Water Wheel

Being one with all Buddhas, I turn the water wheel of compassion.
—Gate of Sweet Nectar

Destroyed, Not Destroyed

by Katherine Senshin Griffith

A monk asked Daizui, "When the great kalpa fire bursts out, the whole universe will be destroyed. I wonder if IT will also be destroyed or not." Daizui said, "Destroyed." The monk said, "If so, will IT be gone with the other?" Daizui said, "Gone with the other."

A monk asked Ryûsai, "When the great kalpa fire bursts out, the whole universe will be destroyed. I wonder if IT will also be destroyed or not." Ryûsai said, "Not destroyed." The monk said, "Why is it not destroyed?" Ryûsai said,"Because it is the same as the whole universe." - *Book of Equanimity, Case 30*

A "kalpa fire" is a great conflagration that will burn up the whole universe as if a hundred thousand nuclear bombs dropped simultaneously. According to Indian cosmology, the universe is constantly moving through formation, abiding, destruction, and void. The phenomenal world emerges, stays for a while, then dissolves and disappears. This cosmic cycle continuously repeats.

Everything in the universe is also like this, every plant, species and even the smallest particle. Civilizations also blossom, expand, wither and die. We too are born, mature, decline, and die. The universe is like a huge human being and each human is like a tiny universe. More accurately, each of us is the entire cosmos itself.

Earlier this year, Los Angeles experienced the worst series of catastrophic wildfires in recorded history. Across the globe, there are earthquakes, tsunamis, tornadoes, hurricanes, floods, wars, famine, disease and the crumbling of political and social structures. Individually, we can experience the deterioration of loved ones and our own bodies. When the L.A. fires were happening, I was in Texas spreading the ashes of my mother near the dilapidated house of my greatgrandmother.

From the phenominal point of view, we are constantly experiencing impermanence. It seems natural to grieve

The Skull and Crossbones Nebula is a large cloud of gas blasting star-forged elements into space. (Image credit: ESO)

over loss. Even things! We are taught to wash our bowls as if they were the baby Buddha. We care for the buildings and grounds that protect the Dharma. In *The Hidden Lamp*, Case 55, "Permanence and Impermanence," a grieving woman says, *"Master, truly—presence is impermanent, but absence is permanent."* In those words, we can feel her profound sorrow. Life is precious not because it is permanent but because it is ephemeral.

Everything passes as soon as it arises, all things arise and cease together. There can be periods of time when we don't notice change—then all of a sudden we do. She was just a baby and now she's in college. Dad is slower and more forgetful. We were making progress with human rights, now there is major backsliding!

We can say we don't like change—but if we look closely, what do we mean? Sure certain moments are more

(Continued on page 2)

INSIDE THIS ISSUE ... *and more!*

DESTROYED, NOT DESTROYED *(Continued from page 1)*

pleasurable than others. But where would you freeze it? What moment, what age, what state? Even when you miss dead loved ones, what age would you want them back? When awful things happen, we find that impermanence can be a blessing.

With greater awareness to the threat to our planet, exacerbated by our own deluded human behavior, we may wonder, "what happens when the whole earth is gone?" Will IT be gone too? Is there anything that lasts? Like the monk, we may also wonder about our own mortality. What happens to me after I'm dead? What happens to it all? What is this IT the monk is referring to? Is it our essential or Buddha nature, the boundless formless field? Is that separate from our own mortality?

In the *Heart Sutra*, we chant that formlessness is none other than form, not separate from the phenomenal world. There is only one world so when one goes it all goes. That's why Master Daizui says destroyed, gone with the other. But Master Ryûsai says it is not destroyed because it is the same as the whole universe. This doesn't make sense but that's the point. This question cannot be answered rationally. Just like when asked if a dog had Buddha nature, Master Joshu one time said Mu (no), another time he answered U (yes).

The translation of the opening Case is from Thomas Cleary. David Hinton translates the questions like this: When the kalpa-fire's perfect understanding burns this thousand-Buddha-realm Cosmos down into ruins, will this unthought here-right-now also be burned down into ruins? Will even thusness itself vanish away with it?

