



Water Wheel

Being one with all Buddhas, I turn the water wheel of compassion.

—Gate of Sweet Nectar

2019 Winds of Change

by Wendy Egyoku Nakao



We turn the calendar page and enter the year 2019. This is a time to pause and refresh, breathing in and breathing out breaths of renewal. When you turn the calendar page with intention, it is like revolving a sutra—allowing the old pages to breathe, circulating love and wisdom everywhere.

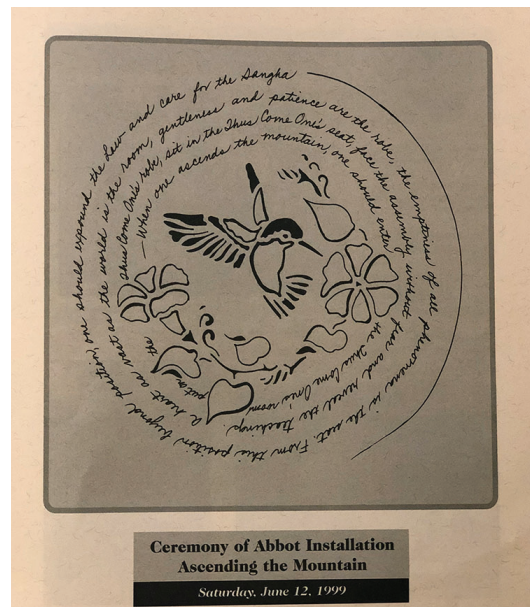
What are your vows—your deepest heart's desire—for yourself in the new year? What is your heart's desire for your loved ones, for your fellow beings with which you share this earth, and for the earth and universe itself?

This past fall, intense fire storms raged throughout California leaving death and destruction in their wake. In the midst of this, Roshi Bernie, ZCLA's second abbot and my beloved Dharma teacher, passed away in Montague, MA. In Zen speak, we say that "He went to another realm to teach," but I hope he is resting, having a cigar, and taking a hot bath somewhere. As if these unsettling movements weren't enough, I announced that I am descending the mountain after twenty years as Abbot and that Sensei Faith-Mind will ascend the mountain in 2019.

When I ascended the mountain in 1999, Roshi Bernie descended. In preparing for that big day of June 12th long ago, James Bodhi-Song Graham, Deborah Dharma-Heart McColl, and I wrote a celebratory song. This is the chorus that weaves throughout:

*The blue sky bears witness to this day
The dharma ocean brings the winds of change
And we will all come with you, you won't be alone
Ascending the Mountain, Zen flesh and bones.*

This verse has sustained me for the twenty years that have passed since that day. It is my prayer that it will sustain Sensei Faith-Mind and those who will ascend Great Dragon



Program cover for Abbot Installation, 1999.

Mountain in the years to come and that the sangha, and all who take the seats that guide it, will remain true to its purpose, lead from a heart of love and wisdom, and not regress in fulfilling their vows.

Long before his own death, Maezumi Roshi had stipulated in his will that Roshi Bernie, his first Dharma heir, would become the second Abbot of ZCLA. So in 1995 when Maezumi Roshi died suddenly, Roshi Bernie

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found himself not just the head of the Zen Community of New York and the fledgling Greyston Foundation, but also the Abbot of ZCLA and Yokoji Zen Mountain Center in Idyllwild. Roshi Bernie's tenure spanned four tumultuous years, during which he guided Zen Center through the unexpected death of its founder, a subsequent resident teacher scandal and rupture of the Sangha, and the legal separation of ZCLA and Yokoji. By this time, Roshi Bernie himself had been away from ZCLA for sixteen years. Although he remained very close to Maezumi Roshi throughout those years and was himself the leader of a Sangha in New York, I think that being pulled back into ZCLA's complex orbit must have felt like a burden. People wondered, "What will become of ZCLA?"

A few months before Maezumi Roshi died, he and I were standing together by the window at the Green Gulch guest house looking out at the garden and sharing an orange. I said to him, "You know, Roshi, after all we have been through, I want you to know that I am so grateful that I stuck it out with you." "Really?" he asked. "Yes, really," I replied. And with Bernie, I always told him, "I am so grateful to you because I went to Zen finishing school with you." When Maezumi Roshi's breath stopped, I shifted seamlessly into another generation of Zen teachers and into the wide open field in which Roshi Bernie practiced. Today ZCLA continues to skillfully blend the worlds of these teachers.

Whatever you are feeling about the upcoming change of abbots, I want you to deeply appreciate that descending and ascending the Mountain is the most natural movement in the world. When I told my dharma sister Roshi Jikyo of my decision, she wrote, "How amazing to do this at a time when there is no sangha rupture, no grief—it is just natural to descend and someone else ascend." Indeed.

When I ascended in 1999, Roshi Bernie said to me, "Now you must think about who will ascend after you." It has taken 20 years. I am deeply grateful and inspired that Sensei Faith-Mind will become the fourth abbot of ZCLA. Just as I never imagined myself as ZCLA's abbot, I am sure that she never imagined herself stepping into this position. But when the winds of change blow, we are often called forth into new realms and expand accordingly. I myself look forward to continuing as the Head/Resident Teacher.

