# Wind Bell

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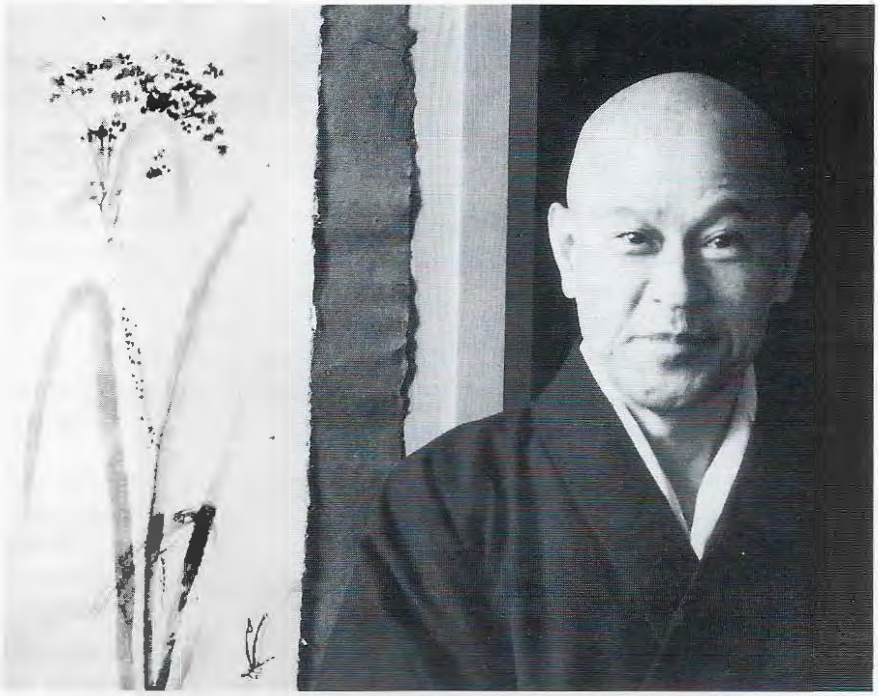
## IN MEMORIAM: BOB BONI

Our good friend and supporter Bob Boni died unexpectedly of a heart attack last June. Bob took many powerfully expressive photographs, which he good-heartedly shared with Zen Center, including the well-known photo of Suzuki Roshi which is on the back of *Zen Mind, Beginners' Mind.* His photos have often graced the cover of the *Wind Bell,* including one which we picked out for this month's issue in his memory.

Those of us who worked with him remember Bob's warm-hearted and compassionate nature and his easy generosity with his time, facilities, and photographs in helping Zen Center and Zen Center's editors and photographers. Out of his love for Suzuki Roshi and Zen practice he offered whatever resources he could to benefiting other beings without seeking recognition. Through his photographs we continue to be touched by what touched him.

We extend our boundless gratitude to Bob, and also our kind sympathies to his widow Caterina, and to their children and grandchildren. Caterina expressed that she would welcome calls or visits from anyone at Zen Center.



## USING VARIOUS STONES

67/09/08 B

Shunryu Suzuki Roshi

Tonight I want to give you what I feel is a correct understanding of Buddhism or Zen. In a word, Zen is the teaching or practice of seeing *things as it is,*[1] or accepting things as it is, and of raising things as they grow. This is the fundamental purpose of our practice and the meaning of Zen. But it is, actually, difficult to see things as it is. You may say you are seeing things as it is, but actually you do not see things as it is. I don't mean that it is a distortion of sight, such as when something of one shape looks shorter than something of another shape. I mean that as soon as you see something, you already start to intellectualize it. As soon as you intellectualize something, it is already not just what you saw.

When I was young, I wanted to practice true practice, and I wanted to know what the way-seeking mind is in its true sense. I thought that to do something

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[1] Suzuki Roshi uses the term "things as it is" in the same way that Master Joshu uses the terms "*mu*" and "*u*" (non-existence and existence) to mean absolute existence before the division of seamless reality into existent and non-existent.

*Stone steps leading from Cabarga Creek to Suzuki Roshi's rock garden at Tassajara*

good might be the way-seeking mind, so I got up very early and washed the toilet and sink before the others got up. I thought that would be a very good thing to do. But while I was doing this, I was afraid someone would see me. I wanted to do it just by myself without being noticed by anyone else. "If someone sees me, that will not be pure practice," I thought. But, before they saw me, I was already going wrong in my mind. I asked myself whether I liked doing it without being noticed by anyone, or whether I wanted it to be known by someone else. "Why am I doing something like this?" So, in a way, I couldn't accept my way-seeking mind. I was not so sure of the purity of my way-seeking mind.

When I saw a lamp lit in one of the rooms, I hid myself. I thought that someone had gotten up already and might come down. It seemed as though I was at least trying to do something good with a pure mind. But my mind was not so pure.

My mind was wandering about. I couldn't make my mind pure, and I was at a loss for what to do. I suffered a little bit, and I thought and thought and thought about what I should do.

One day when I was listening to a psychology lecture, the teacher said, "It is impossible to catch our mind exactly. It is especially impossible to know exactly what we have done. The mind which acted some time ago, the mind which belongs to the past, is impossible to catch. And even the mind which is acting right now is impossible to catch." So I thought, "No wonder it is so difficult for me to understand my mind," and I gave up trying to be sure of my way-seeking mind. Since then I have done things without thinking that I did them just because they were good. And, at the same time, whether or not people saw me was not my problem anymore.

So when you want to see, or be sure of your mind, you should realize that you cannot catch it. But when you just do something, and your mind is acting as it is, that is how you catch your mind in the true sense. Anyway, it is rather difficult to see things as it is because seeing things as it is is not the activity of our sight or eyes. This is why we put emphasis on practice. To do something without thinking is the most important point in understanding ourselves. Since it is difficult to see things as it is, we should just practice our way.

People may say, "If the purpose of Zen is to see things as it is, then there is no ueed to practice." That is the big problem. I think that in your everyday life your root practice may be to raise flowers or to grow things in your garden. That is, I think, the best practice. When you sow a seed, you have to wait for the seed to come up. And if it comes up, you have to take care of it. That is our practice. Just to sow a seed is not enough. To take care of it day after day is very importaut for the good gardener. When you build a house, your work is finished. If someone has written a book, that is enough. But for a gardener, it is necessary to take care of the garden every day. Even though you have finished making that garden, it is necessary to take care of it. So I think our way is nearly the same as making your own garden, or raising some vegetables or flowers.

Each seed, or each plant, has its own character and its owu color. If it is a stone garden, each stone has its own character. A long stone has a solemn, profound feeling; a rouud one expresses perfection; a square one expresses some rigidness or feeling of austerity. If it has moss on it, it has some deep, profound, mystical spirit to it. Those are the individual characteristics of each thing you use in your garden.

People may say, "Whatever we do, that is zen," or "I am seeing things as it is." They usually see things one by one, but that is uot enough. You may say you see things as it is, but you are just seeing each object and each object's characteristics.

It is necessary for a gardener to make his garden beautiful. If possible, the gardener should express some meaning, or some particular beauty, according to some order. If someone wants the gardener to build a calm garden, the gardener must make the garden accordingly. If he wants a solemn or austere feeling, the gardener makes the garden austere. The gardener has to choose the material and make it austere by contrast, or by association, or by harmony. If there is a sharp, straight, narrow stone, it expresses some mystical feeling. If the stone is this way [making a shape with his hands], it expresses calmness or peacefulness. And these two shapes are in contrast. But a round stone will be harmonious with every other stone. It goes perfectly with any kind of form. A stone which has a wide base expresses a stable feeling. This stone is in contrast with a massive stone, and a long, upright stone and a massive stone are in order. You cannot make a beautiful garden if you just arrange the stones in order. So you should use some stones which are in contrast with the stones you're using.

The way to create harmony is to have some rules. We may have many colors, and they may be in harmony or contrast. If you arrange the six colors in order, starting from red, and going to orange, yellow, green, blue, and violet, that is the color order. If you use red and yellow together, that is harmony. And if you use red and green, that is contrast. By following those rules, you will accomplish your purpose, and you will have a beautiful garden.

So just living however you like is not the way. If you want to live the way, you should follow some rules. If you want to live, in the true sense of the word, in relationship with others, and in relationship with the "you' which has been living in the past, and which will live tomorrow, there must be some rules. Although it may look like there are no rules, actually there are strict rules. This point is also emphasized in Zen. Zen is not just personal practice, and our enlightenment is not just personal attainment. When we attain enlightenment, everything should be enlightened. That is the rule of enlightenment. When we find our position in this moment, we say that we attain enlightenment. And when we live accordingly with other beings, we say that we attain enlightenment.

If you think enlightenment is just a personal experience, this idea is like collecting only square stones or only round stones. If someone likes beautiful stones, in which he can see some unusual blue or some unusual white, he will keep collecting the same stones. But with so many of the same stones, you cannot build an interesting garden. You should use various stones. Enlightenment is the same. If you attach to some particular enlightenment, that is not true enlightenment. You should have various enlightenments. And you should experience various experiences, and you should put more emphasis on relationships between one person and another. In this way, we should practice back and forth, according to the position in which we find ourselves.

This is the outline of our practice and how you attain it. If enlightenment is just collecting, or just being proud of a kind of experience, that kind of experience will not help you at all. And if that were enlightenment, there would have been no need for Buddha to strive hard to save people after he attained enlightenment. What is the purpose of wandering about the dusty road of illusion? If attaining enlightenment is the purpose of zazen, why did Bodhidharma come to China from India and sit for nine years on Shaolin Mountain? The point is to find our position moment after moment, and to live with people moment after moment according to the place and the circumstances.

I wonder if I was able to express myself, and if you understood what I said. Will you ask me some questions?

Q: Can you put too many stones in your garden?

R: We should forget them, one after another. At the same time, it might be better to give them away after we enjoy them.

Q: Could you please try to summarize, again, the idea of true teaching?

R: The true teaching is to accept things as it is and to raise it, or let it grow as it goes. I understand the purpose of our practice in this way. We do it by living on each moment in the right position, by giving things some nourishment, day by day, when they want it. To understand what people want, you should be able to talk with them. That is Zen. Do you understand?

