



Water Wheel

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

Zen Center of Los Angeles
Great Dragon Mountain / Buddha Essence Temple

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Ox Herding

By Roshi Wendy Egyoku Nakao

In April, we began a monthly study series on the Ten Ox Herding Pictures. The pictures we are using were painted by the late Obaku Zen Priest and master sumi-e artist Gyokusei Jikihara, Sensei, as a gift to Zen Center in the early 1980s. They are based on the 12th Century Chinese paintings by Zen Master KuoAn Shiyuan (J., Kakuan Shian). Master KuoAn composed a verse for each picture, and his disciple Master Jion later composed a preface. Much later in Japan, a verse was added by Shotetsu Shoki of Tofuku Temple.

What do these pictures depict? The Ox Herding pictures can be appreciated in several ways. The most obvious way is as a metaphor for a linear sequence of so-called stages of Zen practice. While such an interpretation can be helpful to Zen students as an overall guide, it is fraught with the pitfalls of assuming that practice actually unfolds in this formulaic way and of the inevitable angst of comparison and expectation and a sense of failing or of arrogance and pride.

The Ox Herding pictures can also be appreciated as a metaphor of the facets of the nature of consciousness or the Zen mind, rather than a progression of spiritual development. In fact, Zen students experience these facets many times throughout the twenty-four hours, in whatever order they appear, in accordance with the conditions of one's life. The facets may arise in varying sequences and duration, according to each person's unique experience and capacities.

When approached in this way, the pictures inspire and challenge us to go deep and wide, and resonate intimately with our everyday activities. One can see that each



#1 – Searching for the Ox.

facet of Buddha Mind inter-permeates seamlessly with all the other facets, and that these pictures are of a vast interweaving web unceasingly revealing itself.

Each painting is within a circle or *enso*, the Zen symbol of Buddha or Enlightened Mind, which is executed with a single brush stroke. What is the significance of the circle? If you were to take a brush, soak it in paint, and draw a circle, you would have a perfect enso, even though its jagged edges and deviation from a fully round appearance may be judged imperfect by you. But it is perfect because it is *as is*. Clearly, this is not the idea of perfection

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that one measures oneself against throughout the day – that fixed, self-created standard of perfection that results in so much suffering.

From the view of Buddha Mind, *as is* perfection is without self-created limits or boundaries. The enso in these pictures are not quite closed, signifying the open, unlimited nature of Buddha Mind with which you are fully endowed from the very beginning along with the potential to realize and actualize the wisdom of the Buddhas.

The Ox Herding pictures are quite straightforward: a

“From the view of Buddha Mind, as is perfection is without self-created limits or boundaries.”

person lost in the wilderness is looking for the way home, finds an ox, tames it and rides it home. Zen masters often say, “Zen is finding your long-lost home.” Who is the ox herder? You are, of course. Specifically, that part of you that is motivated to know what life truly is; the part of you that is driven to practice whether through mere curiosity or a deep angst that must be addressed. It’s the part of you that gives rise to the fundamental inquiry of “What is this life?” or “Who am I in the midst of all this?”

What is the ox and what is ox herding? In the pictures, the ox symbolizes two primary aspects of Buddha Mind. There is the aspect of the ox as Buddha Mind itself, which one must uncover, investigate, and integrate completely into one’s life. It is not something new to be acquired, but rather is discovered as inherently you.

The ox also represents the mind that is full of afflictions, what we often call the conditioned or habitual mind, which you learn to pay attention to and study by observing it over and over. In referring to the mind of affliction, we often use the expressions “taming the mind,” or “quieting the mind” or, as Zen Master Dogen says, “To study the Way is to study the (conditioned) self.”

Some versions of Ox Herding pictures depict a black ox that turns white as one’s journey of taming the mind evolves from penetrating the nature of the aspect of mind conditioned by greed, anger, and confusion, to the awakening and integration of Buddha Mind. So as one’s investigation continues, the question arises: What is the nature of Buddha Mind and the so-called afflicted conditioned mind? The pictures further depict the changing relation-

ship of the ox, ox herder, and ox herding as one engages Zen practice.

Let’s consider the first picture, Searching for the Ox.



#2 – *Seeing the Traces.*

The Preface:*

Till now, the ox has never been lost. Why then do you need to search for it? Turning away from your own awakening, you became estranged from it; then enclosed by dust, in the end you lost it. The hills of home recede farther and farther away; you’re lost as soon as the paths divide. Winning and losing consume you like flames. Right and wrong rise round you like blades.