I ascended the mountain when ZCLA was in a state of tumult—the sangha in shambles, the buildings and grounds in need of work, and the finances in the red. Of all these factors, Roshi Bernie considered that the Sangha was most important. He asked me to "return and heal the Sangha." Maezumi Roshi himself had often said to me, "Your job is the Sangha Treasure." We have all put our



Shogen Bloodgood as Roshi Bernie with Roshi Egyoku on "Love Bernie Day." Roshi Egyoku sent Bernie's suspenders and aloha shirt for the occasion. Roshi Egyoku is wearing the lineage: a bowing cloth from Baian Hakujuun Daiosho, brown koromo from Maezumi Roshi, and the Peacemaker okesa made for Bernie by Roshi Jishu. The okesa will reside on the Founders' Altar along with Bernie's relics and ihai (plaque). (Photo by Kathy Myoan Solomon)

shoulders to the Dharma wheel and worked incredibly hard. A few years ago, I realized that I have done the job I was asked to do. I leave ZCLA healed, just as Bernie asked me to. Both Maezumi Roshi and he would have been thrilled to see the wisdom and care with which the Zen Center is evolving.

This sense of fulfillment calls to mind the words I wrote on the cover of the program for when I ascended the mountain (see page 1). I took my inspiration from the *Lotus Sutra* and adapted it as follows:

... When one ascends the mountain, one should enter the Thus Come One's room, put on the Thus Come One's robe, sit in the Thus Come One's seat, face the assembly without fear, and reveal the teachings. A heart as vast as the world is the room, gentleness and patience are the robe, the emptiness of all phenomena is the seat. From this position beyond position, one should expound the Law and care for the Sangha.

ZCLA is poised for a vibrant future. Let's see to its fulfillment in the new year as we welcome and support Sensei Faith-Mind as our new abbot and tend to our unfolding.

Roshi Egyoku is ZCLA's Abbot & Head Teacher.

Is this me? Is this mine? Is this myself?

by Sensei Kipp Ryodo Hawley



*All through' the day ... I me mine, I me mine, I me mine.
All through' the night ... I me mine, I me mine, I me mine.
All I can bear ... I me mine, I me mine, I me mine.
Even those tears ... I me mine, I me mine, I me mine.
All through your life - I me mine.*
- George Harrison

This year I retired from 30 years of computer programming. That's what I called it in the beginning -- being a programmer. Then it turned into being a software architect, finally an IT consultant. With all these different labels, regardless of what I called it at each point in my IT career, I was doing the same basic thing - putting a bunch of parts together to make a system work, and sticking around to fix things when they break.

Retiring is one of the big sea changes we go through in life. It is yet another opportunity, like finishing our years of schooling, to look at just what it is we are. What is "me"? What is it that perceives a "me"? What is it that cares? We ask these questions of ourselves periodically, but it usually takes one of those inflection points, when our deepest self is open and paying attention, to really see what we're up to.

The central liturgy of the Soto School of Zen is "The Heart of the Perfection of Great Wisdom Sutra." In the very first line it addresses this matter: "Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva, doing deep prajna paramita, clearly saw emptiness of all the five conditions, thus completely relieving misfortune and pain." Paraphrasing and expanding on Buddha's second sermon, the sutra continues to center on those five conditions: form, sensation, conception, discrimination, and awareness. These conditions, also known as aggregates or skandhas, are the basic building blocks of what I, me, and mine are made of.

Buddha taught us to deeply inspect all of them, and showed that we arrive at liberation by seeing into each one and realizing that "This is not mine, this I am not, this is not myself." In the introduction to his translation of the Pali Canon sutras in the Samyutta Nikaya, Bhikkhu Bodhi says: "The lesson this maxim teaches is that there is no point in appropriating anything, no point in identifying with anything, because the subject of appropriation and identification, the 'self,' is merely a fabrication of conceptual thought woven in the darkness of ignorance." Bhikkhu

Bodhi's encapsulation: it's all about the self and its accessories.

This is not myself

For 30 years "I" was "a programmer." Before I started computer work, I was "a musician," Or "a songwriter," or "a store clerk," or "an audio engineer" depending on the time of day. Before that, I was "a student." And in recent years, I've been "a Zen teacher."

And now, what is "I"? Now I am "retired." Well, not quite, since I'm on a contract for a transition period, hanging around to help fix things when they break. On the other hand, I now have time to pursue music once again. So "I" am not just "retired," I'm also "a musician." And as before, at certain times of the week, I am "a Zen teacher."

OK, which one of those am I really? What is this "me"? Classic Buddhist commentaries refer to this as "identity view," what Chogyam Trungpa Rinpoche referred to as our "credentials." In his book "Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism," Trungpa points out that as we progress along the spiritual path, we usually go through stages of dropping off grosser sets of credentials only to pick up more "spiritual" ones. We start off with "material" materialism: I'm me because I have such and such a job, such and such a car, with such and such a spouse. But as we begin progressing along the path, we soon replace this "material" materialism with a sort of "spiritual" materialism. I'm me because I have given up my attachment to material things, go on meditation retreats, and have had such and such a breakthrough. After subsequent breakthroughs, we pick up even subtler credentials. And on and on.