Q: Thank you, I think I uuderstand now.

R: I should not talk too much. I should summarize. Alright: And at the same time, I want to correct any misunderstanding of Zen. Just doing whatever you like is not Zen, and is not Buddhism. We call it *jinen ken gedo.* [*Jinen* = spontaneity; *ken* = *darsana, drsti*, view; *gedo* = non-Buddhist religion or philosophy. *Jinen ken gedo* means the view of a life of naturalism, such as Rousseau had.]

Q: You said that after you plant the seed, then you have to wait for the seed to come up. Does the gardener do anything while the seed is coming up but before it sprouts?

R: Yes, the gardener gives it some water and works it every day. He or she is very busy, day by day.

Q: Should the gardener build his garden the way he wants it, or the way other people would like it to be built?

R: Some gardeners should build according to what has been ordered. But one may build a garden just for oneself.

Q: Why did you chose a garden as an example?

R: Because I like them; I understand them.

Q: What happens if you don't follow the rules of order?

R: Actually, it is not possible to not follow order or rules. But if you do not know how to follow the order, you will not be successful in your work—you cannot do anything, actually. It will be a waste of labor and time. But the more you work on it, the more you will have intuition to help you follow the rules. Actually, it is not possible for us not to follow any rules. Even though you may look like you're not following any rules, in fact, you are following rules.

Q: You said that even though it doesn't look like it, we're always following the rules whether we know it or not. Through practice, do we get to a point where we can pick which rules we are following more than we can now?

R: Yes, that is practice, you know. So that is why we should practice our way back and forth.

My practice should not be just giving lectures to you. I should sometimes listen to you. We have to change our positions in our practice. That is very important.

Q: If a lot of insects come in and start eating up the garden, or if there's a hail storm or a frost, what do you do then?

R: Right at that point it is necessary to follow some rules. And you should have some purpose. We say *gan* [*pranidhana*, vows to some particular end]. *Gan* means to have some purpose. For Buddhists, to save all sentient beings, even though it is not possible to save them all, is our final desire. Our effort should be pointed in that direction. So if the purpose of growing your garden is to help hungry people, you should protect the plants from hail and insects.

There should be some purpose, or else we cannot live. To live means to have some purpose. And that purpose is sometimes not complete, or not wide enough. Everyone works for someone. Even a thief will be kind to his wife, or at least to himself. But he is not being kind enough to his neighbors. That

is why he can steal things from them. So we should have some ultimate desire for which we strive.

We say, "Even though the truth is incomprehensible, we have to study it completely." That is not possible, you know. One after another, we'll find some new theories, or new truths, also in science or physics. So it is not possible to reach the final, ultimate truth. Even so, we continue our effort. Even though being friendly with each other will not be possible, we should strive to be friendly with each other. Even though our evil desires are limitless, even though, one after another, we have evil desires, we should strive for realization and freedom from them.

Those are a Buddha's ultimate desires. Before you practice our way, which is knowing this truth and knowing reality, whatever you see looks pointless. But once you start practicing with those four noble desires, [Bodhisattva vows] you will understand that everything is practicing our way. Even insects and animals and gophers are one in striving to attain our way.

*Suzuki Roshi's garden at Tassajara*

## DEVOTED TO THE DHARMA

### An Interview with Yvonne Rand
### by Barbara Wenger

*Note: The editors of the* Wind Bell *have wanted for some time to acknowledge Yvonne Rand, for her long-term contribution to the growth and development of Zen Center; for her deep, abiding commitment to Dharma and to truth; for her strong way-seeking spirit. We've been in each other all along, and Yvonne has helped us flower in ways we would not have flowered without her. Dear friend, thank you.*

*Yvonne is also an example of that rare species, a Zen Center 'graduate,' a Zen teacher who has established herself outside of Zen Center. Sitting, teaching, and working with students; giving precepts; conducting ceremonies, Yvonne has been a companion and inspiration to many people.*

*Barbara Wenger offered to interview Yvonne, and the following excerpts should give readers a feel for Yvonne's good-heartedness and devotion to the Path.—Ed.*

One Sunday morning last August I drove past Green Gulch Farm and the entrance to Muir Beach until I reached a driveway marked Goat-in-the-Road.

Reaching my destination I was warmly greeted with a friendly wave from the garden gate. It was Bill Sterling, husband and spiritual partner of Yvonne Rand, whom I had come to interview. I found Yvonne, past secretary and president, long-time Zen Center board member, in the back gardeu watering young trees and potted plants. During a guided tour of the premises, I marveled at the meditative atmosphere of their living space which included a zendo, Buddha hall, dokusan cabin, Bill's office, aud various sleeping quarters. Together they have created a temple where week long retreats, lectures, ceremonies, other special events, and workshops are held. Yvonne and I settled into the dokusan room for a long visit, some of which is shared below.

Barbara Wenger (BW): Thank you for this interview. Many readers would like to know how you came to Zen Center and met Suzuki Roshi and Katagiri Roshi, and what were some of the important things they taught you.

Yvonne Rand (YR): Well, I studied Buddhism as an undergraduate at Stanford in the early fifties. Before that I was a teenager active in a Congregational Church Yonth Gronp, and studied meditation in the Christian tradition. In 1966 when I met Suzuki Roshi, I realized, "Here is somebody who is actually an exemplar of what I've been studying and reading."

That summer Zen Center was looking at Tassajara as a possible site for a monastery. Dick Baker had discovered Tassajara and taken Suzuki Roshi there. In early fall a large group of Zen Center people also went to check it out. My first husband and my children accompanied me on that weekend. In very close order I met Suzuki Roshi, heard him lecture, and went to Tassajara. Katagiri Roshi was helping Snzuki Roshi then, so I met both Suzuki Roshi and Katagiri Roshi basically at the same time. The following spring I started working part-time as the secretary for Zen Center while still teaching high school math.

Almost immediately I felt very dedicated to Snzuki Roshi. I took his mail to him every day. He would ask me to read it to him, and then tell me what to answer back. I became his secretary, taking him to appointments, driving him to and from Tassajara, and participating in meetings, that sort of thing. I also shared an office at Sokoji with Katagiri Roshi. From the beginning my relationship with Katagiri was very collegial and never really changed. We were always good friends. His affirming way was helpful for me.

Then Zen Center began to fundraise for Tassajara. I plunged into the middle of it all. There was an active membership of abont forty people and an annual budget of $4,000. To buy Tassajara for $300,000 was like saying, "Let's fly to the moon." Every week a group of us would meet in my living room and think of ways to raise money. The next week we'd come together and talk about what we'd done. We were inexperienced and felt our way along. This turned out to be

very effective, especially since over half of the money raised for the purchase of Tassajara came from people who sent donations of $25 or less. The main energy behind all of this was Richard Baker, assisted by many quiet individuals doing background, worker-bee activities. The buying of Tassajara became a reality through benefits of Indian music, and a huge "Zenefit" by many rock and roll bands, including the Family Dog, Jefferson Starship and the Grateful Dead. There were poetry readings and art shows, showcasing the Beat Poets and Artists of the era who had a strong interest in Zen Center. It was a very intense, lively, diverse and exciting time—deeply satisfying.

My connection with Suzuki Roshi deepened significantly by late 1968. Because of my daily contact with him, I was able to watch his life closely and see how he did things. I felt inspired by what I saw. He was impeccable in following the precepts. When he became sick in the summer of 1971, Suzuki Okusan and I were taking care of him just as a continuation of this daily activity. The last six months of his life he personified all those years of Zen practice by showing how to be present with death and dying. It was the biggest teaching of my life.

BW: Can you give an example of this teaching?

YR: Well, he accepted being taken care of with such graciousness. To experience that kind of acceptance and care, without any of the clutter that one experiences in one's family, was wonderful to see. Every day was quite ordinary. He was radically present with whatever happened, particularly as he got sicker and was talking less. His life and my life got more spare. After he died, I realized how extraordinary these "ordinary" days were. He was so fully in the moment all the time, no matter what was happening. Okusan and I would take turns sitting with him sometimes for hours without saying a word. I would give him massages. Once in a while, this skinny arm would come out from under the covers and stick up in the air. After I'd rub the arm it would go back under the blanket. I'd ask if he wanted his back or his neck rubbed, and he'd nod. Then I would help him sit up. All this was a very simple kind of caretaking. He was so thoroughly doing nothing else. There was strikingly no fear in him.

I remember one time he had a bottle of painkillers that his doctor had prescribed. After much procrastination he took one pill. About four hours later he handed the bottle over and said, "Please throw them away. Even though my doctor would feel better if I took them, I don't like what they do to my state of mind."

The doctors who were treating him initially thought he had hepatitis, so Okusan and I went through all kinds of contortions to segregate his food and sterilize his dishes. This went on for eight long weeks. Eventually tests proved he didn't have hepatitis. He had gone to Mt. Zion to figure out what was going on. One day as I

*Yvonne at work with John Steiner in the early days at Sokoji*

walked into his hospital room, two or three doctors were leaving. His lunch was on the table next to the bed, and he motioned me over to sit next to him. With a big grin he mouthed, "I have cancer," and proceeded to feed me. "Now we can eat together again." I was so struck with his ease and his pleasure in being able to eat off the same plate again, no matter what the cause. Being with him through his dying process was an experience of, "This is part of life."

Through all these years I also continued to have a very friendly and warm-hearted relationship with Katagiri Roshi and his wife. His eldest son Yasuhiko and my son Christopher are both the same age and enjoyed playing together. From the standpoint of Zen practice, my experience of Katagiri Roshi during those years was primarily seeing him, and watching him practice with a constancy and whole-heartedness in everything he did. The physical experience of sitting with him, as a developed and powerful practitioner, and watching the way he walked and sat, was inspiring. He was devoted to doing his life wholeheartedly. When he left Zen Center to find his way as a teacher on his own, I was surprised how deep a connection we had even though physically far apart. When he came to Zen Center, Green Gulch, or the City Center, once or twice a year, it was very intense. It was like having food that you could eat once for a whole year.

By the early 1980s I had become much closer to him in a dharma sense, and was relying on him as a guide, support, and teacher.