Till now, the ox has never been lost. From the start, you have *never been lost*. You, in fact, have been completely endowed with Buddha Mind from beginning-less time! So, *why then, ox herder, do you need to search for the ox?* Who is searching for what?

Turning away from your own awakening, you became estranged from it; then enclosed by dust, in the end you lost it. How has this estrangement come about? You are waking up to the suffering created by the small-self’s striving for a fulfilling life based on its conditioned habits and judgments. The incessant grasping for material things, of attaching to identities, and the accumulation of experiences and titles – all the clothing and masks of mistaken ideas that settle like so many layers of dust upon the True Self. You are lost in your own conditioning, in your ideas of right and wrong.

*Yamada Mumon, “Lectures on The Ten Oxherding Pictures,” translated by Victor Hori, Univ. of Hawaii Press, ©2004.

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Ordinary Mind Is The Way

By Sensei Pat Shingetsu Guzy

Mumonkan Case 19: “Ordinary Mind Is The Way.”

The Case:

Joshu asks Nansen: “What is the tao?”

Nansen replies: “Ordinary mind is the tao.”

“Well, shall I try to seek after it?”

“If you try for it, you will become separated from it.”

“How can I know the way unless I try for it?”

“The way is not a matter of knowing or not knowing. Knowing is delusion. Not knowing is confusion. When you have really reached the true way, beyond doubt, you will find it is vast and boundless as outer space. How can it be talked about on the level of right or wrong?”

Joshu comes to a sudden realization, but must delve into it for another 30 years before he can fully understand it. Especially in our culture, we have this notion of: I want it yesterday. Think of it, the willingness to just go day after day, moment after moment, to explore this.

Mumon’s verse on this case:

The spring flowers, the autumn moon,

Summer breezes, winter snow.

If useless things do not clutter your mind

You have the best days of your life.

When we first come to Zen practice, we might think we need a special sort of mind to begin, not the mind that’s all cluttered. But we must always start where we are. We don’t need to try and change anything. If we do, we soon find out it’s useless! We are instructed to just sit zazen and follow the breath. We’ll probably make great efforts to “get into” the practice. All one gets through this is the effort to get into practice. One could say: the less faith one has, the more drama.

Spiritual work comes out of a need for truth; it’s because we *are* truth that we *seek* truth. It’s because we are



Sensei Shingetsu

one and whole that we seek unity. Saint Augustine said: “If you had not already found me, you would not be seeking me.” This is why we suffer: we turn our back on the truth of who we really are, and we search for it in reflection of our experiences rather than in our direct experience.

Master Hakuin painted a picture of a monkey trying to fish the reflection of the moon out of the water. This is pretty much the condition we’re in. We don’t want to realize that our hopes and dreams are actually keeping us away from our true home. All that stuff we dream about, want, desire, and that we’re off somewhere checking out – that’s what keeps us away. We don’t yet see that the mental pain we experience is precisely what we must face if we are to let go of the reflections and live a life that is all of its messiness and richness.

We talk about Zen as being transcendent, but actually we have to go right into the dirty old mud and slosh around in it. Remember, that’s where the lotus grows. It can’t grow anywhere else except in mud. In India and Nepal, it grows right up out of the gutter, out of open sewage. They don’t grow in clean, nice water – try to grow one in your garden. You can’t do it.

Be where you are and do not wish to move from that spot. There’s an old Christian hymn: “If you knew how to suffer, you would have the power not to suffer.” Not to wish to move from or separate from that place of suffering is knowing how to suffer. In zazen, we sit and face the

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Sensei Shingetsu began Zen practice in 1989 and received Dharma Transmission from Roshi Egyoku in 2009. She has led the Valley Sangha since 1992. This article is adapted from a Dharma talk she gave on March 23, 2012, during the Introduction to Sesshin weekend.

wall. What are we really facing? We're watching our suffering show up. If you're willing to stay right there in the fire of it, then you begin to know how to suffer. Don't run away from it or push it or pull it, just stay right there. Easier said than done, but that's the practice.

In zazen, we have the opportunity to stay put no matter what. It is just things as they are. Take yourself

“Samadhi doesn't belong to conceptual understanding; it is to be experienced.”

out of the equation: zazen does zazen. Shingetsu does Shingetsu, whatever that is. Tim does Tim. Just be who you are – not who someone else is or who you think you should be, but who you are. You'll be surprised.

