

NEW MEMBERS
HANDBOOK

WELCOME
TO



*THE ZEN CENTER
OF LOS ANGELES
BUDDHA ESSENCE TEMPLE*

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This booklet is dedicated to
The Sangha of Great Dragon Mountain
Zen Center of Los Angeles

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Introduction

Welcome to Zen Center of Los Angeles (ZCLA). ZCLA is a place where people come for various reasons, from various parts of the world, with different backgrounds to practice of Zen. Starting a practice at ZCLA is an opportunity for everyone to learn and grow.

This booklet will introduce you to the practice at ZCLA. The program offers you a place for study, practice, and service. It is our hope that the practice at ZCLA will provide you with an environment for personal and social transformation. As a new comer it is often helpful to have an overview of the routine, the structure and roles in the community. The curriculum is oriented to those wishing to deepen and develop their practice and understanding of Zen Buddhism. This booklet was designed to provide an orientation of a learning path and also a big picture of what we offer at ZCLA. Many questions might arise as you start practicing with us. Please feel free to bring any questions or concerns to the teachers, the staff or the community members.

We welcome you

In Gassho

The Sangha of ZCLA

The Structure of ZCLA

Zen Center of Los Angeles (ZCLA or the “Center”) was founded in 1967 by Roshi Hakuyu Taizan Maezumi, a seminal figure in the transmission of Zen Buddhism to the West. The Center’s temple name is Buddha Essence Temple, or Busshin-ji. We also refer to the Center as Normandie Mountain.

These names reflect ZCLA’s three primary functions: Normandie Mountain, a practice place for Zen training and study; Buddha Essence Temple, a temple for rituals and honoring life passages; and the Center, an organization with operations and legal and fiscal requirements, which support all of the above.

ZCLA is incorporated as a 501(c)3 California non-profit religious and educational institution and abides by requirements set forth by the State of California. Buddha Essence Temple is a registered Soto Zen Temple with the Japanese Soto Zen Sect, which is headquartered in Japan. Normandie Mountain derives its name from the ancient Zen tradition of naming its training places after its geographic locale.

At ZCLA, the crux of our understanding is that all life and all activities of our life, without exception, are the Buddha Way. By our actions—how we care for our lives and for each other, and how we care for and run the Center—we acknowledge that the continuation of the Dharma for future generations depends on our day-to-day practice right here, now. How we live is the vivid manifestation of our practice and realization.

In the next pages, we present the underlying principles and structures that guide us: the mission and vision of the Center and its core values; the Statement of Right Conduct, a path for beginners and the curriculum of the Center, explained with the model of the Mandala.

We are organizing the Center in a Shared Stewardship style, that is an exploration of how we, as Zen practitioners, can take stewardship of the Center as partners and, in so doing, create the Sangha Treasure.

Mission and Vision Statement

Our Mission

is to know the Self, maintain the precepts and serve others. We provide the teaching, training, and transmission of Zen Buddhism.

Our Vision

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

Core Values and Core Practices

Our Foundational (Dharma) Values

We take responsibility for creating a strong foundation to protect the Dharma.

Specifically, we will:

- take care of our buildings and grounds
- provide safety and security
- maintain financial stability
- nurture close and healthy relationships within the sangha

We will:

- be disciplined and orderly according to established guidelines for community living
- extend ourselves to all others politely and with respect
- handle difficulties with calm and perseverance
- address conflicts with balance and evenness
- act to support one another physically and emotionally, especially in times of need
- maintain a healthy and effective organization

We will:

- freely disseminate and receive information regarding the operations of the Center
- employ sound management practices in our day-to-day operations
- recognize the traditions of our lineage
- create training paths and liturgy
- practice environmental responsibility

Our Focus (Sangha) Values

We contribute to the peace of the world by striving to fulfill our mission and vision.

Specifically, we will:

- take responsibility that everyone is treated equally
- use our unique gifts and skills in the service of others
- help to create a climate of mutual trust and confidence in which all can speak and listen from the heart
- honor diversity and actively welcome all people, regardless of age, ethnicity, gender, physical and mental ability, race, religion, sexual orientation, and socio-economic background
- interface with other religious traditions
- be open to and foster innovations in forms and styles of practice
- expand our expression through ceremony, arts, media and ritual
- laugh at our own imperfections
- make amends and learn from our mistakes
- practice generosity
- practice non-attachment
- seek simplicity
- develop policies and practices that promote environmental stewardship
- practice collective responsibility and shared stewardship
- seek collective wisdom
- give and receive feedback
- create beauty

Our vision (buddha) values:

We pursue the Enlightened Way and promote global harmony.

Specifically, we will:

- practice zazen
- maintain the precepts
- serve others
- live the truth of interconnectedness
- care for and nurture the natural world and all its creatures
- fulfill the Four Great Bodhisattva Vows

Core Practices

We are committed to the core practices of the Five Sphere Buddha Mandala:

- Atonement: taking responsibility for our own cause and effect
- Council: speaking and listening from the heart
- Fushinzamu: working together on a common project
- Koans: inquiring into the nature of life
- Precepts: abstaining from evil, cultivating goodness, and acting for the benefit of others
- Ritual: practicing liturgy and ceremony
- Shadow Work: reclaiming our projections and repressed energies
- Shared Stewardship: co-creating with one another
- Study and Scholarship: continuous learning and unlearning
- Sociocratic method: decision-making by transparency, circle organization, and elections by consent
- Three Tenets: not knowing, bearing witness, and loving action
- Zazen: appreciating life as it is

Statement of Right Conduct

Preface

Practicing in a Sangha carries with it certain responsibilities and it is important that the proper environment be continually actualized for the practice of the Buddha Way, to which we have dedicated our lives. To this end, we renew our commitment to right conduct by endorsing the following statement.

Statement

The Zen Center of Los Angeles / Buddha Essence Temple (ZCLA) is committed to providing a supportive and nurturing environment for the practice of the Buddha Way. The ground for right conduct is the practice of the sixteen bodhisattva kai, or precepts, which are:

The Three Treasures

Be one with the Buddha, the awakened nature of all beings.
Be one with the Dharma, the ocean of wisdom and compassion.
Be one with the Sangha, the community of those living in harmony with all Buddhas and Dharmas.

The Three Pure Precepts

- Do not commit evil. I will practice not-knowing, thereby giving up fixed ideas about myself and the universe.
- Do good. I will bear witness to the joy and suffering of the world.
- Do good for others. I will take action to effect the healing of myself and others.

The Ten Grave Precepts

- Do not kill. I recognize that I am not separate from all that is.
- Do not steal. I am satisfied with what I have.
- Do not be greedy. I encounter all creations with respect and dignity.
- Do not tell a lie. I listen and speak from the heart.
- Do not be ignorant. I cultivate a mind that sees clearly.
- Do not talk about others errors and faults. I unconditionally accept what each moment has to offer.
- Do not elevate yourself and put down others. I speak what I perceive to be the truth without guilt or blame.
- Do not be stingy. I use all of the ingredients of my life.
- Do not get angry. I transform suffering into wisdom.
- Do not speak ill of the Three Treasures. I honor my life as an instrument of peacemaking.

It is our sincere intention to continually realign our lives in accord with these precepts. Inappropriate conduct is harmful to ourselves and others. Inappropriate conduct may include such acts as violence, sexual impropriety, drug and substance abuse, malicious gossip, and abusive language. Persons who encounter inappropriate conduct from any member of the ZCLA Sangha, including its teachers and senior instructors, or themselves practice such conduct, should be aware that these actions violate the spirit and practice of right conduct and seriously undermine the harmony of the Sangha.

We are committed to working out problems and difficulties that may arise from violations of right conduct. If a situation of difficulty arises, persons who are involved should, first of all, go directly to the person in question and make every effort to work out the situation. If this step fails, the second step is to contact a senior member of the community, a member of the Teachers Circle, and/or the Spiritual Leader, as appropriate. When a grievance is made, steps will be taken to hear the grievance and, if desired, to meet with all parties concerned. If these steps have been exhausted and the difficulty has not yet been settled, we will set up an arbitration committee to resolve the situation. It is our hope that difficulties will be resolved well before such action becomes necessary and that an arbitration committee will be used infrequently.

Any person who violates right conduct is also expected to make every effort to realign his/her conduct with the precepts and to take the action(s) necessary to restore the harmony of the Sangha. Such atonement is an integral part of right conduct.