Eventually we experience a shift, when we clearly see though the illusion of a permanent "me" that is separate from everything else in the world. But even though we don't regress back into the old identity view, there still remains a deeper perception of an "I" that is aware of this realization and continues to bind us in subtle ways.

This is not mine

As for the self's accessories, as George Carlin put it, "That's the whole meaning of life, isn't it -- trying to find a place for your stuff."

What does it really mean for something to be "mine"? What about my new guitar sound that I've been crafting

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IS THIS ME? IS THIS MINE? IS THIS MYSELF? (Continued from page 3)

for a couple of years now? I feel an emotional and physical connection with the equipment I've carefully chosen to reproduce the unique timbre I'm hearing in my head. Now, after two years of tone hunting, I've arrived at a sound that I like better than what I was first looking for. But after all this, is my art really "mine"?

Another problem with "mine" -- we quickly see the truth behind Buddha's teaching that all the skandhas, especially form, are impermanent. I used the bulky little tool that came with my sweet sounding new guitar to adjust the strings. While I was turning the screw to raise the bridge, the tool fell and put two little dents in the guitar. Impermanence! "My" beautiful guitar is now marred. As you may know, vintage, well-worn guitars are prized for their visual character and the patina of nicely-aged sound. But a brand new one has that shiny look that is also inspiring. Sigh.

This I am not

This is one of the last fetters we are freed from in Buddhism: conceit. This "conceit" is much deeper than our usual meaning of the word, which we typically use to say someone has a high opinion of themselves. Rather, this is a view that "continues to linger like the scent of soap over newly washed clothes," as Bhikkhu Bodhi describes it. The primal feeling that someone is here, perceiving all the events in our life.

This is very difficult to discern. First of all, why isn't the saying just "me and mine"? What is the distinction between "I" and "me"?

I see this "I," this conceit, as the enabler of all the other fetters that Buddha says afflict us. Note that in English syntax, "I" is a subject. The other self of our "I me mine" trinity is "me," which in English usage is an object. Roshi Bernie Glassman, ZCLA's second abbot, was known for saying, "Drop the subject/object relationship." "I" am the subject, and the object could well be "me," as in my credential. Or it is "mine," as in my music. I me mine. Most often, though, the object is something "out there." In every case, drop the relationship between "I" and whatever the subject is. What is left?

Even those tears

Even those tears ... I me mine, I me mine, I me mine.

It is said that George Harrison wrote this song about the Beatles' emotional state prior to their breakup. When digging into our spiritual issues and building up our strength of samadhi, it's easy to become detached from our emotional processes. Yes, developing detachment is part of our practice, but that doesn't mean suppressing our feelings. We're flesh and blood Buddhas, not robots!

When the tears flow, we're deep in the midst of our human condition -- and conditioning. Here we directly experience the workings and results of what we abstractly refer to as clinging to the skandhas. This is when we start approaching the real point of all this, when the rubber hits the road -- what is truly important to you?

Transcendence

"Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva, doing deep prajna paramita, clearly saw emptiness of all the five conditions, thus completely relieving misfortune and pain." Notice how carefully this is worded. It doesn't say, "We all relieve misfortune and pain." Rather, it is Avalokitesvara, the bodhisattva and archetype of compassion, that realizes there is no self or permanence in these skandhas, these building blocks of our illusory selves. As a result, I, me and mine dissolve away, and along with them, misfortune and pain.

What is left? Not-I, not-me, not-mine. Isn't this what is revealed when we drop the subject/object relationship? This is the first Zen Peacemaker tenet, Not-Knowing. Isn't that the point of the Heart Sutra? It declares: "In Emptiness there is no form, no sensation, conception, discrimination, awareness." Not that nothing exists; Buddha warned against harboring this idea, which he termed "annihilationism." Rather, the special relationship with "I" is dropped, so the specific kind of misfortune and pain associated with each of these five skandhas disappears.

I'm seeing a peculiar phenomenon in my state of retirement -- a sort of flywheel of productivity that keeps spinning all day long, even though it's not needed anymore. I'm driven to feel like I'm working each moment of the day, at least until dinner! This comes from those 30 years of being productive, of each day being oriented toward getting things done. Now, even though I do have things I want to complete, like an album of guitar music, Zen writings and preparations for an upcoming conference, these aren't urgent matters that require constant attention. After taking care of everyday responsibilities, it's actually okay to take some time off to listen to a whole album of music, read more of the newspaper than I usually would, or even just sit around looking at the clouds. Even so, I still feel the spinning need to be constantly productive. "I can't just sit here for a moment, I have to ____." Since this is a primal drive, and not clearly articulated like this, I'm not aware of that telltale blank after the phrase "I have to ____", just the wordless need to be in action. When I do take a moment to be aware and articulate that sentence to myself, since there is nothing I actually have to do, the feeling vanishes.