If we don't hold to fixed views, freed from the duality of birth and death and this or that thinking, we can live with wisdom and compassion for the benefit of all. This is reflected in the capping verse to the case:

Destroyed – not destroyed:
The great universe – gone with the other?
In the phrases lies no activity of hook or chain.
Many legs are caught by entangling vines.
Understand? – not understand?
It's a matter with utmost clarity – why are they being so extremely polite?
Those who know the heart need not bring up the matter to negotiate about it;
If you insist on selling or buying at my store, you are [already] a poor loser.

Can we live in the middle where everything is and also, paradoxically, is not? Going beyond permanence and impermanence, we can see how life/death, destroyed/not-destroyed expresses the natural wholeness of all things. My life will end but it will not end. How do these two ways of seeing things, inform how we live our lives, appreciate each moment as it is?

The cycle of change that consumes the universe is always upon us. We should not waste time, but "practice diligently as if extinguishing a fire upon our heads." We should clarify this Life and Death matter and also contemplate the Five Remembrances of the *Upajjhatthana Sutra* (see page 11.)

We can also look at the patterns in Nature. After a devastating wildfire, it can be hard to appreciate the restorative power in the fire itself. With nothing left to hold the soil, the following rains can bring major floods and mudslides. But the rain also helps new vegetation grow. Seeds begin to germinate, and branches sprout out of charred trees. There is a natural pattern of recovery in which the land, plants and wildlife move through various ecological stages to return to a state of relative stability. This ecological succession is like hitting a reset button on the forest's life cycle. Recovery from large wildfires may require some outside help, but with time, forests will heal themselves.

Astronomer Carl Sagan famously said, "We are a way for the universe to know itself. Some part of our being knows this is where we came from. We long to return. And we can, because the cosmos is also within us. We're made of star stuff." Chris Impey, professor of astronomy at the University of Arizona, adds, "His statement sums up the fact that the carbon, nitrogen and oxygen atoms in our bodies, as well as atoms of all other heavy elements, were created in previous generations of stars over 4.5 billion years ago. Because humans and every other animal (as well as most of the matter on Earth) contain these elements, we are literally made of star stuff."

So, is IT destroyed or not destroyed? Regarding this question, I deeply resonate with the words of George Bernard Shaw and his splendid torch:

This is the true joy in life: The being used for a purpose recognized by yourself as a mighty one. The being a force of nature instead of a feverish, selfish little clod of ailments and grievances complaining that the world will not devote itself to making you happy. I am of the opinion that my life belongs to the whole community and that as long as I live it is my privilege to do for it whatever I can.

I want to be thoroughly used up when I die. For the harder I work, the more I live. I rejoice in life for its own sake. Life is no brief candle to me. There's a sort of splendid torch which I've got hold of for the moment and I want to make it burn as brightly as possible before handing it on to future generations.

Sensei Senshin is the ZCLA Head Teacher.

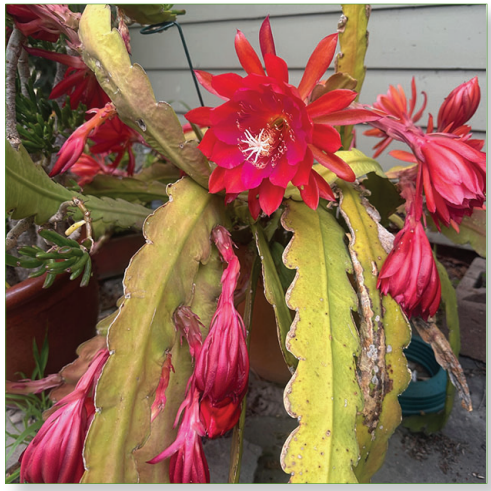
Tools for Practicing in "Interesting Times"

by Tom Dharma-Joy Reichert

The first of a two-part reflection.

The world is on fire – both literally and figuratively. How can I practice in such circumstances?

