You do not need to leave your room.
Remain sitting at your table and listen.
Do not even listen, simply wait. Do not
even wait, be quite still and solitary.
The world will freely offer itself to you
to be unmasked, it has no choice, it will
roll in ecstasy at your feet.

——*Franz Kafka*

Journal Readers

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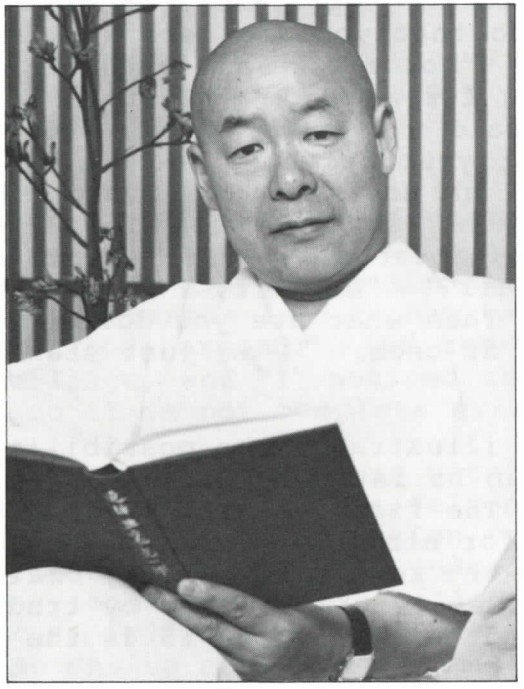
Contents

Nirvana

by Eido Roshi



G. Murrell

Today, February 15, is Nirvana Day according to Mahayana tradition, and so I would like to say something about nirvana. There are many possible interpretations of nirvana, but I would like to speak of three. Let me start with a Zen story.

Once upon a time in China, three monks were traveling together. At one point they noticed a man standing on top of a distant hill, and they wondered what he was doing there. One of them said, "He must be looking for his dog." "No," said the second monk, "it is obvious that he's waiting for

his friend." The third said, "You are both mistaken. The man is out to enjoy the fresh air." They argued for a while and finally decided to go up the hill and ask him. When they came to the top, the first monk asked, "Isn't it so that you are here looking for your dog?" "No, sir," said the man, "I'm not looking for my dog." "Just as I thought," said the second monk, "You are waiting for your friend!" "No, sir," said the man, "I am not waiting for my friend." The third monk, smiling broadly, asked, "Aren't you, after all, just here to enjoy the fresh air?" "No, sir, I am not," said the man. "Then what are you doing here?" they asked at once. "I am just standing on the hill."

This story illustrates the possibility that one fact can be interpreted in many different ways. The first interpretation that I will give for nirvana is Shakyamuni Buddha's death, and the reason why we say that today is Nirvana Day is simply that by tradition it is agreed that February 15 is the day he died.

The second interpretation is quite common: nirvana literally means extinction--to extinguish or to "blow out." The candle is...whsssssssh!...blown out. Lightlessness --this is nirvana. Greed, anger, and evil passions are extinguished. This interpretation looks and sounds clear, but the danger of such an interpretation is that it leads the student into too idealistic a view. In reality, as we all know, as long as we have a body and heart and as long as we are members of society, many, many conflicts and difficulties accompany us, and it is hard to imagine that greed, anger, hatred and all evil passions may be extinguished. This is

not to say that these things cannot be extinguished for a while but that it is impossible to maintain that condition forever. To make this point clear, allow me to introduce a short poem by an old Japanese poet:

> When I look around
> There is no flower, no maple leaf
> This fisherman's village,
> This Autumn evening

When the interpretation is offered that nirvana is "to extinguish," this poem is often mentioned, especially the second line--"no flower, no maple leaf." But there was "I" when "I look around." And there was the fishing village, and "I" noticed the autumn evening, so it is not complete extinction.

But I often say that there is nothing, and you ask me, "Who realized or felt nothingness?" Rationally your question is reasonable, but the truth is that, indeed, there is nothing, and even the so-called "me" is nothing. It is "nothing samadhi," so to speak. No one to realize, no one to feel. Indeed, no-thing. However, our rational mind, that is our dualistic mind, still wants to know subject and object. The language which we use consists of subject, verb, and object, but fundamentally there is no subject, no verb, no object. So we are talking of two different dimensions, and our basic problem stems from our attempt to make the dimension of nothingness conform to the way of subject and object. Here is where zazen practice begins.