What is this "I" that feels this?

Sensei Ryodo is a teacher at ZCLA and leads Westchester Zen Circle.

The Power of Vow in Difficult Times

by Bill Earth-Mirror Corcoran



In her book “Sanctuary: A Meditation on Home, Homelessness, and Belonging,” Soto Priest Zenju Earthlyn Manuel explores her search for home as a black woman and finding freedom in Zen practice. In response to the traumas arising from her gendered, sexualized, racialized identity, she writes, “With freedom, we begin to participate in

our destiny and not fear or live in reaction to the wrath of oppressors or dominant cultures. We bloom rather than wither away in our suffering.”

Her words speak deeply to me as I observe how I both embrace and resist the change processes happening in my workplace (where I work on climate advocacy). How do I advance equity, inclusion, and justice and bloom rather than wither in the face of the world’s suffering and my own?

For Rev. Zenju, her Zen practice, especially zazen, engenders the space to become intimate with her fundamental nature and open the gate of freedom. But what about in a workplace? Within the power dynamics of the work space, can collective leadership emerge? How do the values of wisdom and compassion show up when working in politics or struggling with corporations? How does participating in one’s destiny function in an advocacy community that often confuses opinion with truth? Diving into all of this at work has brought me a deeper appreciation of our Zen forms—ceremony, council, the Three Tenets, our Statement of Right Conduct. The forms center us, expand us, ground us, and support us. I am experimenting with how to introduce such forms into work, presenting them in familiar language or introducing them when a group is stuck.

The Three Tenets are at the core of my work practice: Not Knowing, Bearing Witness, and Loving Action. It’s a gift in a fast-paced and complex work environment to become aware of when I am drifting into one-sided self-awareness and to deliberately shift to letting go of my “knowing,” listening from the top of my head to the bottom of my feet, trusting that the appropriate, loving action will emerge. When something goes awry, I have begun saying to others, “Oh, that’s interesting. What is that situation telling us? What is it asking for?”

In engaging with great change and great uncertainty, I could flee. When that impulse comes up, I am stuck in resistance. By turning to my vow to this earth and all beings,

I can respond in a wholesome way at home, wherever I am, and able to be with whatever arises. Doesn’t this constitute a life well lived?

As Roshi Egyoku says in her talk “The Bodhisattvas and the Three Tenets”: “We simply cannot ignore each other because fundamentally we are all the same nature. This is not approached with a sense of an overbearing responsibility, but rather a sense of joy. In the midst of suffering, the bodhisattva connects with the profound joy of serving others.” That joy arises when I de-center the small self and align with interconnection and interdependence.

Without that shift, I naturally fall into instrumental action. It can be scary to let go of that way of being and open up to the vast context of relieving suffering and honoring the earth, the womb for all we experience. Can I hold my bodhisattva vow and be effective? This is where faith enters—faith in this very thusness of being, faith that

**By turning to my vow wherever
I am, I can respond in a
wholesome way.**

alignment and perseverance right here and right now will bring forth whatever is needed.

My Dharma name, Earth-Mirror, has the aspect of Jizo, whose Sanskrit name Kshitigarbha can be translated as “Womb of the Earth.” Jizo vows to liberate all from the hell realms before her own liberation. Unless we address climate disruption, we are creating hell realms for our youth and many future generations as well as for all of life -- our relations in the plant world, the insect world, the four-legged world, the water beings world. My vow is to heal and liberate in the midst of this fire. It gives me stability and inspires me to experiment and explore ways of working that benefit liberation.

In the direct reality of this life, how I respond is not about my ideas about all of that. Rather, it is about letting go, letting life do life. That is the womb from which radical change emerges moment after moment. May your vow and mine be fully realized and the earth healed so that life flourishes, the sky shines with purity, and the waters gleam in response.

Earth-Mirror is a practicing member at ZCLA.

Remembering Roshi Bernie

by Wendy Egyoku Nakao

When I think of Roshi Bernie (1939-2018), this koan comes to mind:

Master Goso said to a monk, “There is a man who can write the words ‘Why did Bodhidharma come to China?’ on the paper of the universe, using Mount Sumeru as a brush and the ocean as an inkwell. If you can do it, I will open my prayer mat and bow.”

Only I hear it this way:

There was a man who wrote these words, “Zen is Life—Plunge!” on the paper of the universe, using Mount Sumeru as a brush and the ocean as an inkwell. If you can do it, I will put on my clown nose and dance with you.