I and the other teachers hear this almost every day now. Whatever your politics, we are living in a time of great disruption. Sensei Jitsujo refers to Donald Trump as a "disrupter." This description is interesting and apt – you don't need to agree or disagree with what he is doing, or enter the realm of "for or against," to acknowledge that he has ushered in an era of tremendous disruption that reaches virtually every facet of our society. But even beyond Trump, a single individual who seems determined to be a force of nature and to bend every institution – from the local to the global – to his will, we are living in an era marked by tremendous, accelerated disruption. We are experiencing climate catastrophe and the increased natural and ecological disasters that it has brought down on us (and by "us" I mean not just human beings but the entirety of this planet); human migrations across continents at a scale that have never been seen in recorded history; shifts in wealth that are enriching a tiny fraction while impoverishing the vast majority; technological transformations that have left us bereft of community or an ability to pay attention; a rise in autocratic governments with large swaths of populations in approval; and a sense of separation and isolation that has left us grasping for community – but preferably, from our comfortable couches, thank you very much.



The red cereus plant in front of the Pine House usually blooms at night and each bloom only lasts around 24-36 hours.

As William Butler Yeats writes in his poem, "The Second Coming":

Turning and turning in the widening gyre
The falcon cannot hear the falconer;
Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,
The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere
The ceremony of innocence is drowned;
The best lack all conviction, while the worst
Are full of passionate intensity.

These lines have taken on new and urgent significance in recent times; we are living in a period of the world where the existential questioning that brings many of us to practice in the first place has jumped from being "merely" personal to being societal—indeed, to the level of species and even to the level of our planet.

So, going back to the first question: how do we practice in such times?

I'm afraid that there is no magic answer to this question, no "magic pill" or simple panacea that Zen offers. (If you want such a thing, I recommend a fundamentalist religious tradition that will spoonfeed you your life.) Instead, we have to go back to the most basic building blocks of our practice. Just as Yeats' "Second Coming" has taken on new and urgent significance, all of the tools that this practice offers us have taken on equally new and urgent value, because both they – and you! – are sufficient to the task at hand. Do you believe that? Please do! This is a form of Great Faith. Because the fundamental components of our practice, which are always available to us if we are available to ourselves, will support you and guide you through these "interesting times" we find ourselves in.

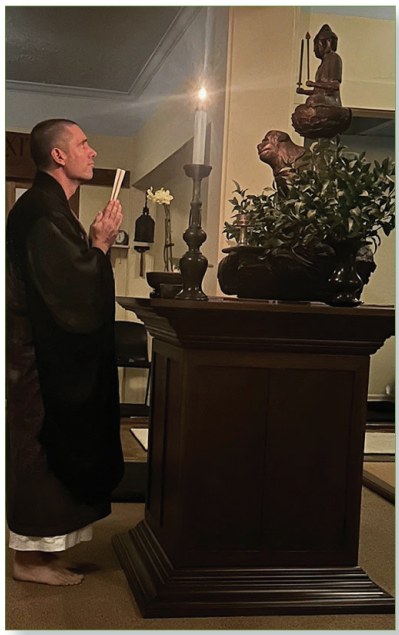
As Zen practitioners, every day we align ourselves with the Four Great Bodhisattva Vows. What is the first vow? "Numberless beings – I vow to serve them." In terms of orientation, that is all you need! To serve all beings is to serve life; our actions in serving all beings must be life-affirming. This vow is to serve all beings, not just the ones who agree with you, or the ones for whom your heart is breaking. Of course, if we take this vow literally, our rational minds will rebel – how can I possibly accomplish this vow? Well, is a vow something to be accomplished? At the deepest level, a vow is an orientation of how we live our lives, a touchstone. It is not an "idea," instead, vow emerges from the quietest and most settled place inside us. A vow announces itself to you, and not the other way around. When we take up this vow – and each of the Four Vows – we can be clear from the beginning that we can't "accomplish" them in the way that our checklist-minds want to do, but, nevertheless, these vows become a natural expression of our lives. Vow always

(Continued on page 4)

TOOLS FOR PRACTICING *(Continued from page 3)*

arises from that place in us where the "of course" recognition of the interconnection of all life rests. It is therefore a natural expression of our most basic desire for how we live out this fact of interconnection, minute-after-minute and day-after-day. When this vow to serve arises from there, and we rest in it, where is the problem, what is the confusion?

Now, if we simply approach a vow to serve all beings – and by "all" we mean all, no picking and choosing! – as an intellectual, conceptual thing, it can easily be hijacked into a form of serving that is actually designed – if we are truly honest with ourselves – to serve us, our ideas, and our preferences. That is, our "service" becomes about validating our small ego-selves rather than serving others in the ways that they actually need, rather than in the way that either I actually need or in the way that I think they actually need. A healthy dose of Great Doubt should be liberally deployed!