The interpretation of "to extinguish" is commonly known as the Theravadan interpretation. When Mahayana Buddhism developed, a third interpretation was born: samsara is

nirvana. Samsara means life and death. Life and death implies the many difficulties that arise in experience. Dukkha is often translated as suffering and pain. But why suffering and pain? It is because things do not always go in the way that I would have them go. This is dukkha. When we really appreciate dukkha in this sense, we become the intimate friend of dukkha. Things do not go as we would have them go, hence frustration, anxiety, confusion, and disappointment.

For instance, disappointment comes because one expects nirvana to be complete extinction of evil passion and all other things. When it doesn't come, there is confusion because what one thinks and understands intellectually is not identifiable with what is actual, with what is fact...[Bang!... strikes the lectern]. The point is that Mahayana Buddhism believes that "suchness" or "as-it-is-ness"...[Bang!]...is the reality. This reality cannot be judged. It is neither right nor wrong, good nor bad. Confusion is suchness, and it stands against any kind of judgment or criticism. Confusion is confusion, period. Likewise disappointment, anxiety, frustration, a broken heart.

What we are talking about is being saved, we are talking about being free, and yet what we rationally conclude is that in order to be free we must get rid of something which we do not like. We often say, "I cannot do concentrated zazen because of so many thoughts." The implication of this statement is that when thoughts are extinguished, peace of mind will come. The moment we think this way, we think in the Theravadan style; this is the Theravadan expectation. The Mahayanan confronts and accepts the fact as fact. He or she does not even think of

making progress. The real freedom is to naturally accept each fact as fact. When this is done we are being saved even in the midst of hell. If this isn't done, then even when in the midst of heaven we dream of improvement, we are not saved. This notion of progress has been a serious problem. We can't deny that each one of us has made progress in our sitting posture, in our breathing, in our concentration and attentiveness. Yes, we have made progress. In the scientific world, we see a great deal of tangible evidence of progress, but are we really contented with such progress? Don't we say that the life of the Pennsylvania Dutch is more peaceful than the life of Manhattanites? So while we acknowledge "progress," we are very nostalgic toward what we used to be. Zen is not anti-science, anti-intellect, but it certainly does not support the idea that we must make progress. Instead, Zen "insists" that we see things as they are.

We normally think that firewood is useful because it combusts and gives heat, and this, of course, is correct. Also, we normally feel that ashes are not as valuable or useful as wood. This is one viewpoint. Another "viewpoint" is beyond value or non-value, useful or not useful. Firewood is firewood and cannot be otherwise at this moment though we may say that in the future it can be reduced to ashes. Ashes are ashes and cannot be otherwise though we may say that in the future they can be mixed with the soil. Things simply are as they are and cannot be otherwise.

In the same spirit, Paul Reps once wrote, "Cucumber cucumberly cucumbering." This is in the same spirit. Things simply are as

they are and cannot be otherwise. Thusness!

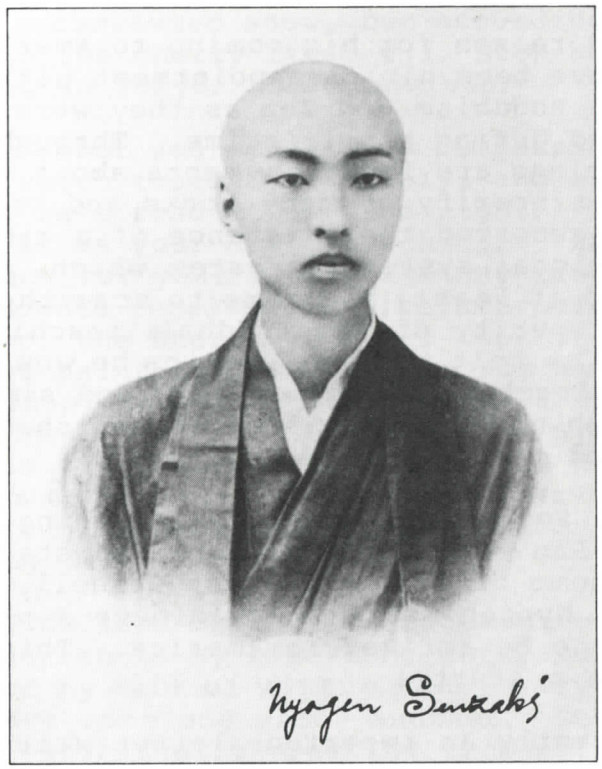
So getting back to samsara and nirvana. Greed, anger, impatience, a broken heart are none other than samsara, and they are in fact none other than nirvana. When we thoroughly understand this, we can say with conviction that "this very place is the lotus land of purity, this very body is the body of the Buddha."