The trajectory of Roshi Bernie’s Dharma life is extraordinary for its range. He began as a student of Maezumi Sensei in the late 1960s and was part of the founding of ZCLA, becoming Tetsugen Sensei, Maezumi Roshi’s first Dharma heir in 1978. Bernie and his family moved to Riverdale, NY, and began the Zen Community of New York, a gathering of many outstanding Zen students, which included future successors such as Roshis: author Peter Muryo Matthiessen, Sheikh Lex Jikai Hixon, and Fr. Robert Jinsen Kennedy, SJ. His vow to feed the hungry spirits was awakened when he had a visceral experience of entering the hungry ghost realm. This led to the founding of the Greyston Mandala, street and Bearing Witness retreats, and the Zen Peacemakers Order. During the last months of his life, he delighted in meeting with his many successors through Zoom. The photos here capture aspects of his Dharma life.



This sign at the former home of the Zen Peacemakers in Montague, MA, captures facets of Bernie’s vision.



Tetsugen Sensei with his teacher Maezumi Roshi, the founder of ZCLA, circa 1967. (ZCLA archive photo)



Tetsugen Sensei and Maezumi Roshi walking on the lawn of the Zen Community of New York in Riverdale, NY.



Bernie in one of his favorite environments: tearing down the old and repurposing it for social action. Yonkers, NY.



*Photos by Peter Cunningham
(www.petercunninghamphotography.com)
Peter documented Bernie’s life from his 1979 return to New York until his death in 2018.*



In 1984 on his 55th birthday, Bernie sat at the U.S. Capitol building asking himself: "What can I do about AIDS, homelessness, and the violence in this country?"



Roshi Sandra Jishu Holmes with her husband Bernie on a Street Retreat in NY. Together they initiated the Greyston Mandala and co-founded the Zen Peacemaker Order.



Bernie standing at the entrance to a crematorium at Auschwitz/Berkeinau. The Bearing Witness retreat there has continued for twenty-three years.



Roshi Robert Jinsen Kennedy, SJ, with his Dharma Transmission teacher Roshi Bernie. This transmission marked the beginnings of the White Plum's Zen Catholic lineage.



Bernie became a student of clowning under Mr. YooWho Moshe Cohen. They travelled to Chiapas (above). Bernie took on the clown name "Boobysatvah (Stupid Being)."



Roshi Eve Myonen Marko and her husband Bernie. Together they co-authored many notable books including "Bearing Witness: A Zen Master's Lessons in Making Peace." (Bell Tower, 2013)

Photo at left: From left, Peter Muryo Matthiessen, Soen Nakagawa Roshi, and Bernie during the pilgrimage to Japan which Muryo described in his book "Nine-Headed Dragon River." (Shambhala, 1998)

Breathtaking Transformation

Bodhisattva Staff member Nina Reiju Wasserman first walked through the gate of Great Dragon Mountain more than 27 years ago. Over the years, first as a commuter and then as a resident, she has offered her service and self to the Sangha in the capacities of Office Manager, Bookstore Manager, and in many other ways, seen and unseen. Now, as Reiju steps away from her long-time managing of the Bookstore, we celebrate her devotion and keen sense of humor. In this interview with Dokai Dickens, we asked her about her experience and shapeshifting through the years.

Water Wheel: Who were you before you came to Los Angeles and ZCLA?

Reiju: I was a 27-year-old student from Chicago who came to help out after a death in the family. It was a fortunate move because my life was in an absolute shambles. I was emotionally in turmoil and terribly confused.

I finished college out here, got a teaching credential in art, and went to work for LAUSD. I lucked out; my first job was a coveted art teacher position which included working with ceramics and crafts, working with clay, learning how to use a kiln.

WW: How did you become interested in Zen Buddhism?

Reiju: In those days, we were just getting to know things Japanese. I watched their movies, read books, and came to appreciate their art forms, especially of ancient Japan.

When my therapist at the time suggested I look into a spiritual practice, a Zen practitioner I knew mentioned Cimarron Zen Center (now Rinzai-ji Zen Center) and ZCLA. I naively asked her which was easier and ended up here. That was 1984. It was an opportune time. I needed Buddhist teachings desperately. I had already been through a number of psychiatrists and therapists.

My feeling is that something within me kept me here. I knew I needed something, didn't know what, and that something in me pointed the way. Soon something deeper than thinking formed an allegiance, an intimacy with the Center. And I could see that some of my behaviors were changing.

At the time, what held me was not so much allegiance to people as to the teachings. I didn't want to abandon the work of Maezumi Roshii in the United States or the Zen Center itself. The teachings have been a salvation not only for me, but for many others as well.



Reiju Wasserman

WW: How do you view your practice over the years?

Reiju: Over these 27 years, I've experienced a breathtaking transformation. I started to like people. I discovered they had more elasticity than I gave them credit for. I realized that my mind-habit of storytelling was illusory and destructive. What goes through the mind is not the truth. Everything is open. Nothing is set. There's a wonderful flow.

WW: Your volunteer activities at ZCLA have spanned many years.

Reiju: I started out as Office Manager, and later became Bookstore Manager. For me, the bookstore has been like the kitchen in a home, the heart of informal linking for friends, family, and practitioners who pass through the door. Meeting all those different personalities has been a self-discovery and has broadened my relationship to the Sangha. Now I'm retiring from the bookstore, but I continue to work in the office and Sangha House and coordinate a variety of membership tasks.