We recognize that the study and practice of these precepts is a life-long effort; it is the responsibility of each person who endeavors to live the Buddha Way.

These guidelines are not intended as a legislation of morality, but to encourage each of us to continually examine the basic attitude necessary to accomplish the Way. As human beings struggling to accomplish the refined life of the Buddha, the responsibility rests with each one of us. We urge all who come to practice to assume this responsibility for themselves, the welfare of others and the Sangha, and the Buddhadharma. It is through such efforts that mutual trust and respect and the joy of practice will flourish in our Sangha.

This statement was first issued on October 28, 1991 and approved and endorsed by the Spiritual Leader and Board of Directors of the Zen Center of Los Angeles on March 10, 1993, in Los Angeles, CA. Changes in wording have been made to reflect the current structure and practices of the Center.

Note:

Steps for Conflict Resolution as outlined in the Statement:

Talk to person involved. If fails:

Contact the Teacher Circle (TC) or a Senior Student

A procedure will be made by the TC to attend to the conflict

The ZCLA Curriculum

The ZCLA Curriculum follows the Center's **Circle of Life (Mandala)**. The Circle of Life is the teaching of the Five Buddha Families which presents the wholeness of a mature human life.

The **Five Buddha Families (also called Spheres)** are Source, Study, Resources, Relationships, and Service. The essential practices of each Family are zazen (Source); study (Study); lineage, precepts, and health (Resource); relationships, liturgy, art, ritual, and sexuality (Relationships); and service, livelihood, world learning (Service). We are creating a curriculum that addresses your development in each of these areas.

The Circle of Life is a three-dimensional hologram of the wholeness of life. Each sphere is a fractal of all the others — all the components are contained in each sphere. For example, when we place the Relationship sphere in the center of the hologram, it contains elements of zazen, study, service, lineage, precepts, and health. The Circle of Life is used for the structure of our organization as well as for personal practice.

The **curriculum** offers skillful means to awaken and to deepen, refine and integrate one's practice with Life. The practice of Buddhadharma is transformative; one turns and is turned by it.

We feel that the present circumstances of your life are the perfect vehicle for your awakening. How can we use these very circumstances to “forget the self, practice the precepts, and serve others”? We aim to provide the practices and skillful means that enable you to live an awake life. In our view, *everything* in your life is practice itself.

The Center has a **Teachers Circle** that offers instruction and guidance under the direction of the Head Teacher, Roshi Wendy Egyoku Nakao. Circle members are Senseis (fully empowered Dharma Teacher) Merle Kodo Boyd, Kipp Ryodo Hawley, John Daishin Buksbazen, Sensei Raul Ensho Berge and Sensei Patricia Shingetsu Guzy.

In addition, all members of the Sangha are teachers and students of one another through their stewardship of the Center. We are committed to individual and collective awakening.

<p style="text-align: center;">NOTE: NO ONE IS TURNED AWAY FOR LACK OF FUNDS. The Dharma Training Fund assists those with financial need. Please inquire.</p>
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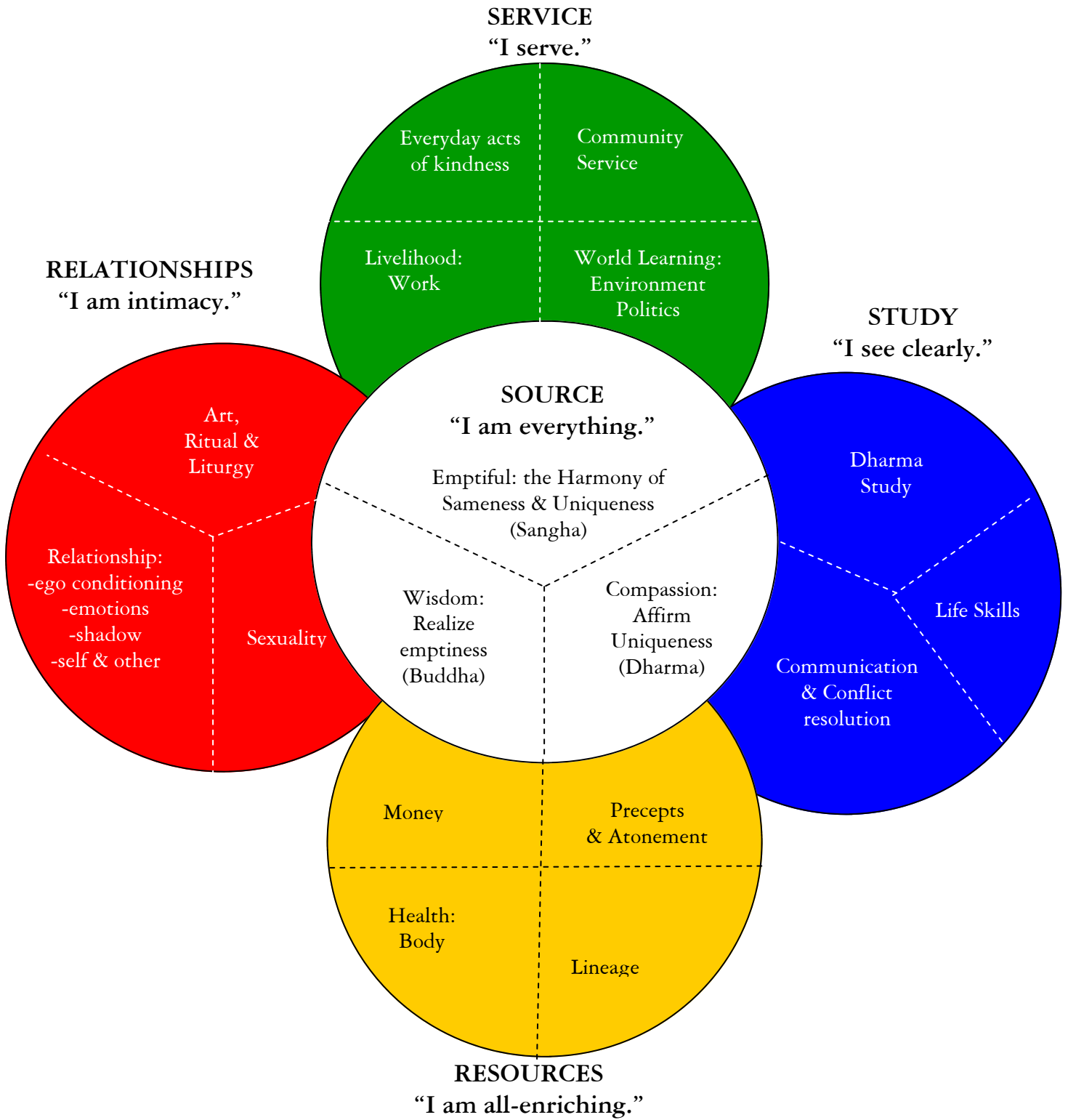
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**THE CIRCLE OF LIFE
OF THE ZCLA ORGANIZATION**



THE PERSONAL PRACTICE MANDALA



Source Sphere

Zazen is the practice of the Source Sphere. The primary characteristic is “include everything; everything included.” Since the Source is essentially empty of a self, it is empty-full, or “emptiful.” The key ingredient is non-duality.

Zazen. The core of Zen practice and training is zazen, or sitting meditation, which is offered weekdays at dawn and evenings, and on weekend mornings. Intensive zazen practice is offered monthly in the form of Zazenkai or Sesshin. Members study individually with a teacher.

Tangaryo. Tangaryo is an all-day sitting which is open to all and required of members and new residents. You may sit on your own, under the guidance of an experienced practitioner, at a date agreed upon by you and the coordinator. Contact our office to arrange a time for individual Tangaryo. A group Tangaryo takes place several times a year. Typically, the sitting lasts from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., with an hour off for lunch and a tea/discussion to end the day.

Zazenkai. A one-day retreat of zazen with face-to-face interview, walking meditation, chanting, meals, work, and a talk or class. The schedule is similar to a day of sesshin.

Introduction to Sesshin. This is an introduction to sesshin practice for those new to sesshin practice as well as for experienced sitters. There are more opportunities for instruction, questions, and explanations than is possible in the silence of regular sesshin. In addition, the sitting periods are shorter and the schedule lighter.

Sesshin. Literally translated, sesshin means “to unify the mind.” It is an extended silent retreat in which our normal daily schedules are set aside to allow for a more focused zazen practice, integrated with walking meditation, face-to-face interviews, mindful work practice, chanting, rest, oryoki meals, and talks. Sesshin is an important and valuable opportunity to deepen our practice.