Rikkyu's interpretation of nirvana was Mahayanistic. He once pointed to a poem by Iyetaka which negates nothing but implies that samsara is nirvana, nirvana is samsara.

> For those awaiting the cherry blossoms
> Look at the small green shoots
> In the midst of snow
> Where else is Spring!

We all expect the kingdom of heaven is somewhere else and that we may only find it when defilement is extinct. When this is done, the thinking goes, we may reach it and stay there for good. As long as we pay the rent we will not have to leave. This is our habit of mind. But we cannot be other than thusness. People may understand this intellectually, but they have not learned it with body. It has not deeply penetrated. Thus, I want to emphasize the importance and indispensability of zazen practice. Zazen practice means the integration of body and mind. It is like the preparation of bread. First, water and flour are mixed. Kneading is badly needed, and we add east because we have plenty of west. If this is done, then even dukkha becomes an intimate friend, and even here we realize nirvana.

A Letter to Soyen Shaku from Nyogen Senzaki



[Nyogen Senzaki at age 21.]

For a long time there was much speculation regarding the question, "Why did Nyogen Senzaki come to America?" In the introduction to Like a Dream, Like a Fantasy I wrote:

There are three plausible reasons for Nyogen Senzaki's decision to abandon his homeland in order to come to America. One is that at that time Japan was engaged in the Russo-Japanese War. Perhaps, because Nyogen Sen-

zaki was born in Siberia of unknown parentage and anti-Russian sentiment was high, he might have been ostracized by his companions and neighbors.

A second reason for his coming to America might have been his disappointment with Japanese Buddhism and Zen as they were being practiced during his lifetime. Throughout his writings are found comments about the lack of sincerity of many monks and priests. He also abhorred the existence of a rigid institutional system--a system which, to his mind at least, had come to scar the original purity of the Buddha's teaching. Perhaps he felt that in America he would be free to teach and practice pure and simple Zen, with no hindrance from established norms and traditional formalities.

Finally, Soyen Shaku was then planning to come to San Francisco and would be staying at the home of Mrs. Alexander Russell. So at least Nyogen Senzaki would have a place to go once he arrived in America. This would be a start.

Very recently an important letter written by Nyogen Senzaki to his teacher, Soyen Shaku, was found. This letter was written in the spring of 1905. The following is a translation of this letter, and it clarifies his intention in coming to America. The letter was written in a poetic, colloquial, and old-fashioned Nyogen Senzaki style. Hence, a literal translation into modern English is impossible. Many parts have proved to be extremely difficult; nevertheless, the spirit of the letter is accurate and clear.

---Eido Roshi

Dear Ryoga-Kutsu [Soyen Shaku Roshi],

I trust that you are well in this still wintry spring. Here in Hirosaki we have a lot of accumulated snow, but according to the news the cherry trees will soon be blooming in Tokyo. I am envious.

Last December you wrote me a compassionate letter which touched me deeply, and ever since I have read it day and night. Thus, I regard it as your daily teaching. Thank you very much for your kind gift. My kindergarten students received it like ambrosial nectar of the Dharma rain. I took it that the last painting you sent was for my sake. I was inspired. I felt guilty and I cried, and I was sad when I realized that my insight is not deep enough. I should have written to you much sooner, but I have been struggling. Please accept my apology for the long delay.

Once, I decided that the management of the kindergarten is my life-long work, but because of my lack of virtue many, many problems have come one after another. Even though, spiritually speaking, I'm walking on the Way straight ahead, we are in extremely bad shape financially. One of the kindergartens in the fishing village has become extremely poor. The children have written me expressing their loneliness because I have not been visiting them. When I receive such letters, my heart becomes heavy. You can well imagine their feelings. They feel that they are ignored because I do not visit. It causes competitiveness, jealousy, and self-pity. All come from poverty.

Another kindergarten in the city of Hirosaki was doing well until last year, but due to

the war with Russia, we lost its supporters, and now this city kindergarten is as poor as the one in the fishing village. The financial situation is inexpressibly bad. The problems are difficult to get rid of. It is impossible to continue. The students are not aware of my problems. They just gather around me, and in this way, their home away from home is established.