WW: Do you have any closing thoughts?

Reiju: I feel transformed, and my transformation has been a beautiful thing. I've become more open and hold a real joy and love of the Sangha. The Dharma teachings are beautiful and continue their lure of being inconceivable, exhilarating, and regenerative. Once when I was complaining to Roshii about being "old" here, she told me that I was a teacher for others; I do whatever I feel I can do.

2018 Fall Practice Period Commitments

We acknowledge the more than 100 Sangha members who participated from Zen Center of Los Angeles, San Luis Obispo Sangha, Westchester Zen Circle, and California Men's Colony.

April True-Flower Ford
Barbara Myogetsu Hambly
Betsy Enduring-Vow Brown
Bill Earth-Mirror Corcoran
Bob Doetsu Ross
Bonnie Myosen Nadzam
Brian Huff
Burt Wetanson
Chris Hackman
Christina Choren Carvalho
Clé Van Buerden
Conrad Butsugen Romo
Corey Ryujin McIntyre
Daniel Wilner
Darla Myoho Fjeld
Dave Taian Goodsmith
David Randall
Deb Faith-Mind Thoresen
Diane True-Joy Fazio
Diane Enju Katz
Dylan Neal
Eberhard Fetz (Seattle)
Eleanor Joen Heaphy
Elizabeth Jiei Cole
Ellen Reigen Ledley
Emily Enmei Donahoe-O'Keefe
Frank Genku Martinez
Gary Koshin West
George Mukei Horner
Gemma Cubero
Geoff Kanjo O'Quest
Geri Meiho Bryan
Glenn Gikai Davis
Hannah Seishin Sowd

Harlan Pace
Hark Hoetsu Heck
Helena Anjo Harvilicz
Howard Ottenheimer
Jacob Busshin Duarte
Janet Koren Sager-Knott
James Bodhi-Song Graham
Jeanne Dokai Dickenson
Jenny Jusen Bright
Jim DōJun Hanson
Joe Johnston
Jonathan Kaigen Levy
John Lafia
John Reager
Kane Buzen Phelps
Karina Beltran
Katherine Senshin Griffith
Kipp Ryodo Hawley
Lorraine Gessho Kumpf
Mark Seishin Cadiz
Mark Shogen Bloodgood
Marley Jakuan Dowling
Mary Rios
Michael Jinsen Davis
Michael Jishin Fritzen
Michael Tevlin
Nan Reishin Merritt
Nem Etsugen Bajra
Nick Larson
Pam Myogetsu Smith
Patti Muso Giggans
Patricia Suigen Way
Peter Ryugen Sample

Philip Paulson
Richard Taishin Schulhof
Roland Palmer
Rosa Ando Martinez
Ryan Schneider
Sandy Seiju Goodenough
Sarah McCarron
Steve Sumii
Tim Taikan Zamora
Tina Jitsujo Gauthier
Tom Dharma-Joy Reichert
Tom Yudo Burger
Ty Jotai Webb
Wendy Egyoku Nakao
Yoko Gyokuren Bajra
Yuesen Yuen
Benjamin Ballard
Charles Duran
Chris Daian Fields
Hilda Bolden
Jane Radiant-Joy Chen
Jessica Oetsu Page
John Heart-Mirror Trotter
John Kyogen Rosania
Mak Muan King
Michael Haslip
Mitchell Collins
Randall Ellis
Reeb Kaizen Venners
Penelope Luminous-Heart Thompson
Timothy Peoples
Tracy Autman

Bernie Day at ZCLA



Music and Zen Practice

by Chris Hackman



Hello everyone! Welcome to a short essay on the relationship between music and Zen practice.

When I reflect on the connection between music and Zen meditation, the word ‘practice’ jumps out at me. Practice is, to me, the fundamental core of a musical life, so I thought it might be illuminating to explore the elements of effective practice in a musical context, and investigate how those elements could apply to meditation.

Broadly speaking, when I was building my skills as a musician, I spent many hours alone, staring at a wall, returning to the same simple motions over and over again... Luckily, I’ve been fortunate to have been exposed to a few techniques and mindsets that helped me optimize the time spent alone in training.

First, I learned that musical practice is, at its core, self-directed. Even though I worked closely with teachers and mentors, in the end, I discovered that I needed to become my own guide. To that extent, I learned how to evaluate my own performance with extreme honesty; moreover, I eventually learned to be non-judgmental in

that evaluation. Productive reflection is simply to see what the situation is, without guilt or self-blame, and then fix what needs to be fixed, if anything.

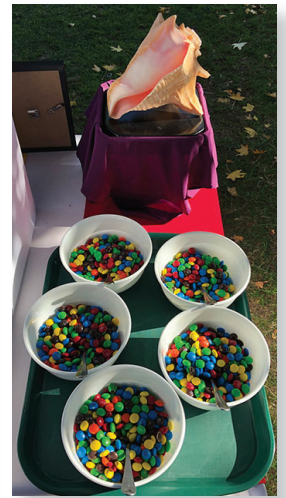
Isolation is another hallmark of the most efficient improvement I experienced. The best performers are able to zero in on their own weakest areas and address them systematically; very often, these areas relate to the most ‘obvious’ things, like posture or simple scales and intervals. When I really, truly invested in the fundamental aspects of performance, the “advanced” techniques began to take care of themselves.