Katsuki Sekida said, “Once you have experienced samadhi, you *know* it's the way.” Samadhi doesn't belong to conceptual understanding; it is to be experienced. If you try to know it through conceptual manipulation you will simply be deluded. We come up with ideas about it that we have to throw away. Is this it? Can this be it? It's a waste of time but we do it, because we “want to know.” Once you have experienced samadhi, you'll know for yourself: it's the way. No one can do this for you. You actually have to do it.

We have so many minds in Zen: parental mind, joyous mind, magnanimous mind, ordinary mind, big mind, spacious mind, vast mind, boundless mind, one mind... you'll find minds and minds upon minds in Zen and in the end, guess what? No mind. We're busy looking after all these minds. Perhaps we have to first seek after it to see that there is nowhere to go.

Joshu said this of his first awakening experience as a young man: “Suddenly I was ruined and homeless.” He was essentially saying: I had cultivated a personality, a mind, a heart. ...nothing of that was me. I had made a nice cozy place for myself according to the rules of society, and just the first glimpse of enlightenment has taken it all away. It's of tremendous significance. What happens when our story, condition, and sense of self is completely dropped and the vastness of reality is right where we're standing? Where do you go once you wake up?

We can't imagine awakening can come about for ourselves: “Oh the ancestors were smarter, it was a different

time, they didn't have so many distractions, they didn't have anything else to do.” We can go through all of that. Dogen Zenji says to study the way is to study the self. To study the self is to forget the self. To forget the self is to be enlightened by the ten thousand dharmas.

Maezumi Roshi has a lovely translation of the Genjokoan: To study the way, the Buddha way, is discipline. To know the self is discipline. To realize that way is the self, is discipline. To be awakened, that's discipline. To really know who you are, that's discipline.

In the famous Zen story about mind that takes place between Bodhidharma and his disciple Huikai, Huikai came to his master and said, “My mind is anxious. Please, help me find peace.” Bodhidharma said: “Bring me your mind and I will pacify it.” We're not told how long Huikai looked for this mind, but when he returned he said, “I have sought everywhere for this mind and I can't find it.” “There,” Bodhi-darma said, “I have pacified it.”

Try this experiment: close your eyes and think of a time you were very fearful, or anxious, or depressed – go to that place. Find that place. Bring that mind forth now. Come on! Where is it? It's hard, isn't it? You can't go there. You can think about it, and imagine it, but you can't be there. When we're angry or have a powerful feeling, what do we do in this practice? Just be that. Just feel that, not something else instead.

Ordinary mind is intimate and immediate. Ordinary consciousness, ordinary everyday life: getting up, washing your face, eating breakfast, going to work, walking, running, laughing, crying. We don't even have to use the word “mind.” Ordinary is the way. P'ang Yun, a celebrated lay Buddhist, was one of the first great Chinese Buddhist masters to reject being a monk after his enlightenment. He didn't rush to do anything but live an ordinary life. His famous poem:

*There's nothing special about my daily affairs,
I am simply in spontaneous harmony with them.
Clinging to nothing and also rejecting nothing,
I encounter no resistance and am never separate.
What do I care about the pomp of purple robes?
The pure summit is never sullied by so much as a fleck of dust.
The wondrous action of supernatural forces
I find in hauling water and cutting wood.*

It is a fantastic, extraordinary, ordinary life, isn't it? As Mumon's poem says: The spring flowers, the autumn moon, summer breezes, winter snow. If useless things do not clutter your mind, you have the best days of your life!



Awakening: The Los Angeles Riots

By Wendy Egyoku Nakao

April 29 marked the 20-year anniversary of the event variously referred to as the Los Angeles Riots, the Los Angeles Civil Unrest, or simply Sa-I-Gu ("4-2-9") in the Korean-American community. These events unfolded in the streets around ZCLA, right up to its boundaries. ZCLA's chief administrator at the time, now our Abbot and Head Teacher, wrote the following article for the issue of the Zen Center's newsletter that came out only days later. We also reprint remarks by Maezumi Roshi offered at a sesshin in May 1992.

On Wednesday, April 29, came the long-awaited verdict in the Rodney King case: not guilty. I was stunned. Disbelieving. Numb. And then, a sense of foreboding arose as thick as the Los Angeles smog. We were about to be hit by the Big One. Not the long-predicted seismic quake, but an explosion of violence that would confront us with a deep and unsettling look at the people that we are.

Within a few hours, the rage erupted. For years, as a resident of the Zen Center, I have lived side by side with the ever increasing dis-eases of our city: suffocating smog, drug deals and gun fire nearby, the sad poverty, our alienation from our neighbors, and even experienced first hand the violent fists of gangs. But all this did not quite prepare me for the upheaval that followed. Our city exploded. Our neighborhood engulfed by rioters, looters, and flames. Los Angeles, the City of Angels, was consumed for 36 long hours with uncontrolled human rage and greed.