Wall-gazing Days. The main practice on Wall-gazing Day is zazen, sitting in meditation facing the wall in the style of the great ancestor Bodhidharma. The sitting schedule begins every hour on the hour, followed by brief walking meditation. The day is in silence and includes meals. On Wall-gazing Days, a **Prayer Circle** dedicated to ending suffering in a current world event is held in place of morning service.

Study Sphere

Study is the practice of the Study Sphere. The primary characteristic is “seeing clearly.” The key ingredient is “practice and study are not two.”

Face-to-face interview. Private interviews with a teacher for instruction and checking of one’s practice are offered during zazen periods. This is an important component of Zen training.

Group study. Many opportunities for group study are provided in the form of classes and workshops.

Thursday Evening Dharma Talks. Dharma Talks or Teisho (talk by Roshi) are given nearly every Thursday evening. The talks are focused on a text or theme, usually pursued over several months. Texts are announced beforehand.

Practice Periods. A 90-day Practice Period is held annually from October through December. During this period, practitioners increase their practice commitments for zazen and study. Practice Periods of shorter durations are sometimes held throughout the year.

Public Face-to-Face Interview. From time to time, Roshi offers face-to-face interview with the assembled sangha. All may participate in one-on-one dialogue with Roshi.

Conversation About Practice (CAP).

A conversation and inquiry on practice themes are posed by a member of the Teachers Circle. The session begins with brief remarks and opening question. A talking piece is used.

Zazen Instruction for Newcomers (ZP Series)

ZCLA is committed to offering meditation instruction to all who enter the temple gate, and has done so for almost 40 years. Our introductory Zen practice program includes beginning meditation instruction (ZP-1 and ZP-2), a day of practice at ZCLA (ZP-3), Tangaryo (an initial step to becoming a formal member of the Center), and the Basic Practices at ZCLA series (ZP-4).

- **ZP-1: Introduction to Zen Practice.** Instruction on the basics of Zen sitting and walking practices, specifically focusing on postures of the body, breath, and mind. There is opportunity for short practice sessions and questions and answers. This class is offered every Sunday morning from 8:30 to 10:30 a.m. Please arrive by 8:15 a.m. Attendees are also invited to a Dharma talk, a Dharma chat, or a Conversation About Practice (CAP), all offered on most Sunday mornings from 11 a.m. to noon, followed by a meal. Advance registration is not required.

- **ZP-2: Refining Your Practice.** A follow-up to ZP-1, this class gives newcomers the opportunity to return for further guidance from an instructor. The class is held on Sundays from 8:30 to 10:20 a.m. It includes attending the Zen Buddhist service at 8:30 a.m. and sitting one period in the Zendo at 9:45 a.m. Attendees are also invited to a Dharma talk, a Dharma chat, or a Conversation About Practice (CAP), offered on most Sunday mornings from 11 a.m. to noon, followed by a meal. ZP-1 or established Zen practice at another center is prerequisite, but advance registration is not required.

- **ZP-3: A Practice Day at ZCLA.** For those who wish to explore practice at the Center, an instructor will take you through a day of practice at ZCLA. You will experience morning service, zazen, a private interview with a Zen teacher, a teasnack, a Precept Circle, and the monthly Day of Reflection where the focus is on personal practice with the Bodhisattva precepts. There will be ample time for questions and discussion with the instructor. From 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. ZP-3 takes place on the third Saturday of every month. Please register in advance by calling the office. Prerequisite: ZP-1 and ZP-2, or established Zen practice at another center.

Study Sphere continued

- **ZP-4: Basic Practices at ZCLA.**

This series is offered on the second Sunday of every month. The classes can be taken in any order. BPZ is open to all and has no fee. Pre-registration is requested.

ZP4-1: Forms of Practice. This class covers the forms of practice at ZCLA, including a review of the basics of zazen (the postures of the body, the breath, and the mind); the practices of breathing, shikantaza, and koan; zendo procedures; the role of Face-to-Face interview; the teacher-student relationship; and circle practice at ZCLA. Class ends with a recitation of the *Fukanzazengi*. Class materials: *Fukanzazengi* and The Zendo (ZCLA Bulletin #2).

ZP4-2: Service, Liturgy and Lineage. This class covers our temple and teaching lineage. Included is a discussion of how service is conducted at ZCLA, the role of ritual and ceremony, our practice of linking service to events in the world, the sick list, monthly memorial service, rites of passage services for the Sangha (baby blessings, weddings, funerals, etc.), and a description of the Gate of Sweet Nectar service. The class does a service together. Also included is Buddha Hall protocol. Text: ZCLA sutra book.

ZP4-3: Everyday Life as Practice. This class explores the Three Treasures and Precepts as points of reference in everyday life activities, including work, family, relationships, and ordinary life tasks. The main point is the inherent practicality of the teachings. Materials: Precepts (Day of Reflection document).

ZP4-4: ZCLA's Organizational Mandala. This class looks into the evolving organizational structure of ZCLA. We will discuss Shared Stewardship, the Center's organizational mandala (the Five Buddha

Families' perspective and components), ZCLA's Mission and Vision statements, Core Values, and the decision-making structure of ZCLA. Materials: ZCLA Mandala, the Mission and Vision statements, the Core Values document.

ZP-5: One Hundred Hours of Zazen in One Hundred Days. This class is aimed at helping members establish a daily practice of zazen and support the practice of others. Participants commit to sitting for one hour a day for 100 consecutive days. The coordinator will introduce you to the practice, assign a partner (or help you choose one), and give you a Practice Book to track your sitting.

Sutra & Text Study. Classes on Buddhist texts and sutras are held from time to time. Text study has included the "Verses of the Faith Mind," the "Identity of Relative and Absolute," and the "Fukanzazengi." Sutra study includes the *Heart Sutra*, *Diamond Sutra*, *Platform Sutra*, *Lotus Sutra*, *Vimalakirti Sutra*, and *The Way of the Bodhisattva (Bodhicaryavatara)*. A text/sutra is selected several times a year and is used as the topic for Teisho/Dharma Talks.

Sutra Copying. Members gather occasionally to undertake the ancient practice of copying traditional Buddhist sutras. Copying is in English. Guidelines are provided.

Three Steps to Mindfulness. This workshop presents a roadmap to the mindful life from the perspective of Zen practice. This map helps us step through our own mindscape, showing us the mental realms where we find samadhi, delusion, and both self-ish and self-less action. We'll see how to integrate and balance these realms, developing a mindfulness that helps us live our life in a dynamic way inspired by the living moment. There will be discussion time for learning the steps and periods of zazen to practice them. We'll also look at how this method dovetails with the Three Zen Peacemaker Tenets and other Buddhist practices.

Study Sphere continued

Practicing with Shadow Energies. This series explores how shadow energies form and how to reclaim them through spiritual practices. Shadow energies are any energy—both so-called positive and negative—that one does not include as appropriate to oneself. They are also known as “disowned” energies. The series addresses the common misconceptions that spiritual practices bypass shadow energy and that practice does not include certain energies which one may consider to be undesirable.

Introduction to Council. This class covers the tenets of Council practice, including how to facilitate a Council and the special circumstances of Council when it is practiced in the context of ongoing relationships in the Sangha. Council practice emphasizes mindfully communicating with each other while holding the intentions of deep listening, speaking from the heart, and lean speech.

Scholar or Artist-in-Residence. From time to time, scholars and artists are in residence at Normandie Mountain, sharing their work by offering workshops or seminars and showing their art. Scholars and artists have included translator Bill Red Pine Porter, clown master Moshe Yoowho Cohen, sculptor Tom Matsuda, and artist Barbara Yates, who sculpted the eight-foot Kanzeon in the garden wild space.

Bearing Witness Events. Transformation and healing are possible through the practice of Bearing Witness. Bearing Witness means listening deeply—listening without judging; listening to become one with the other. We give another human being complete recognition and acceptance. It is a practice of going beyond our imagined limits; a chance to see beyond our small selves and begin to eliminate the barriers between “us” and “them.”

Bearing Witness retreats have included a Street Retreat. This is a plunge into the unknown which offers an opportunity to raise our consciousness about living on the streets by doing so for a few days; the 60th-Year Commemoration of the Atomic Bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki; and a day-long reading of *Shiviti: A Vision by Ka-tzetnik 135633*, a survivor of the Auschwitz death camp.