When an opportunity came for me to travel to India on a pilgrimage in 1985, Katagiri Roshi encouraged me to go. It was winter in North India and a time when thousands of practitioners would come from all over the world to follow in the footsteps of the Buddha. On this pilgrimage I met Tara Tulku, and His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the Tibetans. It was a heart-opening experience.

I knew the Buddhadharma was alive and well. More importantly though, I gained an understanding of myself as a lay householder priest, in the Bodhisattva tradition. With great relief I could wholeheartedly be myself, periodically practicing as a monastic with classical vows and also as a householder priest in the everyday world. I could stop feeling badly because I wasn't "a monk" in the usual sense.

In Tibetan Buddhism there is a systematized arrangement of the teachings, and what meditation is about. It's like being interested in cars, and having someone explain how a car engine works, what happens when the fuel goes, and all that. I remember in particular the series of teachings Tara Rimpoche did on Shamata and Vipassana. Here for me was a clear explication of what we were about. Tara Tulku was positive and supportive about Zen. I never felt any pressure from him to leave the path of Zen.

Tara Rimpoche visited Katagiri Roshi in Minnesota, and they enjoyed each other's company. I felt great support from each of them for my Buddhist practice.

As with Suzuki Roshi, I was very lucky to spend time with Katagiri Roshi while he was sick, sitting by his bed, reading his mail and hanging out with him. It was wonderful to do that. He was a continuous source of inspiration. Taking care of Suzuki Roshi and Katagiri Roshi while they were dying helped define a life-long practice. Since then, people have asked me to care for them while they are dying. Those people too have been my teachers.

BW: Are there other teachings of Suzuki Roshi's that have stayed with you over the years?

YR: I remember one Thanksgiving in 1968, we had a long conversation about what it means to trust someone. It was one of those conversations I wasn't ready to understand, but I remembered it. He was talking about how much you can trust someone, and how to find the middle ground. As a good adult child of an alcoholic family, I knew how to not trust and how to trust blindly, but I didn't know much about the middle ground. There is wisdom in being a little slow and cautious, knowing someone well enough to say, "Well, I can trust you in these

situations, but maybe I need to be a little bit cautious over here in this situation." That was a big lesson for me that I wasn't open to until the years after he died. Each person has responsibility for keeping a ring of protection and sacredness around their practice. One should never give it away. One should never just say, "Oh well, here I am in this wonderful center and beautiful meditation hall, and it must be safe here." Things are not that simple. Maybe it is and maybe it isn't.

BW: What are you doing now?

YR: What I'm doing is actually pretty straight classical Zen practice. I do have a practice that comes out of the Tibetan tradition which compliments and illuminates my home path. I can more fully follow and understand the Zen tradition as a result of the studying I've done with Vipassana and Tibetan teachers. One challenge we have as Americans is to separate out Japanese culture from the practice of Buddhism. Katagiri Roshi insisted that all of his ordained students study the early sutras and know the basic teachings of the Buddha. Suzuki Roshi also did this by example. That was very wise. Coming from Viet Nam, where Zen and Vipassana are practiced and studied side by side, teachers like Thich Nhat Hanh also see different traditions as complementary.

In fact, often when you study the Vipassana tradition, you can begin to see more clearly how the forms in Zen practice aid the cultivation of mindful awareness. Once you know what you're looking for you can say, "Oh, this is why we bow here when we enter the zendo. This is what's going on when we walk in this way."

The systematic presentation of what the Tibetans call the graduated path is a useful articulation of the core fundamental teaching in Buddhism. Studying sutras and the basic practices in the Insight tradition is invaluable. The whole focus on the cultivation of loving kindness—such a central focus throughout so much of Buddhism—is implied but not overt in Zen. Although Suzuki Roshi often spoke of soft-mind, Zen is often marked by a kind of samurai warrior tone which is not so suitable for Americans. Many of us who practice Zen aren't standing on a firm ground of generosity and kindness, because of the kinds of families we grew up in and because of the disintegration of our society. So what we end up with is something more like what Katagiri Roshi called "training your dog." Both he and Suzuki Roshi recognized this and were open to change—more open perhaps than some of us who are their heirs and disciples. We need to keep looking at the spirit of true practice.

I remember Suzuki Roshi saying after Zen Center bought the Page Street building, "I can only teach you how to do what I know in the ways I know." We would stand in the Buddha Hall with these imaginary pillars because that's the way the space was laid out as he knew it in Japan. He trained us the way he knew, so that we would hopefully understand enough to let what was extraneous drop

away, and keep what was essential. I feel dedicated to that. It is ironic perhaps, but I learned so much about Zen from Tara Tulku. He helped me see what is there in the Zen tradition.

I've been very lucky to meet some remarkable teachers and practitioners. In Zen Maurine Stuart, of the Cambridge Buddhist Society, pushed me to start teaching when she invited me to do a sesshin at the Sparks Street Zendo. She also encouraged me to see people formally in dokusan. She pushed me to come out of "kitchen teaching" to teaching in a more formal way. Two other teachers have also been significant teachers for me. One is Bob Aitken Roshi, a kind and supportive friend through difficult times, who helped me ask important questions. The other person is Harada Roshi, a disciple of Mumon Yamada Roshi. He is a great inspiration. We recently did a sesshin with him when he came to Washington State from Japan.

BW: You have weathered difficult times at Zen Center. Do you feel resolved now about the difficulties?

YR: Yes, I do. I spent several years studying as much as I could and whenever I could to figure out what happened. I tried to understand my own piece in the suffering that arose in our community. It was painful, but extremely important work. I don't regret it at all. I've come out of that much stricter about certain kinds of things. And finally a little bit clear about the hazards of the teaching role.

BW: What kinds of things?

YR: I'm much stricter about clarifying for myself what I can heal and integrate through dharma practice and what I need to do in other ways. There are certain kinds of work that come out of our cultural base and our family conditioning that we need to do in the context of our own culture. There was a time when doing psychological work was looked upon as abandoning the dharma ship. I don't think that's true at all. Good psychological and emotional work can clear the garbage out of the basement in a way that makes one's practice authentic. Maybe a few people can do that entirely through dharma practice, particularly if they have a skillful and realized teacher. I think for most of us though there is great benefit in doing work in the context of our own culture. I've noticed among some of my friends who are teachers that those who have not done emotional and psychological work have a certain difficulty in teaching. We can't be Japanese. We need to understand what makes us Americans.

BW: What other things have you been doing?

YR: I see about 20–25 students a week individually and do ceremonies for people. I am particularly engaged in a ceremony I do for aborted and miscarried babies. The work I do in individual counseling, and with this ceremony for

children who have died, is the current focus for me in my long-standing engagement with death and dying as a spiritual path.

BW: Would you say something about these ceremonies?

YR: We have no forms, no rituals in our own culture, for acknowledging and taking care of the extraordinary suffering and grief that people feel after they've gone through an abortion, or have had a miscarriage, or had a young baby die. People don't know what to do with themselves. They sometimes carry that suffering for years. You can't heal from something you don't look at. The Buddhist tradition has alot to offer here. Interestingly during these memorial ceremonies, particularly for people going through abortions, the shared grieving becomes a common ground for people with diverse politics. Pro-choicers and pro-lifers rarely get together; yet they can share this experience. It softens some of the agitation and terrible violence that's coming up around the issue. Suffering is a great common denominator.

BW: Yvonne, thank you so much for this visit.
YR: You're quite welcome.

*Yvonne (and her dog) in the zendo at Goat-in-the-Road*

*The beautiful new bathhouse was ready in time for our 1994 summer guests. Phase II of the project will include landscaping, steam rooms and outdoor plunges.*

## REBUILDING THE TASSAJARA BATHHOUSE

When the Tassajara Guest Season opened in May of 1994, amazingly enough the new bathhouse was ready for use. The preceding summer we had discovered that the hillside above the old baths was unstable and could fall and demolish the bathhouse at any time. A great deal of work was necessary to have the new baths ready in just a few short months.

Among the many people who worked on the project, we would especially like to acknowledge Helen Degenhardt for her work on the architectural design, Gene DeSmidt and his crew for their efforts in the construction, and Barbara Kohn who was the project manager. Friends and supporters have been kind enough to make donations to make the construction possible.

The old baths on the far side of the creek had a long and storied history—over a hundred years of warmth in the winter and relaxation in the summer. Stepping onto the familiar arched bridge, one sensed something wonderfully evocative about "crossing to the other shore" to bathe. One could leave one's cares, worries, and fatigue on this shore, cross to the other to be refreshed, and then return to this world.

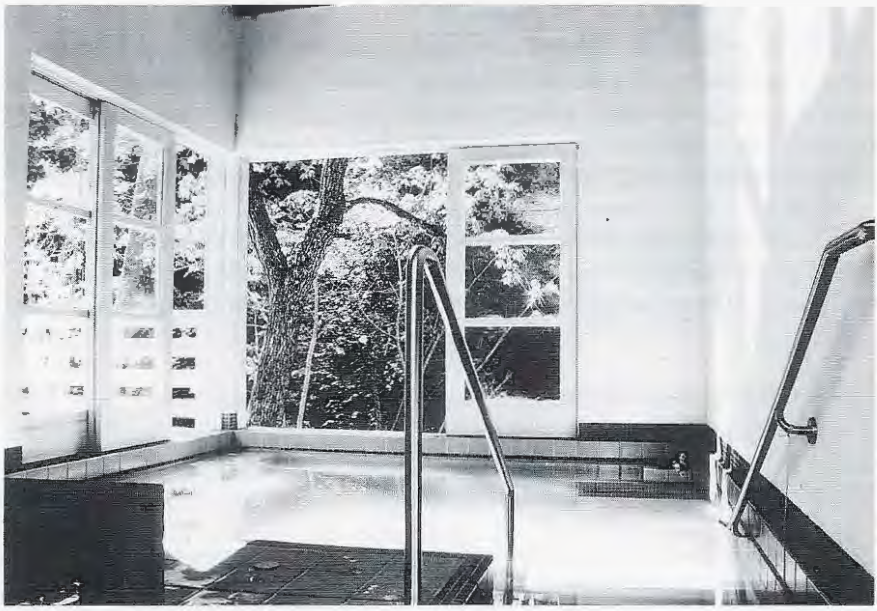
Though it was difficult to imagine that the new setting could be anywhere near as magical, people found that the new baths were in many ways an improvement. Although the area approaching the new bathhouse was rather barren—having yet to be landscaped—once inside, bathers are presented with an expansive, open view of creekside trees and rocks. Whereas previously one had to look above the walls and screening to catch glimpses of branches and sky, here one is more immediately in contact with the natural surroundings. More showers and dressing space are also available.