Within eight hours of the verdict, fires and looting were reported about two miles from the Center. As I watch the outbreak on television around ten in the evening, I smell the foul, sour smoke seeping through my bedroom window. Outside, I meet a neighbor, wondering how close is the fire. A frightened resident calls me at eleven. "What is the plan," she asks, "if it gets closer?" "I'll be up all night, just in case," I respond uneasily. "May need to rouse everyone."

Thursday morning. Dawn zazen is the incessant whirring of helicopters, the screams of sirens. We offer prayers in morning service for those killed and injured and for the safety of our Center and our city. Throughout the day, the

Appreciating Our Life

The Buddha talked about how valuable and significant it is to be born as a human being. But how much do we appreciate it? Just look at what kind of things are going on around us. When we become sensitive enough to observe, it is more than crazy. What is going on? The life of human beings is regarded as if it is even less valuable than a piece of paper. It cannot be. What is wrong? Something is lacking. And what should we do about it? At least we should be more aware of how to appreciate the life that each of us has, which is our only life. Nothing can replace it. If we truly want to do something good for others, it would be to really realize just how valuable, how significant, how precious is the life that each of us has, equally. Let us appreciate this. It would never be excessive to do that. Let us keep on going.

Concluding remarks by Maezumi Roshi at sesshin on May 10, 1992.

violence does not abate. Hour by hour it is clear: we are out of control. Our systems collapsing all around us. Gaining access to the roof of the four-story building next door, we look with disbelief at the surrounding ring of fire. In just 20 minutes, four new fires are sighted close by on Vermont, on Third, on Olympic. How beautiful the Center looks from up high. A spot of calm in the midst of a human hurricane. But will it be standing tomorrow?

Our residents gather and account for everyone. Some cannot make it home because of traffic snarls, others have left for safer havens. And some of us remain, rooted to the very ground we have called home for so many years. Was there anywhere to go? We work out a fire watch-and-alert plan and acquaint ourselves with the fire hoses and gas shut-off valves. Do we have enough food? Drinking water? What should we save, if anything, besides ourselves? Our phones operate now and then. A call is made to Roshi, who is leading sesshin in Mexico City, unaware of what is happening here. I clean my apartment. We keep each other company, settling in for the long night ahead.

By early evening an ominous black plume of smoke announces the arrival of rioters and looters just one block away. Under cover of darkness, we watch neighbors push cart loads of goods and groceries home. Fire! A friend peering out my kitchen window is shouting. Across the street a fire is blazing beside a neighboring church. Call 911. Call Mother Kathy to tell her that her church may be burning. Run out to help her, but bursts of gunfire pre-

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vent us from crossing over. We retreat and watch and wonder and know that if her church goes up in flames, ours may not be far behind. Within a half hour, the fire is put out. Our nerves are completely frayed. By midnight I slip into a troubled asleep, too exhausted to keep watch.

On Saturday morning, we hold service and zazen. Then, we are off to a peace rally along with thousands of others, converging on the small park across the street. After a few minutes, we head down the block with our brooms, trash bags, and shovels in hand, surveying the wreckage and helping merchants put out the small fires burning still. I cannot even remember what businesses stood there the day before.

Soon we are joined by neighbors we have never met – Black, Hispanic, White, Asian. People arrive from neighborhoods across Los Angeles with their brooms and shovels. We are all out there together doing the simplest thing: sweeping. We are cleaning up our home. Picking up trash, laughing, talking, crying, exclaiming – together. It took the near destruction of our city for this to happen.

But everyone is on edge. An uneasy quiet settles upon the city. I feel a terrible sadness. And I do not want to look at anyone. It is as though we have been forced to see just how vast the chasm really is between us all. Our own personal issues arise to confront us brutally. There is no turning away. I am horrified at the depth of my own racism, at my despair. And horrified at the knowing, at the unshakeable certainty, that what I witnessed on the streets of Los Angeles was none other than myself.

For days, sleep eludes me. Gunfire throughout the day and night. And then the curfew- *be in* by sundown, *stay in* until sunup. On Sunday, another sleepless night, this time curfew enforcement unfolds outside my window: a shout, police officers line up the violators along the fence; a heavy step; the National Guardsmen fully armed for combat are crouched across the street; tires screeching, undercover police heading off somewhere. The military presence feels like a boot upon my chest. I see my first humvee. I learn about grenade launchers. Where is the enemy, anyway?