In addition to the Hirosaki headquarters, I have sown the Buddha seed in two cities, three towns, and a few villages. Roughly, 1200 boys and girls are in my "Sangha," and they teach me more than I teach them. So many people teach me, and so many love me, but in return I cannot do anything. What kind of karma do I have? Day and night I am struggling.

In January I started a pilgrimage to the south, and in February I was in the west. Right now on this snowy trip to the north, my monk's bag is full of letters from the children, letters of encouragement. But after much consideration, I have now decided to cut the uncuttable attachment to my Sangha and go to America this year. The hunger of the Sangha comes first from my lack of diligence and secondly from lack of funds.

A blue-eyed Christian missionary said that there are three M's indispensable in missionary work: mind, muscle, and money! I am embarrassed to say that since my ordination nine years ago, I have received many offerings, and in return I should have cultivated the Bodhisattva spirit, but, alas, what do I have to show? I have only my health, and even that is not completely sound. I want to have a Bodhisattva's spirit, but more than that right now I want to

have money. Because of the war between Japan and Russia, it is impossible for me to raise the necessary funds here. Even thirty yen per month is more than I can do. I have heard that some rich people spend two hundred yen a month on their pets! When I hear such a story, I feel great frustration. So I feel that now there is only one thing for me to do and that is to remove my robes and wear the working clothes of a laborer. In this way I may raise the money that I need. I realize that even in America the streets are not paved in gold, but as long as I have mind and muscle I can do what is required to make the money. I think that within three years I will be able to establish the mentorgarten. I am not well educated, and ideally I have to study more, but now I must put my mind to becoming a good businessman.

If I become a houseboy and have a job making beds, I will make them the seat of the Bodhisattva. If I become a cook, I will make food that radiates the great light for those who eat it. Dishwashing is fine, and I will polish shoes. Whatever I do will be none other than the manifestation of the spirit of Tathagata. Your compassionate teaching has penetrated my body, and I feel the time has come to do strenuous work so that I may appreciate the practice of all the patriarchs.

As you well know, I have not even completed my junior high school education, but I am hoping to reactivate my academic study when I get to America. Thus, I may practice the first "M," that is, mind. My nature is rather weak. Because of that, I create unneccessary suffering, but the new continent will be a good training center for me in many ways. Though I haven't been there yet,

just hearing my Dharma brother Daisetsu [D.T.] Suzuki's writings causes my heart to wander even now along the rivers and in the mountains of North America.

Why not let my karma wind blow? For three years I will not wear the Buddhist robe, and at least I will earn my own living by my own labor. But my faith in Buddha Dharma is such that I would like to keep the precepts, and if at all possible, I would like to do the work under the American Buddhists.

These are rather small matters like leaves and branches. What I really want to hear from you are words of encouragement and your permission to go, and then no matter how hard life may be, I will march on. Though I am determined, your word alone can change my decision. There is no one else for me to consult. Please let me hear from you.

The day after tomorrow I will go back to Hirosaki and will stay to the end of May. I intend to continue my communication with the students here even after I go, so I need to prepare many things.

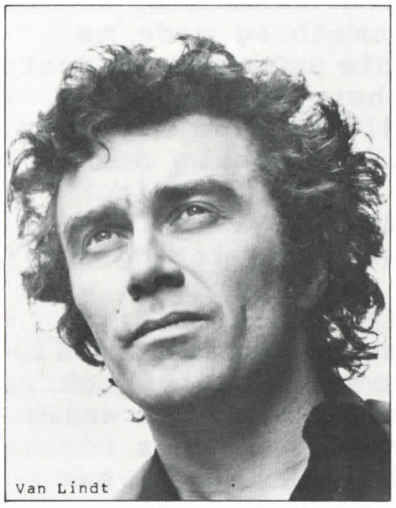
While I have been writing this letter, young girls and boys have been playing around me, and my thoughts have not been well concentrated. Please excuse this rather disorganized letter.

Sincerely your student,

Nyogen

I bow to you nine times.

Interview with Shogetsu Harry McCormick


Van Lindt

[Harry McCormick is an artist based in New York City. Aside from his formal Zen training, begun in 1968 with The Zen Studies Society, he has had long experience in the martial arts practice of aikido. Harry discovered his vocation as a painter much by accident as a young actor just out of the American Academy of Dramatic Arts; since then he has done occasional work in theater and film. This interview was conducted in his studio where he spends much of his time producing work that is shown in galleries and museums in both America and Europe.]