Phase II construction began this fall, and will include new steam rooms and outdoor plunges, as well as additional decks and benches. The steam rooms, which have a devoted following, promise to be as distinctive as their predecessors, with flooring made from 100-year-old redwood wine vats. Green algae is already being cultured (with corn syrup!) onto the concrete walls in order to create the deep mossy color and texture fondly remembered by many adherents. It remains to be seen (heard) whether the new steam rooms will be as resonant as the old.

PLEASE HELP

Initial construction costs on the new baths came to $530,000, of which we have thus far raised $370,000 from gifts, pledges, and foundation grants. The cost of

*The new men's and women's plunges overlook Tassajara Creek.*



Phase II construction is estimated at something over $100,000, so an additional $260,000 is needed to fully fund the bathhouse project.

The Development Office is actively researching foundation grants and planning special events to help us reach our goal. An art auction is in the planning stages for next fall, which would couple an elegant sit-down dinner with the opportunity to purchase works of art offered by well-known, contemporary painters.

In September Abbot Sojun Weitsman, Michael Wenger, several priests and other Zen Center members attended what we hope to be the first of several fundraising house parties hosted by friends of Tassajara.

Our greatest support continues to come from you—students, members, and friends of Zen Center—and we thank all of you for your warm-hearted, generous contributions. If you have any fundraising ideas, are interested in hosting a house party, or would like to make a donation to the Bathhouse Relocation Project, please call us at the Development Office at City Center. We are always happy to talk with you.

## STORY OF INDIAN BONES

by Gene DeSmidt

Easter time at Tassajara. Early in the afternoon of April 6, I had Bill Steele out at the flats on his John Deere 310 digging up top soil for landscaping in front of the new baths. He had just delivered a scoopful in a ditch and guess what rolled out onto the ground—a human skull! Nobody could believe it. We all stopped work, and I had a meeting with the director. Could this have been a murder victim from the 50s? A lot of garbage was mixed in with the bones. Could this be a lost hiker who died, or could this be an Esselen Indian? What should we do?

Well . . . Teah called the sheriff at about 3:30—left a message and tried to call his car phone. I finally talked to Allan (the sheriff) at 7 that night and described the remains that we had boxed up. He said he would drive in the next day at about 11 A.M.

At about 11:30 A.M. on Thursday, a parade of vehicles swept into Tassajara—the sheriff, county coroner, the homicide division, archeologists, as well as the news media. When I went down to the baths, cars and cameras were gathered and the bones were spread out on the tailgate of a truck.

After many interviews, the sheriff/coroner took the box of bones into their truck. The next day the bones were taken to UC Santa Cruz, where a woman named

Allison Gallowy works—she is a renowned forensic anthropologist who determines the age and disposition of skeletal remains.

Well . . . I got a call on Saturday at about 11 from the sheriff, and he said that Allison had determined that the bones were definitely Native American, and that they were probably over 150 years old. The teeth were flattened from eating acorns, and the thickness and texture of the bone indicated that this was an Esselen Indian, a male 25–30. So the sheriff told me he would call the Native American Heritage Society.

Since the phone at Tassajara is so difficult, it was convenient to have all information directed through my office answering service. On Monday the 11th I received a call from the Native American Heritage Society. Debbie Treadway, who said that according to lineage and descendant records the person most closely related to the Indian remains was a woman named Loretta Oscobar Wyer, a member of the Esselen tribe. I spoke with Loretta that afternoon, and she agreed to come into Tassajara the next day.

Well . . . At about 3:30 P.M. on Tuesday the 12th Loretta Wyer and her sister-in-law Ann Comilos arrived at Tassajara. They had just been at a hearing in Moss Landing concerning another set of remains on a commercial building site, and they both seemed stressed out and a bit wary. Bill Steele, Barbara Kohn and myself met with them at the site where the bones were unearthed. They found another bone there as we were talking. When we took a walk up to Suzuki Roshi's grave and over to the waterfall, she noticed the grave posts and rock markings.

We walked back down to the site and talked a little about what to do with the bones—whether the Esselen tribe wanted a private ceremony or could Tassajara be included. Also whether or not the site should be marked.

We decided to walk down to the lower barn to the painting of the Indian legend of how the Tassajara hot spring started. These two women got a kick out of the artist's rendering of feather head dresses, loin cloths, and body shapes. They also disagreed about what each of their elders said about the hot springs issuing forth from the maiden's hot tears or hot blood. Loretta said that her grandfather told her many stories.

Well . . . As we were walking back by the yurts, Loretta noticed something very large over in the garden 50 feet from us. Suddenly a huge golden eagle with a rabbit in its claws began to fly off as if startled. It dropped the rabbit and flew directly in front of us turning toward the east. Its wingspan was well over five feet. We all looked at each other, compared goosebumps, and stared in disbelief. Did this really happen?

Then, to really ice the cake, as we were walking to the front gate I noticed in the sky a cloud formation that perfectly resembled a skeleton with ribs. Loretta spoke in awe about how she had been having dreams about dinosaurs and skeletons, and that this sky was amazing. They left Tassajara to go back to Santa Clara.

I got a call on Thursday the 14th that Loretta was getting the remains back early Sunday morning from the UCSC. She wanted to find a way to get them back to Tassajara right away. We met Sunday at 9 A.M. at River Rock Cafe in Carmel Valley. After discussing some NAHS paperwork and some additional dreams she'd heen having, we surreptitiously sequestered the skeletal "bone box" from her trunk to mine, and I took off for Tassajara. She had an Esselen tribal council meeting that afternoon to discuss the whole issue of reburial.

Well . . . On Wednesday April 20 I spoke on the phone with Loretta. She said that the tribal council, after hearing Loretta's testimony and a description of the community, decided that the people of Tassajara were of "good heart" and the remains should be reburied there with the Esselen people sharing a ceremony with them.

Well . . . Toady, an Esselen raised in Monterey, arrived at Tassajara on April 27 in the afternoon with his half-blind dog. He had just driven down from Washington state. I had been told by Loretta that they hoped he could carve a totem for the reburial, so I offered an 8" x 8" x 16' piece of old red cedar as a gift. He had no tools and no real carving experience, but he had an incredible open-eyed and disarming demeanor. Toady wandered about Tassajara for three days and found a reburial site up on the overlook trail. At the third switchback there is an outcropping of granite rocks that looked like they were piled up by nature. They are surrounded by seven blooming yucca stalks, all about ten feet high. Just to the north is a flattened knoll protected by three oak trees. From this spot you can see the place where the bones were unearthed as well as all around Tassajara.

Before Toady left Tassajara he left a shopping bag of things he picked up as he wandered through the hills—cedar bark, stones, a shell, feathers, leaves and river sand. He left a note entrusting me to make sure these things went into the grave.

Well . . . Not forgetting that the No Race was scheduled for May 14, I was involved in a push to complete the bathhouse, but I also wanted this discovery of the skeleton to be handled properly. With California Native American Heritage law, a complete shutdown of the job site would not have been unusual! But good fortune, good nature and a genuine spiritual connection made it possible for a simple reburial to take place on May 15.

Early Sunday morning (May 15) Loretta arrived with Charlene, the Wintu shaman. Charlene was about five feet tall, with raven black hair down to her

knees, a cigarette in her mouth and a smile on her face. She walked up to the reburial site and just sat alone for several hours. I and two Esselen men walked up the mountain with Loretta at about 11 A.M. and found the spot to dig the grave—about four feet deep and about three feet in diameter. The Esselens asked that no cameras be present. At about 1:45 P.M. a small party of tribal members (approximately twelve) assembled at the site with perhaps ten people from Tassajara including myself, my two daughters and Teah the director.

Charlene asked everyone to remove all metal objects from their person and to line up to be smudged before entering the circle around the grave. Charlene first "washed" each person with a smoking root from sunflower. Then Wolf (her assistant) "washed" each person with smoke from local sage. We all then formed a circle around the burial hold.

Charlene stood on the inside of the circle facing east. There seemed to be a somber and sad demeanor to the Esselen people. Charlene looked at everyone and said that as she had been sitting alone here, she had seen and heard many happy spirits moving about. That this was a magic place. And that only joy and positive feelings should leave with the people who were here. She had a Buddha-like presence.

Pulling out a small plastic ziplock bag containing some mustard-colored ochre from a sacred spot in Northern California, she walked in front of us pouring a continuous circular line around the grave. She asked that we all move forward to stand on this line, then that we hold hands and form a closed circle.

Well . . . We all stood in silence for perhaps three to four minutes. Then the bag of things that Toady had left was opened. Feathers, shells, leaves, bark and other things were placed on the bottom to line the grave. The lower extremity bones were carefully placed and then the upper body parts. Finally the skull was placed on top of this. (The Esselen used to bury people in an upright sitting position.) Some sand that Toady had found on the river bank was sifted over the top.

Charlene asked everyone to place a handful of dirt over the remains. After this Loretta asked everyone to leave except the family so that they could seal the grave and stack rocks up. A carved totem will be placed here in a year.

Wednesday May 18 just about dusk. I was sitting at the coffee/tea area at Tassajara, relaxing. As I looked into the northern sky beyond the zendo, I noticed a large silhouette. Sure enough, circling and gliding overhead was a magnificent golden eagle. Eight to ten people stood staring up as this great bird disappeared southwest directly over the grave site!

## SEPTEMBER PRIEST ORDINATIONS

Sunday September 25th at the City Center Abbot Sojun Weitsman, with help from Preceptor Zenkei Blanche Hartman, gave priest ordination to Mary Mocine, Michael Wenger, and Cathleen Williams. The following day at Green Gulch Abbot Tenshin Anderson conducted an ordination ceremony for Stuart Kutchins, Carrie Kutchins, and Charles Henkel.