Sangha members participating in the Non-Violent Communication Class in February 2012.

A Dharma friend from Northern California calls to ask how we as Buddhists are dealing with the situation. “As Buddhists?” I ask, somewhat dumbfounded. As Catholics? As Baptists? How as human beings is more to the point. I saw a merchant hang a sign on his door. It read: “Human-owned business.”

I have grown weary of all our points of view, of the color of skin, of the ignorance that blocks us from our common human hearts, of our need to categorize our brothers and our sisters into groups far distant from ourselves. For all the racial, economic, and political components of this complex situation, I distill it down to a profound lack of caring. We have ignored the fact, the simple truth, that when our brothers and sisters go hungry, so do we. I do not condone the violence, but I know and understand the rage.

It has been merely a week since the “worst urban riots of the century” ravaged Los Angeles. Our Center survived, but the events of the past week have been a “waking stick.” Slowly we are sifting through the rubble that is our city and ourselves. The Center’s small relief effort of collecting and distributing clothing is underway. And this weekend once again, we will join our neighbors, take up our brooms, our trash bags, our rollers, and our paint, and go out into our streets.

These are small efforts. But as Maezumi Roshi has so often said, “A small thing is not at all small.” Bodhisattvas, *all* of us. May we open to a deeper understanding and a genuine love and caring for the multitude of faces, who are none other than ourself. ■

The hills of home recede farther and farther away; you're lost as soon as the paths divide. Winning and losing consume you like flames. Right and wrong rise round you like blades. You are seeing that it is not possible to find true fulfillment by grasping at impermanent things, by seeking happiness based on constantly changing conditions. "How," your deluded self asks, "can I make things be or remain a certain way?" You are suspecting that much of what you believe will not bring the fulfillment you crave and is, in fact, driving you deeper into suffering. You are up against the wall of yourself, wanting things to be one way and rejecting things that are another way.

The Verse:

*Beating about the endless wild grass, you seek and search,
The rivers broaden, the mountains stretch on and the
trails go ever deeper.
Your strength exhausted and spirit wearied, no place al-
lows you refuge.
The only sound – evening cicadas shrill in the maples.*

The verse expresses a sense of desperation that arises when we live in self-created wilderness of preferences, of likes and dislikes, of gain and loss. You are *beating about the endless wild grass, you seek and search*. At the same time, this very *beating about* is a heartfelt stirring within – something

“True fulfillment does not depend on conditions, but rather upon awakening Buddha Mind.”

is seeking to make itself known to you. This is a potent time when your suffering can become the impetus for awakening, when curiosity or faith or great doubt arises and calls you to not know, to listen, and to investigate.

You know that *no place allows you refuge*, save for what is right here, now. *The only sound--evening cicadas shrill in the maples*. There is a dropping away, over and over again. You begin to let go of attachments to thoughts and self-preoccupations and drop into the sound of the waves, the smell of morning coffee, the sight of the hummingbird, the smoothness of the keyboard. No matter what you do or where you go or how much time passes, you find yourself here, now, just as you are.

What is dropping away? You confront the wrong-headed notions that you are separate from everything else, that you must strive to be something other than



#3 – Seeing the Ox.

what you are. You see that you are living an idea of yourself and of your life, and that this idea can never be a place of refuge. You realize that you can take a radical leap and actually fully accept all of yourself and life *as is*.

Whenever this facet of searching for the ox appears, you are reminded that any searching that depends upon the impermanent conditions of life can never bring liberation. You are reminded repeatedly that the small-self can never be fulfilled. You are reminded of that which stirs deep within -- that true fulfillment does not depend on conditions, but rather upon awakening Buddha Mind, to the very nature of life itself, which is enso.

The Waka (Japanese Verse):

*Searching
The deep hills,
No sight of the ox.
Just the empty
Shrilling of the cicadas.*

When searching-mind comes round again in your life, just look, hear, see, smell what is right here, right now. When suffering arises and conditions are seen to never satisfy, you recognize the movement, the stirring within of the true heart-mind. You know, then, to keep still, to settle in zazen, to become open and curious. Investigate! Buddha Mind is calling Buddha Mind. Look no further! When the cicadas rub their legs together, the enlightened mind is raised! ■

Zen Programs at Great Dragon Mountain

Face-to-Face Meeting Schedule

When she is on campus, Roshi will offer Face-to-Face meetings for members Wednesday evening, Friday dawn, and Saturday and Sunday mornings during scheduled zazen. Members of the Teachers Circle will offer Face-to-Face meetings on Saturday and Sunday mornings for members and non-members. Their specific schedules will be posted in the weekly Programflash.