Training Stewards. There are several positions that are considered specific training in service for the Sangha. They are usually appointed by the abbot. Training Stewards include Development Steward, Program Steward, Guest Steward, Parking Steward, Samu leaders, Co-Tenzo Coordinators, Day Managers, and Stewards of Circles.

Service Sphere continued

Service is the practice of the Service Sphere. The primary characteristic is serving self-and-other and its key ingredient is “Does the action serve the whole?”

Zen Humor. The Institute for Sacred Mischief and Contemplative Clowning (ISMACC). Led by master clown Moshe “Mr. Yoowhoo” Cohen. Workshops include sacred clowning exercises and performances.

Angulimala Prison Program. A program of volunteers who regularly visit prisons in the Southern California area. In addition to on-site visits, volunteers correspond with inmates and provide reading materials on Buddhism.

Interfaith Relationships. The Center maintains a close relationship with Rabbi Don Singer (Sensei Ani Shalom) of Shir Hadash and occasionally sponsors Jewish events. From time to time, Center members engage in interfaith conversations with other religious denominations.

Day of Dana at ZCLA and Food Pantry. Center members donate food to the local Los Angeles food bank through weekly donations during the Gate of Sweet Nectar service. In December, a Day of Dana is held with the Esperanza Center. Families in need in our neighborhood come to the Center for holiday celebrating and to receive baskets filled with food and items for children.

Individual Service Work. As their livelihood, members are engaged in various forms of social service, including non-violence training and advocacy, housing for the aged, environmental work, psychotherapy, education, and union work.

Environmental Education. The Brown-Green Group is active in studying the interconnection of environment, Sangha and individual practice. It offers workshops by renowned leaders, hikes, and informational movies throughout the year.

Compassionate Service for the Dying Retreat. Since 2006 the Center offers weekends for professional caregivers. The retreat is based on the three tenets of not-knowing, bearing witness, and healing action as an approach to serve the dying, their families, and the caregivers themselves.

Zen Peacemaker Sangha: The ZPS is an association of groups founded by, or led by, seniors within the empowered lineage of Bernie Glassman or groups that practice Zen and socially engaged Zen. The ZPS is created to share our diverse methods of practice, service and teaching, to continue to educate and develop ourselves as practitioners and teachers, and to provide the best possible opportunities for practice, realization and actualization for our students and the generations that follow.

Relationship Sphere

Relationship is the practice of the Relationship Sphere. The primary characteristic is “being intimate,” and its key ingredients are “unifying and integrating”—being aware of the impact of our actions on others.

Council Practice. Practicing in a circle with the three tenets of not-knowing (being open to all that arises); bearing witness (right listening, right speech); and taking action, speaking just enough and expanding to include all. The format includes talking pieces and creating a ritual container.

Council Instruction. (See Introduction to Council Class, page 6.)

Council. Councils are held in many different venues throughout the Sangha. The word is used interchangeably at times with circle — precepts circles, shared stewardship, resident councils, special interest topics, etc.

Sangha Councils. Councils open to all Sangha members are held on topics that arise within the community of practitioners.

Shared Stewardship. This ongoing program at ZCLA is aimed at developing an organizational model and practice forms for collective awakening. Shared Stewardship is a training ground for knowing the self, practicing the precepts, and serving others. It challenges us to let go of hierarchical conditioning and move towards a more inclusive Sangha culture which draws upon the collective wisdom of the group without diminishing individual wisdom.

Samu. “Samu” means “work with awareness” and is a basic training mode for Zen practitioners. The practice of fushinzamu (working together), emphasizes working together in various caretaking projects from gardening and kitchen cleaning to organizing and hosting sangha events.

Dharma Chats. Monthly gatherings led by sangha members to discuss various dharma themes.

Many Hands and Eyes Circles. Many Hands and Eyes Circles are formed to attend to arising issues in the Sangha. They study and research to present and teach the Sangha. For example, MHAE Prison Project: Sexual Violence Education and Ex-Prisoners’ Sangha Integration.

Resource Sphere

Lineage, Precepts, Health, and Money are the practices of the Resource Sphere. The primary characteristic is “taking care.” The key ingredients are respect for those who practiced in the past, ethical living, and care of the physical body.

Service (Liturgy). The Center holds daily services comprised of chanting the foundational sutras and texts of the Zen lineage and dedicating their merits to the lineage and well-being of all. This is an opportunity for students to learn the many aspects of these ancient life-sustaining rituals.

Morning Service, from Monday through Saturday, consists of chanting of the Heart Sutra, The Relative and Absolute or Jeweled Mirrored Samadhi, and the Enmei Jukku Kannongyo or Sho Sai Myokichijo Dharani.

Evening Service, from Wednesday through Friday, consists of chanting the Daihishin Dharani.

Founder’s Service. The monthly Founder’s service honors the founders of ZCLA and ZCLA’s Zen lineage.

Memorial Services. A **Monthly Memorial** service honors all members and their relations recorded in the Book of the Past for that month. An **Annual Members Service** for all those who have recently passed is held on the last day of the year. An **Annual Donors Memorial** is held the first Saturday in February.

Prayer Chains and Prayer Circles. Prayer Chains are held for any member who is ill and in need of support. Members sign up to chant every half hour on a designated day. Prayer Circles are held prior to Wall-Gazing Days and are dedicated to ending suffering around particular world events.

Special Services. Special services include memorials, funerals, baby blessings, weddings, and other life-passage ceremonies.

Service Position Training. One of the forms of practice at ZCLA is an open invitation to participate in the various service positions necessary for the liturgies. This class offers an explanation of each of the positions, demonstrations, hands-on practice, and opportunities for follow-through in the form of service assignments. Everyone is encouraged to take advantage of this form of practice as a way of integrating more fully into the life of the Center. Offered twice a year; individual training is ongoing.

Precepts. The study and practice of the Sixteen Zen Bodhisattva Precepts is fundamental to the Zen life.

Day of Reflection. Once a month, we reaffirm our vows with a Day of Reflection on the precepts. The day includes recitation of the precepts, a short talk on the precept of the day, lunch, and a precept circle.

Ceremony of Atonement. Observed every six weeks, this ceremony includes the renewal of vows and precepts and bearing witness to one’s own conduct in the company of the Sangha. “At-one-ment” is an essential aspect of the Zen life.

Precepts Series. This series is an introduction to the sixteen Zen Bodhisattva Precepts and how these can guide us in our daily life. The series includes: The Three Treasures, The Three Pure Precepts and The Three Tenets, Cause and Effect, Atonement, Center’s Statement of Right Conduct, and the Ten Grave Precepts.

Resource Sphere

Jukai Series. This series is offered for those who are interested in receiving the Precepts (jukai) and formally becoming a Buddhist. The study includes ZCLA's temple and transmission lineage, bowing practice, women ancestors, the Precepts ceremony itself, as well as the rakusu, bowing, and gassho.
Prerequisite: Precepts Series.

Lineage Female and Male. A study of both the Buddhist women ancestor lineage and the traditional male ancestors line and temple lineage. We also cover personal lineage.

Sewing the Buddha's Robe. Students receive guidance on sewing a rakusu, the robe of the Buddha. The process includes gathering "discarded" cloth and dying it, cutting the cloth, and learning the unique stitches for sewing the robe while chanting.

Zen Stretching. A series of basic stretches to support sitting practice.

Tenzo Circle. The Tenzo Resource Steward and current tenzo (cook) coordinators, along with former coordinators, comprise this circle. It meets as needed to discuss policies and practices in the kitchen and tenzoship as a form of Zen training.

ZCLA Resources

ZCLA Buddha Essence Temple has resources available to support the practice of serious Zen practitioners. The primary resources are the following:

Teachers. The Center has a Teachers Circle (TC) formed by the Abbot. The TC includes those who have received Dharma Transmission and senior students who are teachers-in-training.

Sangha. The Sangha is the community of practitioners of the Buddha Way, encompassing wide ranges in age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, work and career, and education. A major emphasis is collective awakening.

Affiliate Sanghas and Groups. The Center has several affiliated Sanghas led by ZCLA teachers. There are in New Jersey and Southern California. In addition, there are several sitting groups affiliated with the Center.

Statement of Right Conduct. The ethical foundations of practice at the Center are founded on the sixteen Zen Bodhisattva Precepts. The Statement also provides guidelines for addressing grievances.