Finally, music is (to me) very much about focus and perseverance. “How committed am I to this practice session? Can I extend beyond my comfort zone, even a little, even for a just few more seconds than last time? Can I allow discomfort to exist without resisting it, and follow-through to the very last moment?”

I don’t want to make too much of the parallels between meditation and musical practice, but I think there are some valuable analogies lurking around in there. At any rate, I hope my observations stimulate some interesting ideas, and I look forward to discussing them with you in person!

Chris Hackman is a Resident of ZCLA.

Love Bernie Day at ZCLA



Your Gifts are Received with a Heartfelt “Thank You!”

The Zen Center is maintained by the hands and eyes of each one of you.

To **Roshi Eve Myonen Marko** for her support of Love Bernie Day by sending his suspenders and aloha shirt and for sending Bernie’s relics and Peacemaker okesa for our Founders’ Altar;

To **Eric Manigian** for handcrafting Bernie’s ihai (memorial plaque);

To **Tina Jitsujo Gauthier** for her Dharma talk;

To **Sensei Faith-Mind** for leading the Precept Series class with **Darla Myoho Fjeld**;

To **Tim Taikan Zamora**, **Diane True-Joy Fazio**, **John Heart-Mirror Trotter**, **Tina Jitsujo Gauthier**, **Roshi Egyoku**, **Christina Choren Carvalho**, **Frank Genku Martinez**, **Pat Suigen Way**, and **Jenny Jusen Bright** for the kitchen cleaning;

To the **Brown Green Circle** for the screening of *Years of Living Dangerously*;

To **Roshi Egyoku** for her class on the Art of Positive Emotions;

To **Jusen** for leading the October Day of Reflection and Precept talk;

To **Jitsujo**, **Tom Dharma-Joy Reichert**, **Mark Shogen Bloodgood**, **Rosa Ando Martinez**, **Reeb Kaizen Venners**, **Geri Meiho Bryan**, **April True-Flower Ford**, **Hilda Bolden**, **Darla Myoho Fjeld**, **Bill Earth-Mirror Corcoran**, **Tom Yudo Burger**, **Choren**, **Suigen**, **George Mukei Horner**, **Bob Doetsu Ross**, **John Heart-Mirror Trotter**, **Sensei Deb Faith-Mind Thoresen**, **Conrad Butsugen Romo**, **Lary Bucher**, **Nancy Teiju Marquez**, and **Chris Daian Fields** for Reiju’s Memorial Service;

To **Roshi Egyoku** for leading the Autumn Wind Sesshin;

To **Betty Jiei Cole** for leading the November Bearing Witness Council;

To **Meiho**, **Doetsu**, **Ando**, **Hilda**, **Kaizen**, **Katherine Senshin Griffith**, **Myoho**, **Dharma-Joy**, **Sensei Faith-Mind**, **Jitsujo**, **Nan Reishin Merritt**, **Heart-Mirror**, **Burt Wetanson**, **Daian**, **Harlan Pace**, and **Taikan** for helping with the Day of Dead/Obon celebration;



Making beanies for our unhoused neighbors.



Kaigen (right) and (left) Foo-ling U at Day of Dead.



Our Tenzos for Rohatsu Sesshin: Enduring-Vow and Mujin Sunim.

To **Choren** for her Practice talk;

To **Mukei** for leading the November Zazenka;

To **Daian** for leading the November Day of Reflection and Precept talk;

To **Eberhard Fetz** for his talk on “Art and the Brain”;

To **Mike Dickerson** from Shelter for All Koreatown for his talk on shelter and homelessness;

To **Jitsujo** for hosting the CPE (Clinical Pastoral Education) Chaplain’s visit to ZCLA;

To **Roshi Egyoku**, **Sensei Faith-Mind**, **Myoho**, **Yudo**, **Mukei**, **Lorraine Gessho Kumpf**, **Katherine Senshin Griffith**, **Dharma-Joy**, **Reishin**, **Enduring-Vow**, **Butsugen**, **Hilda**, **True-Joy**, **Jusen**, **Sarah McCarron**, **Teiju**, **Genku**, **Patti Muso Giggans**, **Earth-Mirror**, **Myoan**, **Meiho**, **Gessho**, **Choren**, **Brian Huff**, **Chris Manno**, **Ando**, **Daian**, **Enju**, **Marley Jakuan Dowling**, **Dan Wilner**, **Ty Jotai Webb**, and **Jessica Oetsu Page** for Love Bernie Day;

To **Roshi Egyoku** and **Sensei Kipp Ryodo Hawley** for leading Rohatsu Sesshin;