Dharma Training Fund

Through the generosity of the Sangha, the **Dharma Training Fund** is available to supplement program fees. No serious practitioner is ever turned away for lack of funds. If you wish to take part in a particular program, please do not let financial difficulties keep you from attending. Inquire with Senshin for an application. Do not miss any opportunity to practice the Dharma!

Zazen Programs

See the schedule and calendar sections of our website at www.zcla.org, for the daily program schedule and for additional program details and updates.

☎ – Please register in advance on the sign-up sheet in the Sangha House or through email to programsteward@zcla.org.

* – Zendo remains open for non-participants.

Growing A Plum Blossom Sesshin, Tuesday, May 22, 6:00 p.m. - Saturday, May 26, 10:00 p.m. Led by Roshi Egyoku. During this sesshin, Zazen is the teacher. The schedule is spare: Just Zazen, Just Walking, Just Eating, Just Resting - breath by breath, step by step, bite by bite, moment by moment. We will look directly at the conditioned mind and taste the freedom of forgetting the self. We will grow a plum blossom with the raw materials inherent in each of us, which is all we ever need to awaken. There will be **no** Dharma Talks, Interviews, Oryoki-style meals, or Samu. **Minimum commitment is one full day of sesshin. Deadline to register: Tuesday, May 15.** A fee of \$25 will be added after Tuesday, May 15, for any late registrations, schedule changes or dropping out (with rare emergency exceptions). **Housing is limited and not guaranteed. First come, first served.**

Zazenkai.* Friday, June 8, 6:30 p.m. to Saturday, June 9, 5:00 p.m. Led by Roshi Egyoku. Everyone is encouraged to come to this silent and restful day with zazen, service, work, meals, Dharma Talk, and face-to-face meeting. The schedule is similar to a day of sesshin. Open to everyone. Fee: \$40; \$75 for nonmembers. Housing fees additional. ☎

SAVE THE DATE: Summer Sesshin, Sunday evening, July 22, to Saturday, July 28.

Precept Practice

A **Day of Reflection** on the Zen Bodhisattva Precepts will take place on **Saturdays, May 19 and June 16, from 8:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.** Open to everyone.

May 19 will be led by Mukei Horner on the Three Pure Precepts;

June 16 will be led by Kaizen Venners on Precept #4: The practice of not lying.

Atonement Ceremony, Thursday, June 14, 7:30 p.m.

During this ceremony of Renewing our Vows and Precepts, we each have an opportunity to bear witness to our conduct in thoughts, words, and actions. Everyone is welcome to participate. Those who have received the Precepts are asked to attend on a regular basis. Sensei Shingetsu will officiate.

Classes and Workshops

SAVE THE DATES! Our second abbot, **Roshi Bernie Glassman**, will be returning in July to give a talk on **Thursday evening, July 12**, and to lead a day-long workshop, "The World As One Body," on **Saturday, July 14**. Watch for more information on our website!

Introductory Zen Practice Classes. Our introductory Zen practice program includes beginning meditation instruction (ZP 1 and ZP 2, offered weekly) as well as a full day of practice at ZCLA (ZP 3, offered monthly). For information on times and dates for these programs, see the "beginners" section of our website at www.zcla.org.

Mother's Day Circle, Sunday, May 13, 10:30 a.m. - 12:15 p.m. Co-facilitated by Sensei Shingetsu and Enju Katz. A wonderful opportunity to celebrate mothers by

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sharing memories of our mothers, as well as our own experiences as mothers. Please bring a photograph to put in the circle center, and, if you wish, a flower or other token to place in front of the photo. Everyone is welcome.


Class Series On The Ox Herding Pictures, Thursdays May 17 and June 21. In April, Roshi EGYOKU initiated a series of monthly classes on “The Ox Herding Pictures: The Journey of Practice.” The series continues on the third Thursday of each month from 7:30 to 9:00 p.m. The Ox Herding pictures and accompanying verses, which date to 12th Century China, depict the ten stages of our individual journey to awakening. In addition to the traditional interpretation, we are also exploring the stages in terms of a collective journey to awakening. We will use the original Chinese-style *nanga* ink brush paintings by the late Sensei Gyokusei Jikihara, a National Treasure of Japan and calligraphy master and Zen Obaku School teacher, who painted these for ZCLA in the early 1980s. The series will continue until we complete the Ten Stages. The classes are \$15 each. ☎

Father's Day Circle, Sunday, June 17, 10:30 a.m. - 12:15 p.m. Co-facilitated by Shogen Bloodgood and Earth-Mirror Corcoran. A wonderful opportunity to celebrate fathers by sharing memories of our fathers, as well as our own experiences as fathers. Please bring a photograph to put in the circle center, and, if you wish, a flower or other token to place in front of the photo. Everyone is welcome.

