Garden of Light (with Jack)
- 25 Zazen and Dokusan 6:30-8:30pm (with Jack)
- 28 Gardening Day 11am-4pm (flexible)
- MAY 12-13 Retreat Mtn Lamp (Nichole 360 592-0600)
- 19- Zenkai Saturday 6:30-8:30pm (with Jack)
- MAY 20 Zenkai Sunday 6:30am-1:30pm (with Jack)
- 26 Gardening Day 11am-4pm (flexible)
- 30 Zazen and Dokusan 6:30-8:30pm (with Jack)
- JUN 14 Dharma Currents Newsletter Deadline
- 23- Zenkai Saturday 6:30-8:30pm (with Jack)
- 24 Zenkai Sunday 6:30am-1:30pm (with Jack)
- 27 Zazen and Dokusan 6:30-8:30pm (with Jack)
- 30 Gardening Day 11am-4pm (flexible)
- JUL 8 Zenkai Sunday 6:30am-1:30pm (without Jack)
- 21-25 Sesshin Mtn Lamp (Nichole 360 592-0600)
- 28 Gardening Day 11am-4pm (flexible)
- AUG 12 Zenkai Sunday 6:30am-1:30pm (without Jack)
- 25 Gardening Day 11am-4pm (flexible)
- SEPT 8-9 Zenkai at Mtn Lamp (Nichole 360 592-0600)
- 19 Zazen and Dokusan 6:30-8:30pm (with Jack)
- 20 Dharma Currents Newsletter Deadline
- 22-23 Retreat Mtn Lamp (Nichole 360 592-0600)
- 29 Gardening Day 11am-4pm (flexible)
- OCT 13- Zenkai Saturday 6:30-8:30pm (with Jack)
- 14 Zenkai Sunday 6:30am-1:30pm (with Jack)
- 27 Gardening Day 11am-4pm (flexible)
- 31 Zazen and Dokusan 6:30-8:30pm (with Jack)
- NOV 2-9 Sesshin Walking Rain (Ace Davis 206 632-8889)
- 14-18 Retreat Spokane (Ellen Cote 509 534-2617)
- 28 Zazen and Dokusan 6:30-8:30pm (with Jack)
- DEC 8- Zenkai Saturday 6:30-8:30pm (with Jack)
- 9 Zenkai Sunday 6:30-11:30am; sangha mtg
- 19 Zazen 6:30-7:30pm Sushi & Sake (with Jack)

Invitation from MCPS...

Mindfulness Community of Puget Sound—the group with whom TTS shares the Center—is planning a fundraiser. This dinner party and auction is 6-9pm on October 14th. Contact Ariel Rathbun (328-2827, ariel@seanet.com) for more info and to buy your tickets (\$30).

Three Treasures Sangha Practice Committee

- Madelon Bolling.....527-1190
- Ace Davis.....632-8889
- Jack Duffy Teacher..... 360.592-5248
- Nils Larsen..... 360.293-5866
- Rebecca Ross.....546-8535
- Jana Zeedyk..... 503.220-0508

Three Treasures Sangha Board

- President Karen Rosenstiel. 325-4334
- Vice President.....Karen Crogan.... 425. 787-5999
- Secretary Mary Ersek784-5052
- Treasurer Sean Walsh709-8681
- At-Large/Historian Rebecca Ross.....546-8535
- Teacher Jack Duffy... 360.592-5248

Practice Center Committee Representatives

- Kay Peters.....322-8759
- Sean Walsh709-8681

Sangha Contacts and Coordinators

- Bookkeeper Jan Mikus.363-9650
- Communications Rebecca Ross.....546-8535
- Dharma Friend Coord . Kay Peters.....322-8759
- Garden Coordinator ... Kay Peters.....322-8759
- Librarian.....Christine Campbell988-4916
- Librarian..... Geoff Cole.....632-9569
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- Newsletter Design Cindy Jennings ..933-8100
- Orientation *Wednesdays* ... Sibyl James.....323-7516
- Orientation *Fridays* Kay Peters.....322-8759
- Orientation *Zenkai days* ... Rebecca Ross.....546-8535
- Sesshin Coordinator .. Ace Davis.....632-8889
- Sesshin Set-Up Coord. Emily Warn.....322-8750
- Volunteer Coordinator Ursula Popp.....783-3921
- Zazen Leader *Wednesdays*. Sibyl James.....323-7516
- Zazen Leader *Fridays* Kay Peters.....322-8759
- Zazen Leader *Portland* Jana Zeedyk...503.225-1390
- Zenkai Coordinator Rebecca Ross.....546-8535