### CITY CENTER CEREMONY

At the ceremony in San Francisco Mary Mocine received the Dharma name of *Houn Zenki*, Dharma Cloud, Total Joy; Michael Wenger is now *Dairyu Zen'en*, Great Dragon, Deep Zen; and Cathleen Williams was named *Baizan Zenshin* or Plum Mountain, Completely Genuine.

Mary was once a radical union lawyer in Berkeley where she began practicing Zen. After having been at Tassajara for several years, she is currently head of the Wheelwright Center at Green Gulch. Known among some of his friends as the epitome of a layperson, Michael surprised many by deciding to become a priest. Continuing in his position as president of Zen Center, he recently confided that he likes the color blue and that his nose is askew. His new book of collected koans is now available (see page 37). Cathleen, who is a psychiatric social worker, has practiced Vipassana as well as Zen.

> You have received Buddha's precepts
> And thus all beings have entered Buddhahood.
> With your new name and clothes,
> With the lineage of Transcendent Wisdom,
> You are a child of Buddha, the Tathagata,
> One with all being.

### ABBOT WEITSMAN SPEAKS ABOUT WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A PRIEST

Discussing with students the meaning of ordination, Abbot Sojun Weitsman spoke about his early training. Being the fourth person ordained at Zen Center, he had few role models, so mainly he had to learn by following Suzuki Roshi, imitating him, and picking up what to do. "Once," Sojun recounted, "I asked Suzuki Roshi what it means to be a priest, and he said, 'I don't know.' Then I went and asked Katagiri Roshi, and he said, 'Hmmmm . . . I don't know.'

"This was how I came to realize that not knowing what a priest was, was very important. My teachers did not tell me very much, and this helped me to step forward, ask questions, and closely observe what to do. 'What is a priest?'—that's

a priest's koan. You may say, 'A priest is a person who wears robes, leads services, and so forth.' Those are the *functions* of a priest, but that is not what a priest is.

"I don't know what a priest is. I hope I never know.

"However," Abbot Weitsman continued, "I can say something about practicing as a priest. A priest does not have any ambition other than to practice wholeheartedly and selflessly, no aim other than to help and support others. The priest's practice is steady and continuous. The priest will not suddenly decide to do something else or stop or slow down or be discouraged easily. Remaining honest and upright, she or he will set a good example for practice.

"Many people practice the way a priest should practice, and yet somehow it is better for them to be lay people. We have *jukai* or lay ordination to acknowledge lay practice. The lay person practices in the world and uses the forms of the world as the forms of practice. A priest is more visible, putting on the full robes, shaving the head, and becoming a highly visible example open to feedback and criticism. Yet one need not be a priest to practice sincerely.

*Seated from left: Mary Mocine, Cathleen Williams and Michael Wenger, the three ordinands in the City Center ceremony.*

*Others participating in the ceremony, from left: Victoria Austin, Jaku Kinst, Blanche Hartman, Paul Haller, Kokai Roberts, Abbot Mel Weitsman, Idilio Ceniceros, and Abbot Tenshin Anderson.*

"When a person is priest ordained, others may look at them as if they are special. This can be a problem. Instead of being put on a pedestal, priests should actually become servants of the sangha. Good priests serve the sangha in any way they can. This service and example provides the glue that holds the sangha together. Being a priest is a humble position and a noble position. Respect needs to be earned. It is not automatic."

## SEWING BUDDHA'S ROBE

A newly ordained priest in the Zen tradition is known in Japanese as *unsui*, literally "cloud water," which is poetically descriptive of the one who 'leaves home' and is without attachments, like clouds or water. During the ordination, the new disciples have their heads shaved by their teacher and receive a new name. They are also given Buddha's robes and bowls and the precepts, as well as the kechimyaku, or "spiritual blood line," a document which traces their lineage from their present teacher back through all our ancestors to Shakyamuni Buddha.

One of the robes which the new ordinands receive is an *okesa* which they have sewn themselves. In Sanskrit this is known as the *uttarasangha* robe. Abbot Tenshin Reb Anderson explains that *uttara* means "covers"—"the robe that covers the sangha" or "the sangha which covers the person." The first ordinands at Zen Center were given okesas made in Japan. Then we began sewing our own, although the first okesas sewn at Zen Center were largely sewn by the wives and girlfriends of ordinands. When Baker Roshi became abbot of Zen Center, he invited Joshin-san to teach us the traditional way of sewing rakusus and okesas.

The pattern of overlapping seams in an uttarasangha robe is quite ancient. Often considered emblematic of rice fields, this design is traced back to a time when Shakyamuni was said to be looking at a rice field and confided to Ananda that the rice paddies and foot path made a lovely pattern. Although this conversation may be more legendary than factual, it seems likely that the rice field design did indeed originate in the source country, India, since Vietnam, Tibet, China, Korea, and Japan all use the same pattern.

The question, "What is Buddha's robe?" has long absorbed sewing teacher Zenkei Blanche Hartman, who has helped make okesas and instructed sewers for every ordination held at Zen Center since the early seventies, when she worked with Joshin-san. "Whoever is sewing the robe," Zenkei says, "takes refuge in Buddha with each stitch, and since there are thousands of stitches in the robe, it's like the protection . . . the wrapping . . . the refuge of Buddha."

*"Namu Kei Butsu"*—"I take refuge in Buddha"—is the phrase chanted with each stitch. Zenkei explains that, " 'Kei' has the meaning of throwing yourself in

without reservation. Just as the needle plunges into the cloth, one can wholeheartedly plunge into practice. This is how my teacher Joshin-san worked and how she taught the sewing of Buddha's robe. She had the most wonderful spirit of throwing herself wholeheartedly into her life's work."

Zenkei recalls that an art dealer once invited Joshin-san to see slides of a collection of antique okesas which he had acquired. When his invitation to view the okesas was translated, Joshin-san was deeply shocked. Believing that every okesa was the *whole body of Buddha*, she found it incomprehensible why anyone would want a collection—a collection!—of okesas.

After having sewn Buddha's robe for more than twenty years and often having helped put the robe on ordinands during the ceremony, this year Zenkei Hartman was invited to participate in the City Center ordination in a new way. Abbot Sojun Weitsman asked her to actually give the okesa to her student Cathleen Williams. Zenkei found that, "Shaving the head and giving the okesa were more moving to me than my own ordination. It meant a great deal to me, even though I still cannot say what it is."

## ORDINATION AT GREEN DRAGON TEMPLE

> Good women and good men, the source of mind is still, the ocean of Dharma is profound. Those who forget this are sunk for ever. Those who realize this are liberated on the spot. Traveling the path of Buddha, one must be in the state of renunciation. This is not for renunciation itself, but for the sake of realizing the Way. This form is common to all Buddhist Orders, a criterion for attaining freedom. To make body and mind one with the Way, nothing is better than renunciation.

With these words, Abbot Tenshin Anderson introduced the part of the priest ordination ceremony when the heads of the ordinands are shaved as a symbol and enactment of renunciation and entry into a new life. Stuart Kutchins was given the name *Anbo Kaika*, Peaceful Garuda, Stream of the Precepts. Carrie Kutchins' new name is *Ninen Koka*, Patient Depths, Phoenix Song. Charlie Henkel received the name *Kokyo Yakai*, Luminous Owl, Midnight Liberation.

Being ordained as a priest is the culmination of many years of practice at Zen Center, but it is also an entry gate to a deeper training relationship with a teacher, an initiation into more formal practice, and a commitment to serving the sangha. Together over thirty years, Carrie and Stuart have raised three children and have two grandchildren, and in the last year have radically changed their lives, moving from Inverness to Green Gulch. Stuart has for now ended his practice as an acupuncturist and doctor of Oriental medicine. Carrie has set

aside her work as a weaver and gardener. Charlie came to Zen Center in 1990 after graduating from Brown University where he majored in art. His works have appeared in past *Wind Bells* and Zen Center newsletters. The three of them are now doing monastic training at Tassajara.

Both of the ordination ceremonies were occasions of great joy for the Zen Center sangha, especially for those of us who have practiced closely with the ordinands, and seen them develop and mature over the years. Their decision to shave their heads, put on Buddha's robes, and become "home-leavers" is profound and far-reaching. Abbot Tenshin Anderson concluded the ceremony at Green Gulch with the following words:

> As always, on occasions like this, in Buddha Lands, in all directions, there is great joy. Those Buddha Lands are shaking in six ways and celestial flowers are falling. Enlightening Beings in those lands, seeing this unusual occurrence, turn to the Buddha and ask, "What is the meaning of this auspicious thing?" And the Buddha says that in the Saha World, in the world of suffering and misery, one woman and two men have just received Buddha's precepts. They have heard discourses on the importance of the precepts and have decided to receive them from someone who has received them already. When the Bodhisattvas in those Buddha Lands hear this, they turn and bow to you, and say, "We are your friends. We will work with you to benefit all beings."

*Setsuan Gaelyn Godwin assists Abbot Tenshin Anderson as he shaves the heads of ordinands at Green Gulch, from left, Charlie Henkel, Stuart Kutchins and Carrie Kutchins.*

## CITY CENTER DEDICATES ACCESS RAMP AT 25TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

On Saturday, November 12, 1994, the City Center, Beginner's Mind Temple, celebrated its twenty-fifth anniversary with day-long activities, which began with the dedication of a new wheelchair access ramp to the main floor of the building. Previously those in wheelchairs were able to enter the downstairs meditation hall, but faced a barrier of numerous steps for main floor entry. Daniel Barnes and Judy Smith delighted onlookers by wheeling right up the ramp and into the world of Zen Center.

Sometimes we're slow making these small steps to accommodate one another, perhaps due to our own handicaps, but once the steps are taken everyone benefits from the growth in camaraderie. It only took twenty-five years!

A morning lecture by Abbot Sojun Weitsman was followed by a joyous ceremony in which participants were pelted with flower petals. After lunch movies of Suzuki Roshi were shown reminding us of his marvelous vitality and beginner's mind. The movies were shown again in the late afternoon, followed by dinner, music, and a variety of personal reminiscences which fondly recalled Suzuki Roshi, Baker Roshi, Issan Dorsey, and Suzuki Sensei, who lived in the building for twenty-four years and in many ways personally embodied the spirit of Zen, caring for the kaisando, teaching tea ceremony, and graciously hosting informal gatherings for tea in her small kitchen.