Receiving the Precepts (Jukai) Series Tuesdays: 7:30 to 9:00 p.m., June 12 and 19

The Jukai series classes are being offered at ZCLA, led by Sensei Daishin, and at the Valley Sangha, led by Sensei Shingetsu. This two-class series is a prerequisite for those who wish to receive the Precepts. Class topics include the Lineage, bowing practice, the Jukai Ceremony, the Rakusu (the Buddha's robe), and the mudra of Gassho. Tuition: \$70 for members; \$120 non-members. ☎

Rakusu Class Series, Saturdays June 23, June 30, July 7, August 4, led by Deb Faith-Mind Thoresen. Faith-Mind will lead this four-class series that will guide participants through the process of dyeing and then sewing a rakusu. Watch our website and weekly emails for additional information! No fee, but dana is requested. ☎



We now maintain a page on Facebook! Go to facebook.com/zencenterla to see what is going on! And if you are on Facebook, you can “like” it and receive regular updates in your news feed.



Zen Practice 4: Basic Practices at ZCLA

“Basic Practices at ZCLA” is a series of four classes that can be taken in any order. They are open to everyone who has already taken ZP3, and there is no fee for the class series. Classes are normally offered on the second Sunday of each month. (Upcoming dates are indicated below.) Please contact the office to register or sign up on the Sangha House bulletin board. ☎

Class schedule:

8:15 a.m. Registration in the Sangha House

8:30 a.m. Service in the Buddha Hall

9:00 a.m. Zazen in the Zendo

9:45 a.m. Class with the instructor in the Buddha Hall

BP 1: Forms of Practice (May 20)

This class covers the forms of practice at ZCLA, including a review of the basics of zazen and the postures of the body, breath, and mind; the practices of breathing, shikan-taza, and koan; zendo procedures; the role of dokusan/interview; the teacher-student relationship; and circle practice at ZCLA.

BP 2: Service, Liturgy and Lineage (June 10)

This class covers our temple and teaching lineage. Topics include 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.

BP 3: Everyday Life as Practice (July 8)

This class explores the Three Treasures and Precepts as a point of reference in everyday life activities, including work, family, relationships, and ordinary life tasks. The main point is the inherent practicality of the teachings.

BP 4: ZCLA's Organizational Mandala (August 12)

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 its components), ZCLA's Mission and Vision statements, Core Values, and the decision-making structure of ZCLA. ■

Your Gifts are Received with a Heartfelt "Thank You!"

Please contact Dharma-Joy (dharma-joy@zcla.org) if you know of bodhisattvas to appreciate. Have we missed anyone?

To our cooks and snack coordinators: **Penelope Luminous-Heart Thompson, Katherine Senshin Griffith, Cameron Jikaku Large, Lynda Jikai Golan, Pam Smith, Tim Zamora, Gary Belton, Cassie Riger, Gemma Cubero, Dan Hegarty, Jane Chen, Roberta Brehm, Carla Schmitt, Susanna Knittel, and Janet Akpobome,**

Co-Tenzo Coordinators **Jonathan Levy and Miguel Rojas** for their tireless efforts to keep us well fed;

Hannah Seishin Sowd and Diane True-Joy Fazio for their tenzo efforts during the March Introduction to Sesshin;

Sensei Pat Shingetsu Guzy for leading the Introduction to Sesshin, and to **Senshin, Tom Dharma-Joy Reichert, Deb Faith-Mind Thoresen, Andy Mugen Handler, Tom Yudo Burger,** and everyone else who helped prepare for and conduct the sesshin;

Susanna Knittel for council practice training for the Residents Circle and Health Circle;

Denise Acosta for making the cake for our Buddha's Birthday celebration;

Dharma-Joy and Darla Myoho Fjeld for coordinating Shared Steward Circle gatherings;

Yudo for tenzo support for the clowning workshop and bunny-hop ceremony;

Ty Jotai Webb for tech support for Moshe Cohen's talk and slide show presentation;

Bob Gido Fisher for his amazing birthday cake for Moshe Cohen—"Don't Pull";

Jane Chen for clowning workshop support;