Statement of Mission, Vision, Core Values, and Core Practices. The Center is guided by this Statement in setting its priorities. The Core Practices have evolved over time and serve to create an environment for individual and collective wisdom and awakening.

Funds. Generous members have established monetary funds to support practice. These funds include the Dharma Training Fund (financial support for members tuition), the Sujata Fund (for women's practice), and the Sutra Fund (for library materials).

Buildings and Grounds. Seven buildings and gardens provide a place for practice and residential Zen living in community.

Library. The ZCLA library is a treasure trove of resources to supplement the Sangha's investigations into the Great Matter of Life and Death. The collection of over 5,000 volumes includes many rare and out-of-print books on Zen and Buddhist studies, and is continually renewed with recent publications. The library is available to all members for browsing, borrowing, and discovery. It is located on the second floor of the Dharma Hall.

Website for Members. The Website is a primary resource for ZCLA members. It includes an interactive Center Mandala, the ZCLA calendar, the *Water Wheel*, dharma talks, practice texts, descriptions of ZCLA programs and events, reports from Circles, and Bookstore offerings.

Bookstore. The ZCLA Bookstore offers a wide selection of books about Zen and Buddhism as well as practice supplies (zafus, zabutans, oryoki, incense) and related items. The store is also online at www.zcla.org.

Zendo Precautions

These Zendo Precautions were inscribed on a redwood slab by our founding abbot Maezumi Roshi in 1968, the year following the zendo opening. He straightforwardly sets forth the purpose of practice and how to practice.

Many times throughout the years, the redwood slab was retrieved from the Center's dumpster. Maezumi Roshi himself expressed his reservations about his English. Today, the carving hangs in the Zendo entrance as instruction and inspiration for us all.

Those who wish to realize and actualize the Buddha's Way are welcome. Otherwise you better keep out.
Let us be harmonious like milk dissolved in water.

Temporarily, there are the relationships of guests to master and juniors to seniors; however, eventually all of us will be Buddhas forever. We should maintain the Buddha-Mind, moment after moment.

Let us not waste time. Time flies swiftly and nothing is dependable. Reflect upon the transiency of our lives.

Do not blame or criticize others. Do not imitate the falsehood of others, but nourish your own virtue. Correct errors and do not hate them.

Pertaining to the zendo, necessary matters will be discussed with the Master. When the decorum of the guests and master relationship gets out of order, absolute and relative functions will not be actualized.

No talking is allowed in the zendo. No strong scent such as perfume is allowed. Do not walk in the Zendo with your hands at your side.

Be at home and be comfortable. Let us be respectful to ourselves and others, as well as to the Buddha.

Our zazen is the zazen of Buddhas. Transcending both enlightenment and delusion; let us be aware of this very fact.

Let us be selfless and be ourselves and accomplish the Great Four Vows together.

Maha Prajna Paramita,

Taizan Hakuyu (Maezumi), Gassho [1968]

The Zendo: Procedures as Practice

Orderliness is a state or condition in which everything is in its right place and functioning properly. Orderliness implies freedom from disorder or confusion, and it helps us to sustain our own samadhi and the samadhi of others.

Orderliness helps us to minimize distractions and friction and promotes harmony so that we can practice well together. For this reason we have procedures and regulations for carrying out the different forms we use in Zen practice. As we train using these forms, we gradually become aware that practice and living the Enlightened Way are not separate events. Little by little we transform ourselves and those around us.

These Zendo Procedures are designed to promote orderliness. You are not expected to memorize them, or to do them all 'perfectly'. They are very detailed and should provide material with which to practice mindfulness for a long time.

From time-to-time you will be reminded, instructed, and corrected. This is our way of showing you how to use forms--in this case zendo procedures--for your own training.

Atmosphere

The zendo is the heart of the Center. Therefore, the zendo building, which is used for zazen, should be treated with the utmost mindfulness and respect. Inappropriate behavior, clothing, and attitudes, should be avoided. Be mindful of common courtesy and good manners. The zendo atmosphere comes directly from the attitudes of participants at the Center. One's attitude should always be concentrated, quiet and aware.

When we enter the zendo, we maintain Great Silence. We are silent in and around the zendo, especially during zazen and sesshin. There is no unnecessary talking in the zendo at any time.

Dress

Dress neatly, modestly, and discreetly. Clean, loose-fitting, subdued-colored clothing, such as long skirts or long pants, is appropriate. Zazen robes are encouraged for those who sit regularly. The black color is passed down to us from the Japanese Zen tradition, but any quiet color will do. Do not wear jeans, shorts or short skirts, noisy jewelry, hats, tank-tops, T-shirts with messages, strong perfumes or cologne. Your dress should in no way call attention to itself or disturb the spirit of silence and harmony in the zendo. Turn off wrist-watch alarms, pagers, pda's and cell phones, or leave them in your car. Please do not leave personal items in the Zendo entrance or changing area.

Sitting apparatus

We use a variety of furniture for zazen and are always searching for new items. Zazen is not meant to be torturous. Please find the item that allows you to sit with stability and comfort. You may use a round cushion (zafu), a square cushion (gomden), a low or tall bench, a stool, a chair, et cetera. In all cases, the basics of zazen posture apply: back upright to allow for proper breathing and hands in the zazen mudra.

Zazen

Zazen periods are started by the Jikido (time keeper) hitting the bell three times. After these three hits, it is preferable that no one enter or leave the zendo. Those arriving late to a zazen period should sit in the back gaitan until the next sitting starts. Do not open the zendo door from the back Gaitan side, when it is closed.

After finishing zazen practice please fluff up your zafu, carry it out of the zendo, if you wish to leave, and thoroughly clean your zabuton for the next person. If you stay for the next period, place the Zafu in the middle of the Zabuton, so that the label faces you.

Sshashu

Sshashu is used during the following times: walking in the zendo, walking around the grounds during retreat, when we cross in front of the monitors or the space between the altar and the abbot's seat, in the service hall, and at various other times.

The same meditative mind that is present during bowing and gassho is also present in shashu. Your left hand is made into a fist with the thumb tucked in; the right hand covers the left, with the fingers extended. Hands are placed against the upper abdomen, on the diaphragm.

Gassho

The word "gassho" literally means "to place the two palms together." Of all the mudras (symbolic gestures or positions) we use, it is perhaps the most fundamental, for it arises directly from the depths of enlightenment. Its uses are many, but most commonly it is employed to express respect, to prevent scattering of the mind, to unify all polarities (such as left and right, passive and dominant, etc.) and to express the One-Mind, the unity of Being.

The Firm Gassho

The most formal of the gasshos, this is the one most commonly used in our daily practice. It is the gassho we use upon entering the meditation hall, and upon taking our seats. We also use it at least sixteen times in the course of a formal meal and during all services. It is made by placing the hands together, palm to palm in front of the face. The fingers are placed together, and are straight rather than bent, while the palms are slightly pressed together so that they meet. The elbows are held somewhat out from the body, although the forearms are not quite parallel to the floor. There is about one fist's distance between the tip of the nose and the hands. Fingertips are about the same height from the floor as the top of the nose. Keep the eyes focused on the tips of the middle fingers. This has the effect of helping to establish an alert and reverential state of mind.

Bowing

Dogen Zenji once said: "As long as there is true bowing, the Enlightened Way will not deteriorate." In bowing, we totally pay respect to the all-pervading virtue of wisdom, which is the Buddha. In making the bow, we should move neither hastily nor sluggishly but simply maintain a reverent mind and humble attitude. When we bow, it is always accompanied by gassho, although the gassho itself may not always be accompanied by bowing.

The Standing Bow

This bow is used upon entering the meditation hall and in greeting one another and our teachers. The body is erect, with the weight distribution even and the feet parallel to each other. Gassho. As the bow is made, the body bends slightly at the waist. The hands (in gassho) do not move relative to the face, but remain in position.

The Deep Bow (Full Prostration)

We do full prostrations at various events such as beginning and ending service, at the end of the day in the Zendo, during atonement ceremony and many other times.