Commemorative T-shirts with the calligraphy for beginner's mind are still available.


## MEETING IN THE HEART

Furyu Nancy Schroeder

I want to start by thanking my *jisha* (attendant), the person who came in with me today. I said to her before I came in how nervous I was feeling, and when she handed me the incense her hand was just like a rock. I'm very grateful for that.

Long ago in Japan there was a great teacher who's name was Sen no Rikyu. Rikyu was a master of the Tea Ceremony. He is considered to be the founder of Tea, which is practiced even to this day, right here at Green Gulch in our tea house. So I would like to say a few words about the history of tea and Sen no Rikyu's teaching of practice.

Powdered green tea was first brought to Japan in the 12th century by Buddhist monks who were returning from their studies in the great Zen monasteries in China. They found that tea was a wonderful aid to their meditation. Like our morning coffee, it kept them awake. It was pretty good medicine as well, regulating the heart and blood pressure and offering relief for a headache or hangover. One legend even links tea with Zen. Bodhidharma, the Indian teacher who is considered to be the founder of Zen in China, is said to have torn off his eyelids

and thrown them on the ground to keep from falling asleep during meditation. From these little discarded bits the first tea plants grew.

As time went by drinking tea became very popular in Japan, especially among the merchants and the ruling class—basically the people who could afford to buy it. They staged elaborate competitions to judge the quality of the tea and the value of the utensils. So for a time this glittering world of excess which we humans are so fond of creating captured and held hostage the simple tea plant with its medicinal benefits. Meanwhile at the monasteries Zen monks were creating their own rituals for brewing tea. Instead of great banquet halls, they built small huts and covered the floor with grass mats. In one corner of the room they built a sunken hearth, inside of which was charcoal and then on top of that a kettle for hot water. Over time they added a small alcove to the room which served as a kind of shrine, and in that alcove they would place a flower arrangement and hang a calligraphed scroll. The calligraphy was most often done by a Zen teacher and was very dramatic—a saying, maybe by the Buddha or another Buddhist teacher. The function of the scroll was to set the tone for that particular occasion. I recently went to a New Year's tea at my teacher's home in the East Bay. She had hung a scroll which was very beautiful, but I couldn't read it; it was quite wild brush work. My friend told me it was five characters: spring in the forest, a thousand birds singing.

Even with these changes in the tone of the setting of the tea gathering, it was still quite possible for human beings to forget why they had come—to forget what was most important to them. Even one of Rikyu's students who had studied tea for many years asked his teacher, "What precisely are the most important things that must be understood and kept in mind at a tea ceremony? Rikyu answered, "Make a delicious bowl of tea. Lay the charcoal so that it heats the water, arrange the flowers as they are in the field. In summer suggest coolness, in winter, warmth. Do everything ahead of time. Prepare for rain, and give those with whom you find yourself every consideration." The disciple was somewhat dissatisfied with this answer, because he didn't hear in it anything he could consider a secret teaching. So he said to his teacher, "That much I already know," and Rikyu replied, "if you can host a tea ceremony without deviating from any of the rules I just stated, I will be your disciple. So even though there is a wonderful room for us to sit in and all the right utensils and wonderful food and so on, the most important thing, in tea and in life as well, is the deeper meaning that happens between the host and guest, a teacher and a student, a friend and a friend. This meeting happens in the heart.

When I thought about coming here today, I wondered if I would be able to meet you from my heart. I imagined that I couldn't, that I would be too scared, and you would be too many and too far away. Usually on Sundays I sit out there where you are, and I feel perfectly comfortable and quite safe, but today I agreed

to come up here and turn around and face you, to face us. By so doing I feel pretty vulnerable and kind of in awe of this gathering. Then I started to wonder what your responsibility might be—if you have a part in making this occasion come to life. If you thought you had that responsibility, would you still feel so comfortable? Meeting someone with your heart is not so easy.

One time a tea grower invited Rikyu to have tea in his home. He was overwhelmed with joy when Rikyu accepted his invitation. When the day came, the tea grower led Rikyu to the room and served the tea himself. However, in his excitement, his hand was trembling—he dropped the tea scoop and knocked over the whisk—all in all it was a rather poor performance. Another guest, a student of Rikyu's, was so embarrassed watching this man that he turned away. But Rikyu was moved to say, "It was the finest." On the way home the student asked Rikyu, "Why were you so impressed by such a clumsy performance?" And Rikyu answered, "This man did not invite me with the idea of showing off his skill. He simply wanted to serve me tea with his whole heart. I was deeply struck with his sincerity."

*Furyu makes tea while tea teacher Nakagawa Sensei looks on.*

For many years those of us who live at Zen Center have been told by our teachers, by all of our many teachers, that we cannot do this practice by ourselves. However much some of us long to be by ourselves, we come to realize there is just no way. Constantly we are being touched and touching the world around us. We might as well get with the program and fully engage in this giving and receiving that we are doing all the time.

I heard a story some years ago that some of you may have heard as well. An American couple were on vacation in Japan. They had studied Japanese a little bit and were determined not to go to the usual places. When they got to Japan they asked a lot of people and finally heard about a little inn which was way off in the countryside. They found their way there and were very happy. They sat down for a meal and the owner came to greet them, giving them menus which of course they couldn't read. There was another couple eating there, an older Japanese couple, dressed in kimono; They just received their food from the kitchen, and it looked quite delicious. So our friends said to the waiter, "We'll have what they're having." The waiter nodded and bowed, and they watched as he went over to this older couple and spoke to them. Sure enough the waiter picked up their plates and brought them over. Dismayed and embarrassed, the Americans politely finished their meal. So to be the guest completely and to receive wholeheartedly whatever comes to you, and to be the host completely, giving wholeheartedly what goes away—this is our task.

If we can remember what our job really is we can join together in celebration of this remarkable connection. Around here we call this celebration "practicing the Buddha Way." Hand in hand we circle the fire, forming a dance, a rhythm. Quite often we do this dance in this room, together, early in the morning. We sit here and listen to the ocean and wait for the birds to sing.

I used to work in Greens restaurant for several years, for Zen Center. I waited tables there, and after awhile I noticed people didn't look at me when I went to take their orders. Sometimes I would try to get them to: "Hello, how are you today?" But it wasn't what they really wanted to do. I wondered about it. And then I began to notice I was doing the same thing when I went to a restaurant, or when I dealt with a clerk, cashier, or librarian. In a way we made a deal with each other that nobody was really here. We agreed not to really meet. And then I found I was doing that even with my mother and my friends, as though I were saving up a limited quantity of intimacy.

I don't want to give you the impression that I don't do that anymore, because I do. Sometimes it's because I am unconscious, and sometimes it's because I am lazy. I'm just not willing to deal with what's happening. I'm not willing to accept and greet wholeheartedly what is right there in front of my face. That's why I study these matters—why I study Tea and study Zen and anything else I find

that will help. I don't want to miss my life. I want to meet you in my heart. I don't know how it is for you, but I really feel as if I just got here, hardly dry from being hatched, and yet if I look at my body, I'm not a baby; I'm not even a child. There is so much that I don't know and that I don't understand, and yet pretty soon it is going to be time for me to die.

The old Japanese teacher who used to live here, Nakamura Sensei, used to tell her students that each step that you take in the tea room should be taken as though it were your last. And I found I could hold this idea in my mind. Not all the time—it's kind of uncomfortable. If for some period of time I can remember impermanence, then I can actually appreciate how fragile and extraordinary it is to be alive. I can actually feel it. And sometimes, with the power of that remembering, I am able to break tbrough my laziness and my apathy and actually greet what's there in front of me—to ask, "Who are you?" and to wonder, who am I. What is it that we have to do together? How can we help each other? Is there something that needs to be done? Maybe not, but let's do it anyway—let's do it together.

At the beginning of the tea ceremony, the host kneels at the entry way and says to the guests, "I will now make you a cup of tea." The host enters the room and kneels down, placing the various utensils in a particular way on the mat. He or she then bows again and says, "Please make yourselves comfortable." Now this is very funny because in the tea room you are sitting in a posture we call *seiza,* which is basically kneeling with your buttocks on your heels; your spine is straight and your hands are folded in your lap, and for the most part you remain silent. Not only that, this ceremony goes on for a long time. So it becomes clear pretty qnickly that putting your body in this posture is not and will never be comfortable. It took me a number of years to realize that what the host was actually saying was, "Please make yourself comfortable with the situation that you are in," which is a very sweet thing to say. She really was not trying to make things better for me. She didn't expect me to go out and get a chair or to curl up on the floor. Actually she was wishing me well, with full knowledge that what I was going through was not so easy.

In Buddhism we call this well-wishing the mind of compassion. The Bodhisattva knows that life is difficult, and willingly enters that difficulty with others. And then right there in the middle of an impossible situation the Bodhisattva does something possible, like offering her friend a bowl of hot green tea. I don't know exactly why it is, but there are times that bowl of tea is so delicious it almost makes me want to cry. On the other hand, sometimes I think, "There's got to be an easier way." Why don't I just move to Hawaii? Sell real estate for a living. In my closet, as part of my wardrobe, I have a shirt. It is called an aloha shirt, covered with flowers. It's the kind of thing you take on a tropical vacation, and I have had it for years, most of my adult life. I think it is a kind of a totem to the possibility

that there is an easier way. But then I suspect that no matter where I turn or where I go, you are going to be there. Then what are we going to do? Are we going to be friends? I am kind of stuck. Stuck with what is called the Bodhisattva Vow. And that vow is something like, "Nobody gets to go to Hawaii until everyone is completely happy." So will you please hurry up?

The time comes when the guests are finished eating their sweet and their tea, so the host takes the utensils back out of the room, and once again kneels at the entry way and says, "It is finished," and then quietly closes the door. At this point the guests stand up and leave the room, returning to their separate lives. Recently I went to a winter's tea here in our tea house. When it was done, and I was walking home in the dark across the lawn, I became acutely aware of the separation I was feeling from my fellow humans. I began to experience somewhat uncomfortably the intimacy between my senses and the world around me—the light from the stars in my eyes, and the sounds of the little creatures rustling inside my ears. The simple hut and the company of good friends was somehow like a mask that had suddenly been taken off, revealing another side of this relationship which each of us alone shares with the universe, an unscripted meeting in the dark. By the time I got home another friendly mask was in place, and as I put my things away I forgot that I had been afraid.