"I step into the day; I step into myself; I step into the mystery." Anishinabe Prayer

Article by Robert Aitken

Dana: The Way to Begin

*When someone brings me a flower
I vow with all beings
to renew my practice of dana,
the gift, the way to begin.*



This excerpt is part one of two of an article appearing in the current issue of Mind Moon Circle. Permission for publication here was granted by Roshi and Gillian Cooté with coordination by TTS member Karen Rosenstiel.

This is a gatha (*left*) I included in *The Dragon Who Never Sleeps*.(1) The idea that dana, or giving, is the way to begin your practice, is not original with me, but is found in the earliest literature: A monk asked Hui-hai, "By what means can the gateway of our school be entered?"

Hui-Hai said, "By means of the Dana Paramita." The monk said, "According to the Buddha, the Bodhisattva Path comprises six Paramitas. Why have you mentioned only the one? Please explain why this one alone provides a sufficient means for us to enter." Hui-hai said, "Deluded people fail to understand that the other five all proceed from the Dana Paramita and that by its practice all the others are fulfilled."

The monk asked, "Why is it called the Dana Paramita?" Hui-hai said, "'Dana' means 'relinquishment.'"

The monk asked, "Relinquishment what?" Hui-hai said, "Relinquishment of the dualism of opposites, which means relinquishment of ideas as to the dual nature of good and bad, being and non-being, void and non-void, pure and impure, and so on."(2)

Hui-hai does not include the dualism of self and other in his list of dichotomies we must relinquish, but it is clear that he intends that it be included, for he goes on to say, "By a single act of relinquishment, everything is relinquished.

I exhort you students to practice the way of relinquishment and nothing else, for it brings to perfection not only the other five Paramitas but also myriads of other (practices)."(3)

This total relinquishment is the self forgotten, the dropped-away body and mind. This act of dropping away is dana, out-flowing as food and housing and clothing and money, and dana, out-flowing as the Buddha's teaching of wisdom and compassion.

It is not giving money or food in order to receive the teaching. It is not teaching in order to gain sustenance. The two acts arise as pratitya-samutpada, mutual co-arising.(4)

Thus dana is not obligation; it is not sacrifice; it is not compassion. I think it is an expression of gratitude. The English word gratitude is related to grace. It is the enjoyment of receiving as expressed in giving., It is a living, vivid mirror, in which giving and receiving form a dynamic practice of interaction.

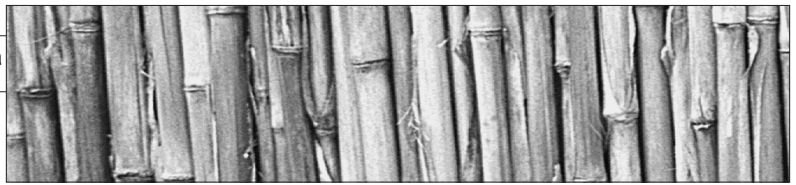
For receiving, too, is a practice. Look at the word arigato, Japanese for 'thank you'. It means literally, "I have difficulty". In other words, "Your kindness makes it hard for me to respond with equal grace." Yet the practice of gift-giving lies at the heart of Japanese culture. The word arigato expresses the practice of receiving.