It is more formal than the standing bow, and requires a continuous concentration during its execution. The bow itself begins in the same way as the standing bow, but once the body is bent slightly from the waist, the knees bend and one assumes a kneeling position. From the kneeling position, the movement of the torso continues, with the hands separating and moving, palms upward, into a position parallel with the forehead. As the bowing movement progresses, the backs of the hands come to rest on the floor and the forehead is lowered until it rests upon the floor between the hands. At this point, the body is touching the floor at knees, elbows, hands and forehead. The hands are then slowly raised, palms upward, to a point just above the ears. Then the hands slowly return to the floor. When the hands have been raised and lowered, the body then straightens as the person bowing gets to his feet once again and ends by standing in gassho. In kneeling, actually the knees

do not touch the ground simultaneously, but in sequence; first, the right and then the left knee and right hand and elbow and then the left hand and elbow, in that sequence. In practice, however, the interval between right and left sides touching the ground may be so minute as to be unnoticeable. In bowing, movement should not be jerky or disjointed, but should flow smoothly and continuously without either disruption or arrested motion.

Entering and Walking in the Meditation Hall

When you enter the meditation hall, do a standing bow with hands in gassho. The bow is made after stepping across the threshold. Step across the threshold with the left foot into the meditation hall. After the bow, place your hands in shashu. While you are in the meditation hall, the hands remain in shashu, never in your pockets or hanging at your side. Keep your eyes lowered while in the meditation hall.

Walk softly and stay close to the edge of the sitting mats, moving towards your seat. As you enter the meditation hall, move to your right or left, filling in empty seats. Do not cross the space between the altar and the abbot's seat. If you want to sit at the street side of the Zendo, use the back stairs to pass from one side to the other. When the hall is very crowded, the monitors will provide reserve seats. We do not walk in front of Roshi's seat, except during walking meditation and when leaving the meditation hall.

There should be no talking or looking around in the meditation hall. If you don't have a cushion, there are some located just outside the meditation hall. When you arrive at your seat, place your cushion on the black sitting mat, then do a standing bow (hands in gassho) toward your seat, turn and do a standing bow to those opposite you. Back up and sit on your cushion, facing in the direction that is assigned for the particular meditation period.

Walking Meditation (Kinbin)

The time-keeper will hit the bell twice to signal the beginning of walking meditation. Walking meditation is done between meditation periods. When the bells ring, gassho and bow while seated. Rock slowly right and left. Massage the legs and feet if they are asleep. Get up slowly after Roshi, (if she is not present, after the head monitor), and stand in front of your seat, hands in gassho. Maintain concentration. Clappers are then hit once; do a standing bow, then turn to your left. When the clappers are hit again, place your hands in shashu and begin to walk slowly, stepping with your right foot first. Take a half step with each exhalation. After several minutes, the bell is hit; bring your feet together and do a standing bow (in shashu). As soon as you straighten up from bowing, begin walking faster. Everyone starts at the same time. When the clappers are hit to signal the end of walking meditation, place your hands together in gassho and continue to your seat. Stop in front of your seat, bow to it, and turn around. The bell is then struck once; do a standing bow in gassho and prepare for the next meditation period.

You may leave to go to the bathroom as you pass an exit during fast walking meditation. Gassho as you exit and back out of the line; this is to prevent the person behind from following you. Those who leave the line should not re-enter it, but wait until the bell signaling the formal end of walking meditation before re-entering the meditation hall. People who were late to the first meditation period may enter the meditation hall at this time also.

Exiting the Meditation Hall

After the sitting time is over, bow in sitting position, get up and dust your mat and fluff up the cushion and take it in both arms to carry it out. Place the cushion in the middle of your mat. If you have any personal belongings under or near your mat, take them with you.

We wait until Roshi and the Head Trainee have left the Zendo. If we are going to Dharma Talk or some other event, we wait until the head monitor signals by doing a standing bow. Leave the meditation hall formally, as in walking meditation.

Face-to-Face Study with Roshi (Dokusan)

Roshi's attendant will announce the priority for face-to-face study. Do not push or cut in front of fellow students. You may take your cushion for sitting in line. While sitting in line, do your meditation. During walking meditation, move as far forward in line as possible. You may stand in place during walking meditation or continue seated meditation. When you are next for face-to-face study, move up to the front of the line and wait for Roshi to ring her bell. This signals the end of face-to-face study for the person inside the room.

The person exiting needs to wait in front of the Dokusan room for the person arriving before making the standing bow together; similarly, the person arriving need to wait for the person exiting from the Dokusan room to finish the bows. The entering person should step over the threshold with her/his left foot first, in *gassho*, enter the room, and close the door; the exiting person returns to her/ his seat, or waits during walking mediation, till he/she is able to step in line.

The entering person will then walk to the front of Roshi (place your cushion to the side), stand in front the rectangular cushion (*zabuton*), and make a full bow on the rectangular cushion. Do not stand again, but scoot up to just in front of Roshi kneeling. (If you use a chair, please tell the *Jisha* and one will be provided for you.) State your name and practice or koan. Either make a response or presentation, or ask a question concerning your practice. Remember: your life is practice and this opportunity to be with Roshi is an appropriate time to explore just what this is. When Roshi rings the bell, the *dokusan* is over. Please make a kneeling bow (your hands in *gassho* and a slight bow with the upper torso). Then stand up and take a step backwards and make a standing bow. sidestep to the left and exit the room without turning your back to her.

Zendo Positions

There are several key positions that see to the smooth functioning of the zendo. These training positions are rotated among all the members of the Center. They are a way of serving each other's practice and an opportunity to practice wakefulness moment-by-moment. One also learns how to use the temple bells and gongs. Each of these positions has at their foundation maintaining the harmony and smooth functioning of the zendo.

- ***Timekeeper (jikido)***: The timekeeper is in charge of the room and sitting schedule overall. Responsibilities include opening and closing the building, preparing the altar, straightening zabutons, announcing the start of zazen by hitting the han, and timing periods of zazen and kinhin. All time signals are announced with sound.
- ***Monitors***: The monitors sit in the four corners of the zendo, with the head monitor to the left of the Abbot. When there is a head trainee, that person sits to the right of the Abbot. The monitors are the Zendo hosts. They sit facing the floor and have the primary responsibility of ensuring that zendo atmosphere is maintained. They help others find seats, correct posture, offer the kyosaku, and generally are aware of anyone in the zendo who might need help at any time. This is a position of awareness and caring for others. When you have questions about what to do, or if you need to leave the zendo, ask a monitor.
- ***Teacher's Attendant (Jisba)***: The teacher's attendant attends Roshi and assistant teachers by offering incense, preparing Roshi's seat, setting up the Dokusan room, and running the Dokusan line. All questions about Dokusan and interview should be directed to the attendant.
- ***Doan***: The doan signals chanting of vows and the three bows. The timekeeper or the Head Monitor may also fulfil this function.

Service Positions in the Buddha Hall

Service positions are the roles that people fill during the temple practice. They include jobs such as preparing the temple, signaling the start of meditation, attending to the Officiant; chanting and using the instruments that contribute to the service. Below is a list of the positions used at ZCLA. The residents are encouraged to participate in services.

- **Jisharyo:** The Jisha, Jiko, and Sogei make up the Officiant's Jisharyo. This is a group of three attendants. Their job is to accompany the officiant to and from the temple and help with the ceremony in various ways.
- **Ino:** Mostly used for the chant leader. He/she arranges the Ryoban and sets the tone, speed, and energy of the chant. Everyone cues off the Ino when chanting as a group. "Chant with your ears." In other words, the ideal is to blend in and not "stand out."
- **Jiko:** Carries the Hako (incense box) in the Jisharyo.
- **Sogei:** Leads the officiant's procession to and from services. She/he rings the Inkin (hand-bell) to let everyone know the location of the procession
- **Doan:** The "bell master." Marks the different parts of service and chants through different signals.
- **Chiden:** Prepares the altar for the services after the meditation. Is in charge of cleaning and maintaining the altar.
- **Densho:** Rings the large bell in front of the hall to call the community to service and "communicate" to the inside of the temple prior to service.
- **Mokugyo:** Plays this instrument during service (the wooden fish drum).
- **Han:** the wooden bell that hangs outside the kitchen, in the front gaitan and in front of the Dharma Hall. It calls the Sangha and officiant to sitting and classes.
- **Denman:** this person hands out the chant books during service.