Tara Jiho Sterling for Precept Class support;

Scott Smith for book donations;

John Plum-Hermit Swanger and George Mukei Horner for the digital scans of the Ox Herding pictures;

Plum-Hermit for preparing the space for, and then hanging, the Ox Herding Pictures in the Sangha House;

Plum-Hermit, Jotai, Deb Faith-Mind Thoresen, and Katherine Senshin Griffith for help organizing the Ox Herding classes;

Luminous-Heart, for facilitating the drafting of the revised policy for former inmates' participation at ZCLA, along with group members **John Heart-Mirror Trotter, DeWayne Gojitsu Snodgrass, and Tom Pine-Ocean Cleary;**

Pat Way, Jotai and Diane Enju Katz for coordinating parking for the Ox Herding Class;

Luminous-Heart for coordinating the Sangha reading of Walt Whitman's *Song of Myself*, and readers **True-Joy, Sensei John Daishin Buksbazen, Ellen Reigen**

Ledley, Luminous Heart, Roberta Brehm, Jikai, Senshin, Shogen, Patti Muso Giggans, Jeff Hirsch, Gemma Cubero, and Maggie Rowe;

Enduring-Vow for stewarding the Day Manager program and **Kaizen, Shogen, Luminous-Heart, John Plum-Hermit Swanger, Ando, Faith-Mind and Ty Jotai Webb** for serving as Day Managers;

Jotai for helping to administer the Non-Violent Communication classes;

Burt and Bonnie Myosen Nadzam for editing and proofing the *Water Wheel* under short deadlines, and **Heart-Mirror** for helping produce and mail the *Water Wheel*;

Gary Belton and Reigen for leading recent Dharma Chats;

Ven. Jawoo Sunim for her visit, Dharma Talk, and friendship; and finally

We say "See ya" (and not farewell) to ZCLA resident **Andy Mugen Handler**, who is leaving Los Angeles for ... ? The list of his activities is too long for our "Rites of Passage" column, but here are only a few of the many ways he supports our community: Chiden Co-Coordinator, Disaster Preparedness Co-Steward, Grounds Group Member, Health Circle Member, Parking Circle Member, Recording Group Member, friend and laugh partner.

Thank you!!! ■

ZCLA Affiliated Sanghas & Sitting Groups*

The Laguna Hills Sangha (CA)
coordinated by Helen Daiji Powell

The Lincroft Zen Sangha (NJ)
led by Sensei Merle Kodo Boyd

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

The Ocean Moon Sangha (Santa Monica, CA)
led by Sensei John Daishin Buksbazen

The San Luis Obispo Sitting Group (CA)
coordinated by Mark Shogen Bloodgood

The Valley Sangha (Woodland Hills, CA)
led by Sensei Patricia Shingetsu Guzy

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

Contact us at info@zcla.org for information.

* Affiliated groups are led by Dharma Successors of Roshi Egyoku or coordinated by practitioners actively practicing at ZCLA with a teacher. Those interested in leading a ZCLA-affiliated sitting group may apply to the Teachers Circle.

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

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. **Our core values** are available upon request or on our Web site, www.zcla.org.

Founding Abbot: Taizan Maezumi Roshi
Abbot 1995-1999: Roshi Bernard Glassman
Abbot: Roshi Wendy Egyoku Nakao
Staff: Mary Rios, Business Manager; Katherine Senshin Griffith, Program Steward; Tom Yudo Burger, Guest Steward; Deb Faith-Mind Thorsen, Grounds & Membership Steward; John Plum-Hermit Swanger, Development Steward.
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**ZCLA Great Dragon Mountain
Buddha Essence Temple**
923 South Normandie Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90006-1301

Address Correction Requested

Residential Training Opportunity

Would you like to have a 30-second commute to the Zendo? To live amidst beautiful buildings and grounds as part of an intentional community of practitioners living together to experience collective awakening and wisdom? We currently have a studio apartment available for a student interested in practicing and living as part of our resident Sangha. Contact Buddha Hand Circle Steward Ando Martinez (rosammmm1120@gmail.com), or Senshin in the office (info@zcla.org or (213) 387-2351).

Dharma Training Fund Appeal

Each spring, we send an appeal to everyone to help replenish the Dharma Training Fund. Your donation to the Dharma Training Fund supports individual practitioners in the introductory classes, sesshin, and residencies. It also supports our collective awakening by helping make community events possible, such as visiting teachers, Non-violent Communication Workshops and Mr. YooHoo's Sacred Mischief Workshop. Please give generously!