So I guess the question for me is how much can we stand. Can we bear to face each other and not turn away? Are we actually willing to be known; to wholeheartedly accept one another despite all of our clumsiness and even our cruelty? It is easy to love the tea grower who knocked over the tea whisk, but what about Rikyu's student, the uptight jerk; can we love him? Can we actually remember that we are only meeting ourselves—myself in the form of you and yourself in the form of me? Here is a poem by Dogen Zenji:

> All my life, false and real, right and wrong, tangled;
> Playing with the moon, ridiculing the wind, listening to the birds.
> Many years wasted seeing the mountain covered with snow.
> This winter I suddenly realized that snow makes a mountain."

Thank you very much.

## BOOKS EMERGING

Several books by Zen Center people have been published recently or are in the works. Here is what readers have to look forward to.

### *THANK YOU AND OK*
### BY DAVID CHADWICK

David Chadwick's book *Thank You and OK: An American Zen Failure in Japan* was published in July by Penguin. An excerpt from the book was printed in the previous *Wind Bell.* Another portion of the book appeared in *Tricycle* magazine. David has been busy doing readings from the book, which describes his experiences living and practicing Zen in Japan. David credits his wife Elin for editing work which helps to make the book warm, witty, funny, and moving.

Already the book is in its second printing, and has been receiving positive reviews. David's editor at Penguin had never seen so many effusive blurbs in response to pre-publication copies. Those who have read it have appreciated getting a sense of Japan and Japanese Zen practice, made intelligible by "an American Zen failure." About half the book tells of studying Soto Zen at a temple with Katagiri Roshi, while other parts talk about practice at a Rinzai temple and David and Elin's experiences living in Japan.

### AT WORK ON A BIOGRAPHY OF SUZUKI ROSHI

In the last few months David has embarked on the major task of writing a biography of Shunryu Suzuki Roshi. Already he has interviewed many people in Japan who knew Suzuki Roshi, and begun talking with others regarding their memories of our founder. If you have stories, histories, comments, or backgronnd information about Suzuki Roshi which you would be willing to share, David would be delighted to hear from you. He can be reached at 60A Clark St., San Rafael, CA 94901 or voice/fax (415) 453-1402. He also responds to dchad @ well.com.

*33 FINGERS*
BY MICHAEL WENGER

Also published this summer was Michael Wenger's book *33 Fingers: A Collection of Modern American Koans.* Included are stories about Suzuki Roshi, Katagiri Roshi, Baker Roshi, John Madden, Yogi Berra, Trungpa Rimpoche, Woody Allen, Harry Roberts, and many others. Abbot Sojun Weitsman has written a Foreword. What follows is one of the koans concerning Suznki Roshi.

PERFECT AND YOU CAN USE A LITTLE IMPROVEMENT

CASE
Shunryu Suzuki addressed the assembly. "Each one of you is perfect the way you are, and you can use a little improvement."

COMMENTARY
Sometimes a teacher uses a sharp sword, sometimes a kind hug. Here old Master Shunryu used both a once. Granting way and denying way. Zap!

How can perfection be improved upon, or is it a dead end? Improvement is always running away from where you are. Our teachers were never complacent nor were they flighty.

Can you stand to be perfect? Can you stand to be flawed?
Where do you turn away?

VERSE
The heat of Master Shunryu's heart burns away both faith and doubt leaving a withered tree in the golden wind

*ESSENTIAL ZEN*

Kazuaki Tanahashi and Tensho David Schneider have compiled a book of Zen stories, poems, and sayings, both ancient and modern. A handsome book published by HarperCollins, *Essential Zen* conveys the heart of Zen through its selected passages, including the following:

> A student asked Soen Nakagawa during a meditation retreat, "I am very discouraged. What should I do?"
> Soen replied, "Encourage others."

Kaz Tanahashi was the principle translator of *Moon in a Dew Drop* and has authored several other books including *Brush MInd* and *Penetrating Laughter.* Tensho is the author of *Street Zen,* the biography of Issan Dorsey and is a contributing editor to *Tricycle.*

## JANE HIRSHFIELD'S *THE OCTOBER PALACE*

Jane Hirshfield's new book of poetry was published this year by Harper Collins. Jane was a full-time student at Zen Center from 1974 to 1982, including three years at Tassajara from 1975 to 1978. *The October Palace* is Jane's third book of poetry, and she is also the editor and cotranslator of *The Ink Dark Moon: Poems by Komachi and Shikibu, Women of the Ancient Court of Japan* and editor of *Women in Praise of the Sacred: 43 Centuries of Spiritual Poetry by Women.* Here are two poems from the book:

### Within This Tree

Within this tree
another tree
inhabits the same body;
within this stone
another stone rests,
its many shades of grey
the same,
its identical
surface and weight.
And within my body,
another body,
whose history, waiting,
sings; *there is no other body,*
it sings,
*there is no other world.*

### Under The River

Under the river of the world, the world.
And beneath that palace, a palace—just the same.
From the quarry ledge, children dive
over and over into blue sky;
it always greets them the same,
laughter, then towels, and going home with watery ears.
It sings to them then for hours, hushing the rest—
family, dinnerware, tires spinning by, all stilled.
Open-winged for those moments between world and world,
the rooms leading one to the next,
each linoleum floor marble-cool,
the ceilings stencilled with waterlilies, stars.

*Jordan Thorn loads up a truck with Green Gulch produce*

NEW BOOKS BY ABBOT TENSHIN ANDERSON

Over the years people have asked for copies of Abbot Tenshin Anderson's Dharma talks, which up to now have been available only in the *Wind Bell* and a few other magazines. In response to these requests and in order to make these teachings more readily available, a selection of his Dharma talks, given over the past ten years is now being published in one volume, *Warm Smiles from Cold Mountains.* It will soon be available from the City Center and Green Gulch bookstores (including mail order) and at Tassajara in the summer.

Abbot Anderson is also working on a book on the Bodhisattva Precepts, following the Soto Zen tradition of such commentary. He was inspired to do so through working with Kaz Tanahashi (translator of *Moon in a Dew Drop*) over the past two years, translating the *Zen Kai Sho,* Essence of Zen Precepts, Correctly Transmitted by Buddha Ancestors. The *Zen Kai Sho* is a multi-layered compendium of commentaries on the precepts, based on Dogen Zenji's *Instructions on Teaching and Conferring the Precepts.* The new book is intended to make these important teachings of Dogen Zenji accessible and relevant for present day practitioners of Zen.

## THE GIFT OF LIFE

Laurie Schley Senauke, who nursed the last seven *Wind Bells* to completion, is now occupied nursing her new baby Alexander Dainin, born July 29, 1994. Busy with mothering, Laurie describes her son as a "big, happy guy." *Wind Bells* are not on her mind right now—"it was time to move on," she says—although she continues to do some data-base management work and is also editing Abbot Tenshin's talks on the precepts.

We are grateful for Laurie's careful, concentrated, and caring efforts to give life to the *Wind Bell,* and we will miss her good-hearted, buoyant spirit.

The present issue of the *Wind Bell* is edited by Ed Brown, who is likely to try his hand on at least one more. Rosalie Curtis is continuing to do design and layout.

*The recently-enlarged Senauke family:*
*from left, Alexander Dainin, Alan, Laurie and Silvie Ann*

## THE END OF SUFFERING: A CHRISTMAS KOAN

Abbot Tenshin Reb Anderson

The great teacher Nagarjuna said:

> Without a foundation in the relative truth, the significance of the ultimate cannot be taught. Without understanding the significance of the ultimate, liberation is not achieved.

Without relying on everyday common practices, the ultimate truth cannot be expressed. Without approaching the ultimate truth, Nirvana cannot be attained. Zen stories often indicate the ultimate truth:

> A monk asked Zhaozhou, "In the eon of emptiness is there still someone cultivating practice?"
> Zhaozhou said, "What do you mean by the eon of emptiness?"
> The monk said, "That is when not a single thing exists."
> Zhaozhou said, "Only this can be called ultimate practice."

If I say "this is where not a single thing exists," it sounds like I'm bringing up the ultimate truth. When I bring that up I hope that you have suffered enough in this lifetime to realize that I only dare teach this ultimate truth after you have studied and been relying on the relative truth for a long time. The relative truth is that suffering appears in this world. In this world, you and I are separate, and this clinging to separate existence is the canse of suffering. This is relative truth. The ultimate truth is that there is nobody separate from anybody, that there is not one single thing that exists by itself. I hope when I say that, you don't think it means that there is nothing there. Please understand that "Not a single thing exists," means that there is not a single thing existing by itself, that there is no person existing by herself.

The monk said, "That is where not a single thing exists," and Zhaozhou said, "Only this can be called ultimate practice." The eon of emptiness is a time and a place where things do not exist on their own. Can you imagine a world where nothing appears by itself, where each thing comes up with everything, where everything comes up by the kindness of everything? Everything comes up with the support of everything, and everything that comes up supports everything. Only this can be called ultimate practice. But we rely on the relative truth in order to receive this ultimate teaching. We rely on the relative truth that "I by myself practice Zen." This is practicing relative truth. I myself suffer, you yourself

suffer. We rely on this as our base, and it is there that we receive the teaching that everything is liberated right now and nothing is tied down.

In the realm where not a single thing exists by itself, anything is possible. In the eon of emptiness anything can happen. When things exist by themselves, the possibilities are radically constricted. Only women bear children, and women who are barren cannot. It may not seem to be a problem that only women can bear children. But if we think so, we have not studied relative truth completely. It's painful for us when we can't give birth. That is one reason why we go to war. Although war is horrible and destructive, still, it gives some men access to the radiance and vitality of creation. Barren women may also feel excluded from creation. But women who have children suffer too, if they feel stuck in that situation. This is the realm of relative truth.