Glossary of Terms

- *Ango* (lit. “peaceful dwelling”): A practice period, originally three months in length, devoted to meditation, study, and communal work.
- *Anuttara samyak sambodhi* (Skt): Supreme, complete awakening.
- *Avalokiteshvara* (Skt; J: *Kannon, Kanzeon; Kanjizai*): One of the three principal bodhisattvas in the Zen Buddhist tradition, Avalokiteshvara is the personification of Great Compassion.
- *Bodbi-mind* (Skt: *bodbichitta*; J: *bodaisbin*): The awakening of the determined aspiration for enlightenment.
- *Bodhisattva* (Skt; J: *bosatsu*): An enlightened being who has forsworn final liberation until all beings have attained enlightenment.
- *Bosatsukai* (J) (lit. “a meeting of bodhisattvas”): Can be used to denote any group of Zen Buddhists who meet together for practice.
- *Buddha-Nature*: The mind of not knowing, of oneness, of complete intimacy with the interrelatedness and interpenetration of all things. The intrinsic nature of all beings.
- *Dana*: (Sanskrit) “Generosity”; The practice of generosity is the first of the Paramitas (quality of a Bodhisattva’s mind). Individual donations that may be given to the teacher or the center in support of the teachings.
- *Dharma* (Sanskrit): Buddhist teachings or doctrine; dharma also means “all elements, all things, the law, the truth”.
- *Dharma hall*: A room or building in a monastery in which the abbot gives talks on the Dharma.
- *Dharma name*: The name given upon receiving the precepts (*jukai*).
- *Dharma successor*: A person designated by a Zen teacher to carry on the teaching lineage and authorized to teach, and in turn name Dharma successors.
- *Dharma Talk*: A teacher’s discourse, exploring various aspects of Zen teachings and practice.
- *Dharmakaya* (Skt; J: *hosshin*): One of the three forms of the Buddha, the realm of Oneness.
- *Dokusan*: A private face to face interview with Roshi held during a meditation period. It is a time to discuss matters related to practice.
- *Dhyana* (Skt; Ch: *ch’an*; J: *zen*): Sitting practice as exemplified by Shakyamuni Buddha.
- *Dojo* (J): A training hall.
- *Dokusan* (and/or) *Daisan* (J): A Face-to-Face encounter between Zen student and teacher in which the student’s understanding is probed and stimulated and in which the student may consult the teacher on any matters arising directly out of practice. *Dokusan* is generally used to indicate that the teacher is a roshi, whereas a less senior teacher is indicated by the term *daisan*.
- *Eihei Dogen Zenji* (1200—53): Co-founder, with Keizan Jokin Zenji, of Japanese Soto Zen, he established Eiheiji, a principal Soto training monastery; best known for his writings, especially the *Shobogenzo*.
- *Enlightenment*: Realization of true nature.
- *Five Worldly Desires*: Desire for money or wealth, sex, food, fame, and sleep.
- *Four Great Vows*: “Sentient beings are numberless; I vow to save them. Desires are inexhaustible; I vow to put an end to them. The Dharmas are boundless; I vow to master them. The Buddha Way is unsurpassable; I vow to attain it.” Zen students chant these vows daily as an expression of their aspiration.
- *Four Noble Truths*: The Buddha’s Fundamental teaching- that suffering (*dukkha*) is the intrinsic nature of existence; that it has a cause; that it can be ended; the method of ending suffering is The Eight Fold Path.

- *Fukanzazengi (J)* (lit. “*Universal Promotion of the Principles of Zazen*”): Dogen Zenji’s sitting manual.
- *Gakki (J)*: Memorial service.
- *Hakuin Ekaku Zenji (1686—1769)*: The patriarch of Japanese Rinzai Zen, through whom all present-day Rinzai masters trace their lineage; he systematized koan study.
- *Hara (J)*: The area of the lower abdomen that is the physical center of gravity of the human body, which becomes a center of awareness in zazen.
- *Jukai (J)*: Ceremony in which a person receiving the precepts formally becomes a Buddhist and is given a Dharma name.
- *Kalpa (Skt)*: An eon; an extremely long period of time.
- *Karma (Skt)*: The principle of causality, which holds that for every effect there is a cause.
- *Keizan Jokin Zenji (1268—1323)*: Fourth patriarch and co-founder, with his predecessor Dogen Zenji, of the Soto School in Japan, Keizan Zenji was largely responsible for the spread of Japanese Soto Zen..
- *Kensho (J)* (lit. “*seeing into one’s own nature*”): An experience of enlightenment.
- *Kinbin*: Walking meditation done by a group in a line or circle.
- *Koan (J)*: A brief anecdote recording an exchange between master and student, or a master’s enlightenment experience. Koans are used in Zen to bring students to realization and to help clarify their enlightenment.
- *Manjusri*: (Sanskrit). The embodiment of Wisdom; the image of Buddha-consciousness. Often depicted riding a lion, holding the sword of wisdom, which cuts through delusion. This is the image on the altar in the Zendo.
- *Muji*: (fl. The character “mu,” a negative prefix. When used alone, it points directly at reality and has no discursive content. The use of the word in this sense originated with Master Joshu (CIt Chao-chou, 778—897), who, when asked by a monk, “Does a dog have Buddha nature?” directly answered, “Mul” The incident is used as the first koan in *The Gateless Gate* (Mumonkan).
- *Nirvana (Skt; J: nehan)*: In Zen practice, a non-dualistic state, beyond life and death.
- *Rakusu (J)*: Made of five strips of cloth and thus the smallest of the Buddhist robes (*kesa*), the rakusu is the only kesa worn by both monks and lay persons, and is suspended from the neck by a cloth halter.
- *Roshi*: “Venerable teacher.” Ekyoku Nakao Roshi is the Roshi at ZCLA. To become a Roshi, one undergoes years of study and practice. One role of Roshi is to guide and inspire the students on the path to Self-realization.
- *Samadhi*: Concentration meditation practice; single-pointed focus.
- *Sanzen (J)* (lit. “*penetration in Zen*”): In the Rinzai tradition, sanzen is synonymous with dokusan. For Dogen Zenji, founder of the Soto School in Japan, however, sanzen more broadly signifies the proper practice of zazen.
- *Sangha*: (Sanskrit). Spiritual community. Originally, it applied to a particular group of monks living under specific guidelines- but now is expanded to include nuns, lay practitioners and sometimes all who follow the spiritual path.
- *Zazen*: Literally, “seated mind”; meditation. Or
“Za” = “sit”
“Zen” = “concentration”
- *Zen*:
From the Sanskrit dhyana (“meditative absorption”). It is the process of concentration and absorption by which the mind is first tranquilized and brought to one-pointedness, and then awakened.
- *Zendo*: A large hall or room where zazen is practiced.

- ***Zenji (J)***: Honorific title meaning “Zen teacher or master.” Often reserved for the abbots of Eihei-ji and Sojiji, the main monasteries in the Japanese Sōtō School. Maezumi Roshi also used it for esteemed Zen ancestors.
- ***Zen Peacemaker Order***: Founded by Bernie Glassman and Jishu Holmes to link people who are engaged in social action and Zen Buddhism.

Adapted from: *The Beginner’s Guide to Zen Buddhism*, *The Three Pillars of Zen*, and *On Zen Practice*.

Dana Practice

Every spiritual and non-profit organization depends on the donations of their members to support the place and also those who are teaching and spend their life fully for the practice. Therefore we want to talk a little bit about the practice of Dana or Generosity and begin with a writing of Zen-Master Dogen:

Bodhisattva's Four Methods of Guidance

BODAISATTA SHISHO-HO

(from "Moon in a Dewdrop", Dogen Zenji)

The bodhisattva's four methods of guidance are giving, kind speech, beneficial action, and identity-action.

"Giving" means nongreed. Nongreed means not to covet. Not to covet means not to curry favor. Even if you govern the Four Continents, you should always convey the correct teaching with nongreed. It is to give away unneeded belongings to someone you don't know, to offer flowers blooming on a distant mountain to the Tathagata, or, again, to offer treasures you had in your former life to sentient beings. Whether it is of reaching or of material, each gift has its value and is worth giving. The question is not whether the gift is valuable, but whether there is merit...

You give yourself to yourself and others to others. The power of the causal relations of giving reaches to devas, human beings, and even enlightened sages. When giving becomes actual, such causal relations are immediately formed.

Buddha said, "When a person who practices giving goes to an assembly, people take notice." You should know that the mind of such a person communicates subtly with others. Therefore, give even a phrase or verse of the truth; it will be a wholesome seed for this and other lifetimes. Give your valuables, even a penny or a blade of grass; it will be a wholesome root for this and other lifetimes. The truth can turn into valuables; valuables can turn into the truth. This is all because the giver is willing...

If you study giving closely, you see that to accept a body and to give up the body are both giving. Making a living and producing things can be nothing other than giving. To leave flowers to the wind, to leave birds to the seasons, are also acts of giving.