* * *

Journal: Harry, let me make a general statement of purpose for this interview, something that we may start with. It is the aim of The Zen Studies Society to disseminate Zen teachings and practice in America. This, therefore, is the aim of the Journal and of this interview. You have been a student for a number of years, and we would like to record some of your thoughts in the hope that others may become more clear about this matter we call Zen and be inspired to look more deeply into themselves.

Harry: I see. You know, for a long time I have had an inclination toward this kind of thing--that is, sitting still, clearing the mind of thoughts--even before I had formal training and before hearing about Zen. Just out of high school something made me want to relax with a candle burning. I just sat. I don't recall whether I did it with my back straight, but I did sit and empty my thoughts. I don't know what made me do this. There were others in the building where I lived who thought I was a little crazy. But I forgot about this sitting for a while. So quite a few years later, I went to The Zen Studies Society and heard Eido Roshi give a talk. I remember it very well. It was very impressive to me and it struck me deeply. It was not so much what he said but how he said it. As anyone who has started this practice knows, it can be extremely painful to sit for a long time with your legs crossed. After the sitting, he gave a talk. You wouldn't think that he would come out with something like this, but instead of saying, "This practice is the greatest in the world!" he said, "I'm not really here to encourage you to do this because this is really very difficult. It's not for everybody. It's very, very difficult." Then he went on to say, "But, on the other hand, it's wonderful." The way he used the word "wonderful" was intriguing. Roshi has a terrific flair for the dramatic. He's really a good teacher, especially for Americans. He entices you, he arouses your curiosity. I wanted to find out exactly what he meant by that. It was the way he said it, with so much feeling. I have to admit that since then I have experienced many difficulties, times when I thought maybe I had fallen in with a group of psychopaths [laughter], that maybe I'd been led

astray by a strange cult. But now that all these years have gone by, I see that the Roshi has never said anything that I didn't find to be true in my own way. The things that he professed have come across.

J: You have come to understand this "wonderful?"

H: Yes, yes I have, in my own way.

J: Will you say something regarding "practice," whatever comes to mind?

H: In high school I studied judo, which was very unusual at that time. This led to aikido, and I have been doing this for about twenty-one years. Aikido is very closely related to Zen training, in the sense that you hold the center of gravity in the lower abdomen just as you do in the practice of zazen, except of course in aikido you are in motion. In both practices you extend your mind forward. In self-defense you must keep your composure as you project yourself into the world. The more you do this, the more expansive "it" becomes. You encompass with your breathing, your mind is sensitive to the world. Of course, this vacillates. You go in again and then out. In time, you develop your concentration to the point where it becomes very finely tuned. This is what all people who function well do, no matter what they do in life--businessmen or whomever. There are those who innately have power, personal power: great leaders, vital people. Those who have "abnormal" personalities, mental problems, or neuroses are constricted. The healthy mind always expands and moves outward. This is something I started to learn with aikido. When I studied aikido in Paris with Deshimaru, he

gave some basic instruction in zazen, and after a little sitting, the rest of the day would be devoted to aikido. I noticed an enormous difference after sitting. There was more fluidity, more clarity, more concentration, more vitality. I was very cognizant of that. You know, as soon as there is movement, the mind tends to move and become activated. Let's say that you are being attacked by two or three people. This is definitely like thoughts rising up in the mind, and these thoughts are definitely going to be a big problem. Keeping composure in this kind of circumstance is very stimulating. And so, too, is zazen stillness in daily activity. Cultivating this kind of clarity is very strongly emphasized in both Zen and aikido. All the Japanese arts-- archery, swordsmanship--seem to emphasize the power which comes from the lower abdomen. They all move from this point. The sword comes up from there, it explodes from that point.

In the development of clarity, repetition is the key point. It is so important in overcoming whatever obstacles you meet along the way. You have to develop a habit. First, there is just repetition, then comes devotion to the discipline. If you can't do it for an hour a day, do it for a half an hour, and if you can't do it for fifteen minutes, do it for five, but do it every day! It helps. It makes us more clear. Clarity and energy are, of course, so beneficial in work.

J: When it is not aikido or sitting, just daily business, do you make an effort to practice, to "project yourself into the world" as you said earlier?