Because at this level of generality, "serving" can so easily be hijacked to our own purposes, we need to deploy another set of our practice tools: The Three Tenets. These Three Tenets were first articulated by the Zen Peacemakers and, in my view, they are easily the greatest contribution to spiritual practice American Buddhism has come up with. The Three Tenets are:

- Not-Knowing, by giving up fixed ideas about yourself and the universe;
- Bearing-Witness to the joy and suffering of the world;
- Taking Action that arises from Not-Knowing and Bearing-Witness.

On one level, we could say the Three Tenets are "techniques." They are something to learn and to practice. But as with almost all forms in Zen, we pick up and practice these techniques until they become so naturally expressed in our lives that we are not even conscious of them; the forms naturally fall away, just as we remove the training wheels from the bicycle when we have mastered the ability to ride on our own without falling over (well, at least mostly). The Three Tenets are deceptively simple, but in fact they call for a radical transformation of how "I" meet "the world" – and, I submit, they are absolutely essential to giving us the capacity to meet this time when "mere anarchy is loosed upon the world" and not to simply curl up into a fetal ball and give up on living.

Not-Knowing: This is the basic ground from which all things arise. This is not the "not knowing" of just, as Nansen says (Mumonkan Case 19), blank consciousness. To the contrary, this is the place of vast openness – the wide unobstructed sky. In this Not-Knowing, we have to give up all our fixed ideas. This is the "formless field of benefaction" we invoke in the Verse of the Kesa. Our brains, our rational minds, are very good at "knowing." This asks us to set that aside, to open ourselves up to all possibility and to invoke a mind of curiosity. As Roshi Egyoku says, "The key to Not-Knowing is being open. Not-Knowing itself is the open spaciousness of being that is always present but may not often be accessed by you. Open the mind by releasing your knowing in the form of beliefs, opinions, judgments, and preferences. Acknowledge your mental patterns and habitual stories about yourself or the situation. Then acknowledge your fears and resentments, and open your heart."

Not-Knowing also functions like an active verb. Just as shikantaza is highly active, Not-Knowing is a practice of constantly returning to openness. It can be challenging! The image that arises for me is when I am trying to dig a very nice square hole in the wet sand by the shore; water is always seeping in, the sides are always starting to crumble, and I am called over and over to the work of – attention! My thinking, cognitive mind is always trying to do its thing, which means to impose some knowing. So, over and over, we just come back to this openness, sweeping and sweeping and sweeping. Here at Zen Center, the pine needles are always falling from the tree – does that mean we just sweep them up once and then congratulate ourselves and announce we're done? Hah! So we practice Not-Knowing like we practice sweeping the pine needles.

So: first, we orient ourselves with the Four Vows. Then, we engage in the constant practice of Not-Knowing, over and over. Then, we are ready to encounter the world.

Sensei Dharma-Joy is ZCLA's Abbot and Head Priest/Preceptor.

Who am I?

by Jitsujo Gauthier (with Ru)

This is a classic Zen question, which many good Zen practitioners explore over a lifetime. In the most basic sense, I'm a Zen person that wears many hats. I have a whole litany of titles, credentials, and roles. I serve in spheres of Buddhist education, chaplaincy, peacemaking, social justice, meditation, and community. Closest to my heart these days is being a Zen peacemaker and priest. I currently live in residence at the Zen Center of Los Angeles, work as an Associate Professor and Chair of Buddhist Chaplaincy at the University of the West and serve as a Co-Spiritual Director and Seat-Holder for the Zen Peacemaker Order. In a more existential sense, I really do not know who I am, and I'm only beginning to feel OK with not knowing this, maybe never knowing, or never truly being able to grasp who I really am.

Much of my Zen practice has taught me to embrace learning as I go along, not planning, not aspiring, not hoping, and not striving. I have learned to feel safe within my own body, more at ease being queer, and mostly OK, as I am in any given situation. Of course, I keep finding myself striving, aspiring, and hoping our world to be better. At the same time Zen training has allowed more trust within relationship, more connection to nonhuman beings, nature, and the present moment, and a visceral sense that I belong here, that we all belong here. There is a confidence in the breath and breathing that goes beyond my best ideas and the skin sack that I occupy.