Buddha said, "If you are to practice giving to yourself, how much more so to your parents, wife, and children." Therefore you should know that to give to yourself is a part of giving. To give to your family is also giving. Even when you give a particle of dust, you should rejoice in your own act, because you correctly transmit the merit of all Buddhas, and for the first time practice an act of a bodhisattva. The mind of a sentient being is difficult to change. You should keep on changing the minds of sentient beings, from the first moment that they have one particle, to the moment that they attain the way. This should be started by giving. For this reason giving is the first of the six paramitas.

Mind is beyond measure. Things given are beyond measure. Moreover, in giving, mind transforms the gift and the gift transforms mind.

The Practice of Dana

Since the time of the Buddha exists the custom of Dana or the practice of generosity. Because there is no way to pay for the auspicious value of the Dharma, those practitioners who have the power and opportunity show their gratitude to those who carry the wisdom of the Dharma through supporting their livelihood.

In our western culture we are especially challenged about this practice, because it is not in our mind and consciousness that we have to think about the value of something. Mostly we are going in a shop and pay the

price someone tells us. The practice of Dana gives us the opportunity to work with two issues in our mind: freedom and responsibility. On one hand it is not fixed, what value the teachings have for our own and it gives us also the opportunity to work with our stingy mind states. On the other hand it lays in the hands of the practitioners that the Dharma can be taught. Only if the livelihood of a teacher is provided for will, they have the time and space to teach and also to have time for their own practice. So if we want to extend the Dharma in the world for ourselves, others and the generations after us, we have to practice giving.

Often people ask us what would be appropriate. There is no fixed answer to it, but we want to give you three approaches, so that it is perhaps a little bit easier for you to find out what is appropriate for you:

What would a comparable event cost, if you would do a yoga class, a sport event, a business education or having an ongoing support system?

What are you able to give?

What is your personal value? Where in your value system does the teaching of the Buddha stand, how much is this teacher, her/his teaching and this practice place giving to you?

We hope that this information helps you find a way to support the teachers and the Center, and we thank you in advance for your generosity.

Work Practice by John Daido Looi

"The Sacredness of Work" article? in: *Mindfulness and Meaningful Work: Explorations in Right Livelihood*, edited by Claude Whitmyer, Berkeley: Parallax Press, 1994, pp. 31-35

I'd like to talk about work practice, how our ordinary daily tasks can become opportunities to practice. Work-practice is something that naturally, organically develops out of zazen. When the student reaches a certain point of maturity in zazen, his work, his life, everything he does develops an equivalent clarity and integrity. Work emerges as an active function of zazen.

Training at the Center is an opportunity to examine our habits, our ways of doing things. In this "laboratory" we can develop work as we do zazen – to see ourselves, to empty ourselves, to let our natural clarity manifest, to function totally. But for this to happen we need to approach our work in a spirit of openness and receptiveness.

A quotation I found by Maezumi Roshi reads: "Practice is like a regular exercise which builds strength, gracefulness and self-confidence to meet the situations we all face every day." Precisely the same thing can be said about work; it too is like regular exercise which builds strength, gracefulness and self confidence to meet the situations we face daily.

One of the primary characteristics of work-practice is mindfulness, a state in which the body is relaxed, the senses are alert, and the mind clear and focused on the task at hand. This attentiveness is direct experience. Even thinking or remembering are vivid if done mindfully. It's the process of doing what you're doing while you're doing it.

Mindfulness requires the ability to flow, concentrate, and remain in the present. "Flowing" means being able to let go of the last thing before picking up the next one. It also means staying in touch with the flow of what is actually present and happening. So often we substitute a static idea or image for reality.

Attentiveness or single-pointed concentration is important to all aspects of life. This is samadhi functioning as power to identify with anything, to focus and to stay in the flow of an action or process.

Finally, mindful work-practice focuses on the here and now. A task is performed step by step without looking toward a goal. Our focus is on the present process. Totally immersing ourselves in the actual process is the goal. Flowing, concentrating and remaining in the present are as simple as closing doors carefully, putting our shoes neatly on the rack, and picking up litter rather than stepping over it.

Another important part of practice is seeing what's happening, being aware not only of the work in process but also of what rises up in ourselves. Through work we can study the self and empty the self. Work-practice is non-dualistic. There's no separation. The person, the tool, the work are one thing. This aggregate functions freely. And all aspects require care and attention – a hoe, an emotion, the accuracy of our typing.

The first thing is preparation. This means letting go of everything else and turning on to the task at hand, focusing on the present process. The work is laid out, the tools, materials, everything that's going to be needed is put in a state of readiness. The next step is doing it, the art of doing what you're doing while you're doing it. When the work is completed there's a sense of completion, of finishing it up, picking up the loose ends and making it into a nice, tidy package. And then finally cleaning up, cleaning the tools, putting the materials away, leaving no trace. The dishes are washed and put away, the counters dried, the sink clean, the floors swept and washed, and the garbage emptied. No trace remains that someone has eaten. Everything looks natural and ordinary.

Some of the problems for people in the work-practice should also be discussed; for example, problems in interpersonal relations on the job, "negative" emotions, and boredom.

Working with other people can be one of the most difficult applications of work-practice. We are all a little rough, like stones. Rubbing against one another can make us smoother or break us! What makes the difference is not whether or not we have disagreements but how maturely we handle disagreements. We must

focus on the need for harmony to accomplish work. If we can be receptive to others' ideas and accepting of each other and ourselves, work can progress.

Definitely working closely together accentuates our different styles and personalities. Emotions rise up. Sometimes we need to discuss and share openly our reactions and feelings. Many times, however, we need to be able to just work, despite our feelings. While we do not want to suppress or rationalize our feelings, we can't allow our feelings to immobilize us.

Boredom and frustration can be the gap between where we are now and some goal where we'd like to be. Boredom can also arise from a negative attitude toward our work. If we are indeed focused on the here and now, each moment is complete and unique. There is no energy left over for boredom and frustration. If while we're pulling weeds each weed is the first weed and the last weed, there's no opportunity to be bored. All of our attentiveness is right there at that moment.

The role of silence is important. This doesn't mean not speaking when speaking is necessary, in communicating, in answering the phone, in giving instructions. It does mean cutting down on unnecessary chatter externally and internally. Silence and avoiding idle talk help develop the clarity, receptiveness, and concentration for good work practice.

If you find that you become scattered while working, a good way to come back into focus is to stop what you're doing for a moment and become aware of the breath. In a few moments you are recollected and can bring your attentiveness to the task at hand.

An attitude of detachment is important also. What you're doing needs to be the most important thing in the whole world and yet not important. Somewhere between these two extremes lies a good attitude for work-practice.

Observing a Zen master can inspire us to develop our work-practice. Watch a Roshi; see what he's doing, how he works, the condition of his workspace, his tools, what he does with his shoes. A true master is always teaching with his natural ordinary acts.

I once asked Maezumi Roshi if there was such a thing as a Buddhist morality. This directly relates to work-practice. What is "right livelihood"? Being totally involved in our action is one side; how can we choose our action?

Maezumi Roshi told me of Yasutani Roshi's four points: position, place, degree, and time. Position dictates that the action you take depends on your position in the situation; the place is the space or environment that this action is taking place in; the degree is the amount of action or non-action required; and finally, time refers to time in all its aspects – the morality of the 17th century is not the morality of the 20th century. What is okay in the morning may not be appropriate in the evening.

We must be aware of what's appropriate for the situation. Knowing when to move and when to wait is very important; developing an attitude of action rather than reaction. Be able to make errors without freaking out and coming apart. We must learn to incorporate these skills in the way of our everyday life.

There are several books that have inspired me concerning work-practice. They are: *The Miracle of Mindfulness* by Thich Nhat Hanh, a Vietnamese Zen Master, published by Beking Press. Another is *Zen and the Art of Archery* by Eugene Herrigel, published by Vintage Press. *Zen and Japanese Culture* by D.T. Suzuki has several important chapters on Zen and the arts. That's published by Princeton University Press. *The Art of Scientific Investigation* by Beveridge, originally published in 1956 by Random House, has excellent information on problem solving. And finally, an important sourcebook is *The Way of Everyday Life* by Maezumi Roshi, published by UCLA. It's the very thing we're talking about.

See also *Refining Your Life*, Zen Master Dogen and Kosho Uchiyama, Weatherhill, 1983.