Pratitya-samutpada, is the fundamental phenomenon that the Buddha clarified in his teaching, This is because that is. This arises when that arises. When you smile, everyone smiles. When you are sad, everyone is sad. When you give, everyone gives, including the teacher, including our ancestors. Taking part in this primordial Tao, your contribution brings everyone's contribution. From my essay on Money:

"Kuan-yin distills the dana of primal society, of circulating the gift that nurtures families and clans. At a single festival, a necklace of precious shells becomes two dozen precious pendants. At a single market holiday, a knife becomes salt and salt becomes a colt. The honour of a new chief is spread by blankets far and wide. Of course, Mara blows his smoke through these exchanges. Did the primal peoples know Mara from Kuan-yin? They never heard of either, of course, but they knew greed when they saw it and so do we as well."(5)

NOTES

- (1) Robert Aitken, *The Dragon Who Never Sleeps: Verses for Zen Buddhist Practice* (Berkeley, CA: Parallax 1992), p.16
- (2) John Blofield, trans., *The Zen Teaching of Instantaneous Awakening: Being the Teaching of the Zen Master Hui Hai, Known as the Great Pearl* (Leicester: Buddhist Publishing Group 1987), pp.25-26. I cite this in my study, *The Practice of Perfection: The Paramitas from a Zen Buddhist Perspective* (Washington, DC: Counterpoint 1997), pp.6-7, and draw much of this essay from the chapter "Giving," pp.3-21.
- (3) *Ibid.*, p.27
- (4) Walpola Rahula, *What the Buddha Taught* (New York: Grove 1959), pp.52-54.
- (5) Robert Aitken, *Original Dwelling Place: Zen Buddhist Essays* (Washington DC: Counterpoint 1996), p.172. Robert Aitken, *The Gateless Barrier: The Wu-men kuan* (Mumonkan) (San Francisco: North Point Press 1990), p.279.



Sesshin Registration

Walking Rain

A week long meditation retreat in the Zen Buddhist tradition with teacher Jack Duffy

When From 7pm Friday evening, November 3rd through 2pm Friday afternoon, November 10th, 2006. To minimize coming and going during sesshin, we request everyone plan to arrive Friday evening or night on November 3rd. If you are unable to attend the full sesshin, please schedule your departure for either Sunday afternoon, November 5th at 4pm or Monday afternoon, November 6th at 4pm.

Where Camp Indianola in Indianola, Washington (check the TTS web site for map and driving instructions) Accommodations are dormitory-style. Telephone contact for emergencies only: 360 297-2223.

Cost Payment in full is due with this registration to reserve space. However, sesshin fee will be refunded in full if cancellation occurs two weeks prior in which case \$50 is non-refundable. Payment plans and scholarships may be arranged through the sesshin coordinator, Ace Davis at 206 632-8889.

- Regular and Supporting Members full time: \$322 (your dues must be current to qualify for this rate)
- All others full time: \$380
- Regular and Supporting Members part time: \$46 per night
- All others part time: \$58 per night
- If you are able, please add a donation for scholarships.

Food All meals are included and are vegetarian, including milk, eggs and cheese. If you have food allergies and/or special dietary needs, please call in advance and elaborate below.

Bring Zafu and zabuton as well as support cushions and/or bench as needed
Unless you've made arrangements with sesshin coordinator, you must bring your own zafu and zabuton
 Clothes for sitting (comfortable, unpatterned, dark) and clothes/footwear for working inside or outside
 Sleeping bag and/or bedding
 Your check for the balance amount of sesshin fees
 Cell phones are prohibited while earplugs (for light sleepers), bath mat, tent, flashlights are optional

Detach Clip and mail with full payment to register your schedule, volunteer interests and dietary requirements.

Register Registration form (please print) and check for full sesshin fee amount (made payable to *Three Treasures Sangha*) should be mailed by October 20th to Ace Davis at 4701 Latona NE, Seattle, Washington 98105.

NAME _____ DATE _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE OR PROVINCE _____ ZIP _____

TELEPHONE _____ E-MAIL _____

Details Circle all that apply: I VOLUNTEER TO BE A SET-UP WORKER I VOLUNTEER TO BE A FOOD SHOPPER/PLANNER

I WILL ATTEND FRIDAY THROUGH SUNDAY I WILL ATTEND FRIDAY THROUGH MONDAY I WILL ATTEND FULL TIME

I PLAN TO BRING A TENT I NEED A RIDE I CAN GIVE A RIDE

I NEED TO AVOID THESE FOODS: _____

*Three
Treasures*
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Northwest *Sangha*

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N E W S L E T T E R

Time Value Material: Dharma Currents... Early Autumn Issue
Sesshin Registration enclosed