In a book by Jules Shuzen Harris called *Zen Beyond Mindfulness*, there is an exercise that invites us to explore the question, "who am I?" If you have not heard of this book, I recommend you read it: it is very practical. It asks us to explore our many identities, social and spiritual locations, intersectionality, and the requirements we both have and project onto these various roles, ranks, locations, and intersections. Who we are goes beyond this body we occupy.

Similar to Thich Nhat Hanh's poem "Call Me By My True Names," I recently wrote this:

I am the ink and the pen, keys and keyboard, paper, computer, sky and electricity.

I am movement, an aging body, excrement, roots, trees, air, sunshine and rainfall.

I am the ring on my finger, the jeweler, creativity, metal, hammer, fire in earth.

I am the clothing on my body, the cotton field, dirt, migrant workers, the factory, truck driver, machinery, and engine exhaust.

I am synthetic fabric, plastic, greedy billionaires and dinosaurs, the oil running out, continuous fighting in Gaza, and people sewing.

I am the temple bell, cat, philosopher, sweat lodge, field of benefaction, wise one, and fool.

What am I doing now?

People ask me to lead, write, and contribute to institutional progress, to which I have consistently resisted, and often give in to. I'd love to offer something helpful and useful to our world. At the same time, my most transformative experiences come from feeling useless, unhelpful, powerless and resistant. Zen training, along with a hundred forms of healing work, have provided many rich resources, and a container to uncover old wounds, trauma, and conditioning within the body of a white Irish French-Canadian nonbinary woman. I've learned to be a little wilder and less domesticated from my cat Ru, my familiar and best Zen teacher. I'd like to discover new ways of re-wilding Zen practice, learning as I go along with other like-minded folks.

Sensei Jitsujo is a ZCLA resident priest, who received Dharma Transmission (Denbo) from Roshi Egyoku Nakao in December 2024.

DANA BOOKLET

January 1, 2024 – December 31, 2024

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When we realize the inter-beings that we all are, a great stirring arises in us to generously serve others. Each year, the Zen Center relies on donations to the Dharma Training Fund, the Annual Fund and other funds as needed. There are also sixty donors who have joined the Legacy Circle and have promised to remember ZCLA in the form of future bequests. We are so grateful to all of you for your sincere practice and devoted service during this past year when support for one another has been so important. The donors whose names appear in this Dana Booklet have generously given of their time, energy, material goods and money to ensure that the Zen Center continues to provide the space, teachers and community that encourage the awakening of hundreds of people a year.

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"May all living beings realize the emptiness of the three worlds: Giver, Receiver, and Gift."

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Practicing in the Midst of Fire

ZCLA Members Reflect on their Experiences of the 2025 L.A. Fires

Sandy Seiju Goodenough

About 4:00 p.m. on January 7, we lost power. We lit candles and enjoyed the flickering light. About 7:00 p.m. we went into the kitchen to start preparing dinner. Taishin looked out our window and called me over - the eastern sky was glowing. We knew the fire was in Eaton Canyon, about two miles away, and soon got an evacuation alert on our phones - looking out the window again we could see a wall of flame going up a nearby ridge. We packed overnight bags with a change of clothes and that was it.

We took off down the hill and the traffic was heavy - the entire town was on the move and leaving fast. It still seemed impossible to me that our house might burn. We then went to Taishin's mother's apartment in Glendale and soon received a text from our neighbor who had stayed in his house; he sent a picture of our house ablaze. I was in shock.

Taishin with Samaritan's Purse volunteers.

Weeks later, driving through our old neighborhood or any place in Altadena is just devastating - it looks like a war zone. I miss our old neighborhood - the people, the mountains, the trees. I find myself feeling torn between wanting to help and be involved in creating a new Altadena and just wanting to get on with my life.

Now, we live in a rental found through a friend. The generosity of people has been extraordinary with offers of places to stay, clothes and many calls and notes. Still, the loss is immense. Having spent years sitting with impermanence and non-attachment, reality has now irrefutably told me, this is the way of things.