To those who helped with the End of Year celebrations: **Sensei Faith-Mind**, **Jitsujo**, **Dharma-Joy**, **Myoho**, **Senshin**, **Shogen**, **Taikan**, **Chisho Izzo**, **Nem Etsugen Bajra**, **Kaizen**, **Yudo**, **Meiho**, and **Doetsu**;

To **Kaigen** for leading the December Bearing Witness council;

To our 4th Quarter Tenzos: **Anna Josenhans**, **Teiju**, **Diane Enju Katz**, **Daian**, **Betul Erbas**, **Kathy Myoan Solomon**, **Oetsu**, **Kane Buzen Phelps**, **Harlan**, **Hilda**, **Lana Shoshin Spraker**, **Reishin**, and **Jusen**;

To our 4th Quarter Jikidos: **Kaizen**, **Choren**, **Jitsujo**, **Meiho**, **Peter Ryugen Sample**, **Chris Hackman**, **Taikan**, and **Jim Dojun Hanson**;

To our 4th Quarter Buddha Hall Service Leaders: **Kaizen**, **Meiho**, **Brian**, **Taikan**, **Dharma-Joy**, **Enduring-Vow**, **Myoho**, **Jitsujo**, **Gessho**, and **Shogen**;

We’d also like to thank all those names we forgot or left unsaid.

ZCLA Affiliated Groups

The Lincroft Zen Sangha (New Jersey)
led by Roshi Merle Kodo Boyd

The Monday Night Meditation Group (Pasadena, CA)
coordinated by Betty Jiei Cole

The Ocean Moon Sangha (Santa Monica, CA)
coordinated by Michael Seigan Novak

The San Luis Obispo Zen Circle (CA)
coordinated by Rev. Mark Shogen Bloodgood

Santa Barbara Zen Center (CA)
led by Sensei Gary Koan Janka

Wild River Zen Circle (Nevada City, CA)
led by Sensei Jeanne Dokai Dickenson

The Westchester Zen Circle (CA)
led by Sensei Kipp Ryodo Hawley

Outreach Groups

CMC Buddhist Fellowship Group
California Men's Colony (CMC)
San Luis Obispo, CA
led by Rev. Mark Shogen Bloodgood

Contact info@zcla.org for information.

The *Water Wheel* is published by the Zen Center of Los Angeles, Great Dragon Mountain/Buddha Essence Temple, which was founded by the late Taizan Maezumi Roshi in 1967.

Our mission is to provide the training and resources for realizing the interconnection of all life, to maintain the precepts and to embody the Three Tenets of Not-knowing, Bearing Witness and taking action that serves these goals. We provide the teaching, training and transmission of Zen Buddhism.

Our vision is an enlightened world free of suffering, in which the earth and all beings live in harmony, everyone has enough, deep wisdom is realized and compassion flows unhindered.

Founding Abbot: Taizan Maezumi Roshi

Abbot 1995-1999: Roshi Bernard Glassman

Abbot: Roshi Wendy Egyoku Nakao

Staff: Sensei Deb Faith-Mind Thoresen, *Vice Abbot*; Darla Myoho Fjeld, *Temple Development Steward*; Mary Rios, *Business Manager*; Katherine Senshin Griffith, *Program Steward*; Tom Yudo Burger, *Guest Steward*; Ty Jotai Webb, *IT Steward*; Robert Diaz, *Facilities Manager*. *Water Wheel*: Burt Wetanson, *Editor*; Yudo, *Production Artist*; *Proofreader for this issue*: Jotai. The *Water Wheel* is published quarterly in electronic format only. Contact Burt, our Editor, at bookstore@zcla.org. The *Water Wheel* is available on the web at www.zcla.org.

Sangha Rites of Passage

Welcome New Members

Navid Ardakani
Moshe Cohen
Mary Frankos
Bruce Ingalls
Jack Kuykendall
John Lafia
Corey Ryujin McIntyre
Chris Nilsson

In Memoriam

November 4, 2018
Roshi Bernie Tetsugen Glassman

2019 Sesshins

Beginner's Mind Sesshin

Thursday, March 14 eve. - Saturday, March 16

Buddha's Birthday Sesshin

Tuesday, April 2 eve. - Saturday, April 6

Growing a Plum Blossom Sesshin

Wednesday, May 22 eve. - Sunday, May 26

Just Summer Sesshin

Sunday, July 21 eve. - Saturday, July 27

Autumn Wind Sesshin

Sunday, October 13 eve. - Sunday, October 20

Rohatsu (Buddha's Enlightenment) Sesshin

Friday, December 6 eve. - Saturday, December 14

End-of-Year Reflection Retreat

Friday, December 27 eve. - Monday, December 30

ZCLA Abbot Succession 2019

Save the dates!

Sunday, May 5

Roshi Egyoku offers her reflections
on her twenty years as Abbot

Sunday, May 12

Sensei Faith-Mind offers her reflections
on Ascending the Mountain

Sunday, May 19

Ceremony of Descending and Ascending
the Mountain

Zen Center of Los Angeles Great Dragon Mountain
923 South Normandie Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90006
info@zcla.org • www.zcla.org • 213-387-2351



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