In the *Prajna Paramita Sutra* , Subhuti asked Buddha: "From where does a Bodhisattva go forth into the practice of wisdom beyond wisdom?" Buddha said that you go forth from the relative world. If we don't put our foot down fully on the earth, we cannot go forward; if we go forward without really accepting the relative truth we will misunderstand the ultimate.

In the world of relative truth we think that we can't be ourselves. We might think, "I can be creative and think of something almost impossible, but will they let me do it? If I were just myself I would take my clothes off at the airport. But they might punish me, so I can't be myself." This is the relative world. You can be yourself a *little*, but not completely.

In the relative world, if somebody says they have trouble staying awake in zazen and asks me how to stay awake, I may say, "Try getting more sleep, or run around the block before you sit, or have some green tea, or open your eyes. Look at the spot between your eyebrows; look higher on the wall; chant the Heart Sutra; chant the Bodhisattva vows to yourself; consider how little time you have left," and so on. When the grass around my house gets yellow, I go to the garden and get compost to put on it. The little grasses stand up and turn green; they like it. But if there is no compost or if I am too busy, they die. Still I do my best to stay awake, to help others stay awake, to help the grasses grow. This is the relative world, and it's not workable really. You may think it is not so bad. But really it's not going to work out. Pretty soon you are going to see that, if you don't already see it. If you do see it you may have studied the relative world long enough to start practicing the ultimate without becoming misled.

If you study the world of suffering, you will become aware of your lack of faith and practice. You will become aware that you do not really trust this world. If you think that you really trust the world, do you really trust suffering? Don't you have a little problem with it? Don't you have a little doubt? Don't you think a

*Abbot Tenshin Anderson, Zenkei Blanche Hartman and Hoitsu Suzuki Roshi sort through some things Okusan left behind when she returned to Japan.*

little bit that there is something that you can't do? Don't you feel a little limited, a little trapped? Where's the world where you can actually just express yourself spontaneously? Where's the world where you are not an independent agent who is trapped and tied up?

If we have not studied the world where we are trapped thoroughly enough to realize that we are trapped, and we think that we are free, actually we are still in the world where we're trapped. We are just dreaming that we are free and that we can do whatever we want. But we can't. Everything we do in the world as an independent agent is going to cause problems for ourselves and others. If we do not understand this point, we haven't studied long enough to enter the ultimate practice from which we can act spontaneously. When we are no longer acting as independent agents, everything that we do will be harmless and we will see that everybody is supporting us. Everybody does support us in the world where not a single thing exists. We have to experience the world where we are tight, limited and anxious. It's there that we turn and wake up to the world where we spontaneously do the right thing. In the world where there is not a single thing we can just be ourselves. We can just he ourselves when ourself is not a single thing.

Our practice of sitting is a ritual expression of the teaching that you can just be yourself. Just sitting means you can realize the way in any posture. It means you can lie down. It means you don't have to force yourself to sit still. Manjushri gave Buddha a little talk one time and basically what he said was that when a person is just a person, this is what we mean by being awake. After his talk, a bunch of upstanding citizens of Buddha's world came up to Manjushri and said, "You are really incredibly wise, just like your name says; you are like sweetness and light throughout the universe. You are fantastic, the foremost sage." He said, "Oh yeah? Well actually you should call me the utmost exponent of greed, hate, and delusion. You should call me the utmost enslaved suffering being. You should call me the utmost bum. I'm an ordinary person, I'm the foremost of the ordinary."

So the thought crosses my mind, why don't we just disband, sell this Green Gulch property and give it to charity, give it to ordinary people. Why have this zendo? This place is for people who can't quite stand to be ordinary people.

They need a lot of help. Most people in society cannot stand to be ordinary. Manjushri went all the way and became completely an ordinary person. Thus he realized that there is really no such thing as an ordinary person living all by herself. This is called waking up. When someone is having trouble staying awake I can give them some advice. But actually, the ultimate practice is, if you are having trouble staying awake, have trouble staying awake. It's okay to try to stay awake when you are having trouble staying awake. It's all right to be a person trying to stay awake. But before you do anything, first of all be this person, and feel what it is like to he a person who is stuck in this state. Being this person is your ticket, your price of admission into the eon of emptiness. Being this person is the way to practice just sitting.

You don't get to be this person by your own personal power. As soon as you are completely this person, you immediately leap beyond the bounds of this person. One of the things that this person can do is to doubt and resist being this person. A person is capable of doing this. So when we are in some state, if it is not really great we imagine some way to make it better. If it is great we think of ways to protect it; and that's fine. That is the relative world. But we should know that at exactly the same time, there is always one who is not concerned with protecting or avoiding any state. This unconcerned one realizes that everybody is helping him, realizes that everybody is helping him to be irritable or happy or whatever.

We cannot be irritable all by ourselves. Everybody has to help us. We can't go to sleep by ourselves; we can't have a hard time; we can't do anything all hy ourselves. We can't even feel uuloved by ourselves. We can't feel not appreciated by ourselves. We can't experience injustice by ourselves. We also can't experience justice and love by ourselves. Everybody helps us with everything. So the world where we are miserable and irritable and unrecognized and unloved is ultimately

the world where not a single thing exists, because we do not exist singly. Right in our misery we are completely supported and completely loved, and completely free to suffer. If we weren't free to suffer we wouldn't be able to. We cannot suffer unless we are allowed to suffer.

When we are joyfully strolling through the Green Gulch gardens on a sunny day, we might think that we are being allowed and supported to stroll through the gardens, and we might say, "Thank you." But when we are suffering, do we see that we are being allowed to suffer, that we are being lovingly supported to suffer? Very few people think that. Even if we do think that way, we probably take it to mean that others are causing us to suffer. Then we blame others rather than thanking them for their kind support.

In the world where I think that I can do things by myself, then when I suffer I don't say thank you to the people who are around me for supporting me and aiding me in my suffering. I feel bad about my suffering, I feel trapped by my suffering, I feel entangled in my suffering, because I think I can do something by myself. But when I no longer fall for that and I'm just suffering, then I realize everybody is helping me, because I couldn't do this suffering by myself. When you realize that everybody is helping you suffer, that is the end of suffering. The expression of suffering doesn't necessarily go away, but you are liberated; you get the joke. In the realm of not a single thing exists, when you are suffering, you say thank you. You feel grateful. When you are suffering and you feel grateful, this is called the end of suffering.

All of us in this sesshin are intimate with this process. We are all suffering, but at a certain point we start feeling grateful in the middle of the same suffering. What is happening? How does this work? Gradually, by hit and miss, we allow ourselves to be this suffering person. By the act of being this suffering person just as we are, we enter the realm where not a single thing exists, and here we are always grateful.

In the realm of being just as we are, anything is possible. How do we enter this realm of unlimited possibility? By tuning in completely to our limited position in the relative world. We tune in by our body, speech, and mind. Right then, the fact of the way we are actually makes anything possible. The way we are is a momentary fleeting production of the entire universe delivered at this time and place. It seems to be something but it is just a soft, flexible overlay on top of unlimited potential. It's just a fleeting thin film of appearance over infinite radiance. But we must completely tune in to such a phenomenon. We must not look forward to it or shrink back from it. If we don't tune in to it, this thin film becomes an iron door, "bound and double-chained." Even if the body happens to be golden and blissful we still have to tune into that body. Tuning in means you just tune in to golden bliss and stop, you don't tune in and cuddle it. You

just tune in to it being that way, the same as with some crazy, sick, twisted mind or some yucky verbal expression or some painful, sick body. You just tune in to that form. That's it. The practice is not that golden Buddha, it's not that green monster, it's not that sick person, it's not that healthy person, it's not that nice verbal expression, it's not that mean voice, it's not those things. That's not the practice; that's not Buddhism; that's not Zen. Zen is simply that those things are as they are. Zen is the practice of tuning in to the phenomenal present. You need enough faith to tune in exactly, all the way, and not a little less or more.

Whatever we do, there are consequences. If we wear too much makeup there will be consequences. If we don't wear any, there will be consequences. If we shave our heads there will be consequences. Considering the worldly consequences of our actions, we may feel hesitant, hindered and hemmed in. But there is one thing that the world cannot hinder us from, and that is being who we are at this moment. As a matter of fact, this is exactly what the whole world is assisting us in being.

There are many stories about people who do not accept Buddha's compassion and thus do not feel allowed and supported to be just who they are. These people are miserly with themselves and with others. Charles Dickens wrote a story about this, *A Christmas Carol.* In this story, on Christmas Eve, the old miser Scrooge is visited by various ghosts. The first ghost is his former partner, Jacob Marley. Marley is very upset; he isn't a happy ghost, he isn't a mean ghost either. He isn't coming to hurt Scrooge or even to scare Scrooge. He comes to help Scrooge, to tell him how awful it is not to live your life fully every moment.

He comes to tell Scrooge how terrible it is not to practice Zen, the path of compassion for ourselves and others. Marley warns Scrooge that one will be, "captive, bound and double-chained, not to know" that for eons immortal beings have constantly labored for the welfare of this earth and this good may be wasted if we don't do our part of being thoroughly ourselves. He warns that if we don't understand this, there is "no space of regret [that] can make amends for one's life opportunity misused." And he confesses, "Yet such was I, such was I."

Then Scrooge falteringly says "But you were always a good man of business, Jacob."

"Business, business!" Marley cried, wringing his hands again. "Mankind was my business, the common welfare was my business. Charity, mercy, forbearance, benevolence were all my business. The dealings of my trade were not a drop of water in the incomprehensible ocean of my business."

That night, three more terrifying spirits also visit Scrooge. Finally, Scrooge is able to accept their compassion, allowing himself to be himself, and thus unleashing

his own vast potential for generosity, mercy, forbearance and benevolence. Zen is simply the key that opens the door to our vast potential for goodness. It's a bitter key a lot of the time. It means tuning in to what we are, how we think, what we say, and what we are doing with our bodies. We must be thorough; we must thoroughly be who we are in each moment throughout the day without expecting anything for it. We have to do that in order to drop through this little layer of illusion that is blocking us from our unlimited, spontaneous available goodness.

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Tassajara Zen Mountain Center usually offers two three-month practice periods: September to December and January to April, when the Center is closed to visitors. During the Guest Season in the summer months, visitors may come as guests or as students. For more information on the opportunities which are available, please contact the office in San Francisco.

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