Richard Taishin Schulhof

What remains for me is the utter completeness of the fire. The blaze did not wobble or hesitate that night. Books, plants, clothes, photos, furniture, keepsakes, art, to-do lists, rakusus, walls, and ceilings; everything is gone.

A couple weeks after the fire, I met the volunteers of Samaritan's Purse, a Christian relief organization. They joined me at the remains of the house to help sort through rubble. They came from Georgia, Kentucky and other faraway places, some with Trump bumper stickers on their cars. We held hands, forming a prayer circle before getting started. They looked me in the eyes and wished me the comfort of god's love. Unexpectedly cutting through my judgements, the healing force of their caring and decency poured through me.

We worked from my memories of where precious things should be, where we had left them that night. Among the ash, we found some coins and fused ceramic shards. The few objects that survived in recognizable form were curiously altered by heat. A cast iron Shiva statue retained its basic outlines but with facial features and clothing details melted away. A boulder I'd placed in the garden was splitting and shattered.

My Samaritan friends departed after hours of sifting ash, leaving me with hugs, prayers, and a Billy Graham Edition Bible. That morning gave some truth: that kindness is kindness, and that nothing in the ash belonged to me. These months later, my memories of the house are dimming, the details becoming shadows. As we look to find a new home, I wonder about the last one…Did those myriad things really exist, all at once and in one place? Where did they go? Where is home now? These are my Koans.

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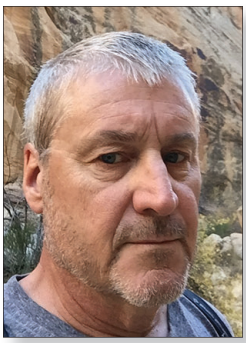
Practicing in the Midst of Fire

Steve Larson



Last fall I was talking to a friend who also lives in a fire zone. She said there was nothing in her house that she would miss if it all burned up in a fire. We had to agree. Looking around our home, we realized that all these things we had accumulated were just that—things. Our life would continue, and there would be new things, but the only thing that mattered was this life itself.

It's easy to have brave thoughts when the situation is merely hypothetical, but we were pleasantly surprised to find ourselves in equanimity as we walked around our house in the darkness of the early morning of January 8 preparing to evacuate. Our cats safely in their carriers, we felt relaxed dividing our time between packing and going outside to experience the windstorm and check on the fire's advance.

Ignorant of the devastation that was occurring in the rest of Altadena, we were free to appreciate the raw beauty of the power of nature. Physical science holds that in any process the system is always seeking its minimum energy state. We've often reflected on that when watching the way water flows. Feeling the force of the wind as it whipped flames over the landscape, we were amazed to realize that this was simply the energy of the sun that the atmosphere and vegetation could no longer hold. This was nature relaxing, letting go.

When embers began to waft into the canyon behind our house it was time to go. We went back inside and walked through each room, looking around in the expectation that we would never see any of this again. Letting go, we grabbed our keys and wallet and locked the door as we left.

Days later, we learned that our house was spared.

Photo of Seiju and Taishin's house on January 8 at 4:57 a.m. taken by their neighbor who defied the evacuation order.

What's left of Seiju and Taishin's house.

Altadena Eaton Fire. Credit: CNN

Palisades fire. Credit: AP

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Practicing in the Midst of Fire

Bob Kanzan Swan

We really did think that the fire was going to miss our house. All afternoon the powerful winds seemed to be blowing eastward, away from our West Altadena home. Though we were getting no smoke or ashes we felt that it would be prudent for Patty (my wife) and Ziggy (the cat) to evacuate at about 8:00 p.m. to our daughter's apartment in South Pasadena. I decided to stay behind to keep an eye on the place (though my go-bag was ready, and the car was pointed down the hill). The power went out at midnight; no big deal, with the winds blowing like they were, a downed power line was to be expected.

I awoke at about 2:00 a.m. to a commotion in the street. I went to the window and beheld neighbors in the street rushing about, yelling, etc. I went to the back window and saw, not fifty yards away, a 10-foot-high wall of brilliant orange fire consuming our neighbor's homes on the upper part of the street. I have often thought of this moment, and it is the first of the experiences that reflect my Zen practice; that is: being in the present. My meditation practice has allowed me to glimpse being fully in the present--letting go of the past, letting go of the future…just NOW. I can assure you that nothing will place one's mind as firmly in the present as an on-rushing wildfire. I turned, grabbed the go-bag went down the car, got in and drove away, without a look back… at our home of 20+ years, almost 60 years of paintings, drawings, sculptures, notebooks, journals, photographs, books (the books!), recordings, things, things, things...

This brings me to the next element of my practice that has seen me through; that is, the technique during meditation of allowing thoughts to arise, to acknowledge them, and then let them go, not fighting or struggling. Frequently during these days an image of something that I lost in the fire (book, painting, could be anything) arises and, because of my training, I acknowledge the grief and loss and then let it go. It really is the only way to proceed: let it go, let it go.

Kanzan's sketch of his house in ruins.

Sand mandala by the Tibetan monks.

Finally, I call upon an experience I've enjoyed as a docent at the USC Pacific Asia Museum. Occasionally the museum will host Tibetan monks from the Drepung Gomang Monastery for a week so they can create a sand mandala. Their commitment and focus during the creation of the mandala is powerful and complete and the final image is just gorgeous. And then, they hold a brief ceremony and wipe the mandala completely away. Things-all things-here and then gone. I hold on to the teaching these monks have given me.

(Continued on page 11)

Practicing in the Midst of Fire

Peggy Faith-Moon Gallaher

I am afraid of a lot of things, but for some reason, I was not afraid of my house burning down. The wind was ferocious the night of the fire. I live on a small street and five houses were spared, including ours. Immediately after utilities were restored, two neighbors reoccupied their homes, but ours has too much smoke damage to be habitable until remediation is complete. We're renting a house in Twentynine Palms until then.

Nena and I have no dependents or pets, and we're retired. Evacuation has been no picnic for us, so can only imagine how it is for those who lost everything. When I listen to people's stories of evacuation and loss, it's clear how traumatizing and exhausting this whole experience has been. The theme this practice season is "Listen" and I really think it helps to listen.

I'm residing right next to Joshua Tree National Park, and have thought about some of the forces that make places like that so awesome: earthquakes, wildfires, climate change, etc. This phenomenon of sudden and gradual change in nature is something I'm more in touch with since the fire.

Practice helps me stay upright when the illusion of permanence is suddenly shattered.

For me, the dharma is all about relationships, and there's no getting through these traumatic disruptions without each other. Thank you to Zen Center sangha for your support! Thank you to everyone who has checked in on us. Namo Kwan Yin Bodhisattva.

Nagasaki camphor tree after the atom bomb, 1945

Nagasaki camphor tree flourishing as a shrine today.

Five Remembrances

From the *Upajjhatthana Sutra*

1. I am of the nature to grow old. There is no way to escape growing old.
2. I am of the nature to have ill-health. There is no way to escape having ill-health.
3. I am of the nature to die. There is no way to escape death.
4. All that is dear to me and everyone I love are of the nature to change. There is no way to escape being separated from them.
5. My actions are my only true belongings. I cannot escape the consequences of my actions. My actions are the ground on which I stand.

Corner of Disorder

Drawing by Mats Borges

A Heartfelt "Thank You!"

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Sangha Rites of Passage

Denbo (Dharma Transmission)
Sensei Etsugen Kaishin Nem Bajra
From Roshi Kipp Ryodo Hawley
March 14, 2025

New Dharma Holder
William Earth-Mirror Corcoran
From Sensei Daiki Senshin Griffith
March 30, 2025

In Memorium
Peter Kakuzen Gregory
June 21, 1945 - March 19, 2025

New Members
William Campos, Luke Hallam, Jason Walton

Resident Leave-Taking
Tim Taikan Zamora

Steward Leave-Taking
Sensei George Mukei Horner, Zendo Steward
Jessica Oetsu Page, Intro to Meditation Co-Steward
Mats Borges and R Waldorf, Library Co-Stewards

Steward Incoming
Reeb Kaizen Venners, Zendo Co-Steward
Jenny Jusen Bright, Zendo Co-Steward and Intro to Meditation Co-Steward
Anna Josenhans, Library Steward

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