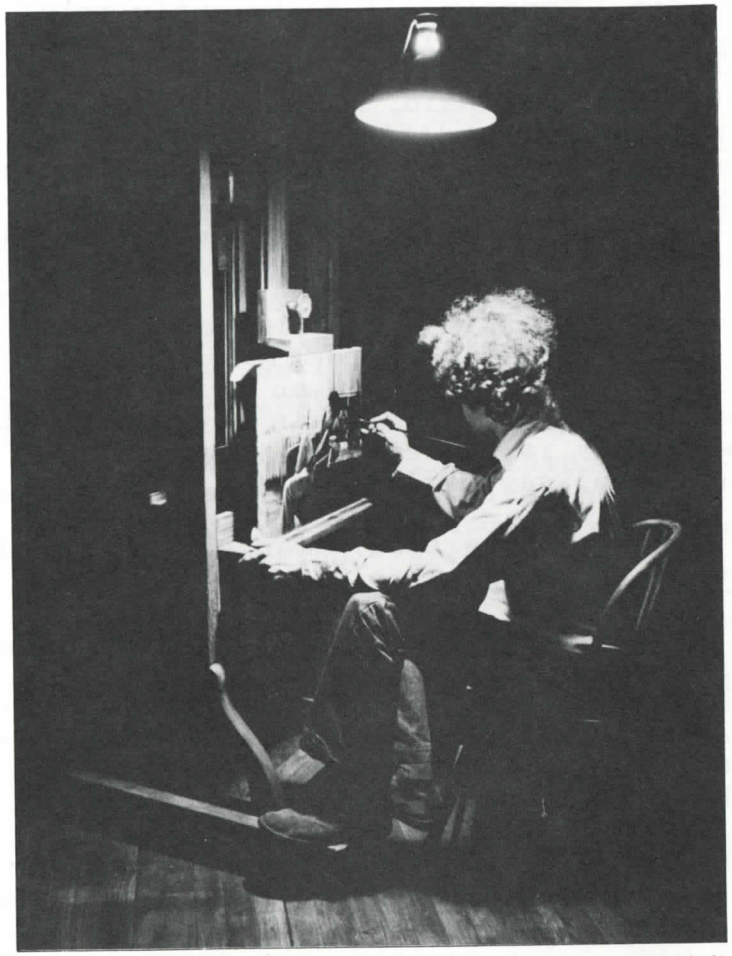
H: Yes. Sometimes I consciously relax and sink into the lower part of my abdomen. A great teacher, Tomei, had a wonderful way of putting it. He said, "There are three things that seem different, but they are the same. The first is to keep one point, to establish your mind and center of gravity in your lower abdomen. Secondly, extend your mind outward. Thirdly, relax yourself completely." When he said one of those things, he meant all three. Relaxing completely doesn't mean becoming completely slack. There is a tension that you bring to it like when doing zazen; there is a tautness of mind. This is the sort of thing I think about when, say, walking down the street.

J: You are an artist. Can you relate some of what you've said to painting?

H: I have always been attracted to Japanese calligraphy and painting--most of them Zen in expression. Something about the Japanese culture was more interesting to me than, say, the Chinese. The Zen art had such a dynamic quality. It was concise, full of energy, highly refined, and very spontaneous. I love the art work of other cultures influenced by Buddhism, too, like Indian art, Tibetan art, but they don't have that particular quality, the spontaneity and energy that I see in Japanese painting.

J: What about Western artists? Do they have this quality that you admire?

H: Oh, sure. You always recognize it. Many, of course, have the power of clarity. Some of them have kind of distorted it. Some might look at it and say, "This is sick stuff!" but the clarity is there. Just look at Francis Bacon's work. His stuff is so



Van Lindt

powerful. You might say that it's "weird," but the strength in the brushstroke is there.

I love Andrew Wyeth's work. He is a total master of what he does with his materials. His drawings are so superb! He covers the entire spectrum, from the very refined to the very loose. He did a painting called "Snow Flurries." Here he had a finished egg

tempera painting that captured just the moment the snow started to stick to the earth on a very low, sloping hill. Then he did a dry brush watercolor capturing the same thing; then, beyond that, he achieved the same quality in a pencil drawing! These things he can do over and over and over again, and this is why he's a master painter.

J: You have spoken primarily of practice per se. Will you reveal more of your insight?

H: When I first started this practice, I had a very great hunger for unusual and exotic experience. I think that a big part of my sitting in the beginning was to get kensho, to get an earth-shattering experience. But no matter what I did, I couldn't get anything. A little thing could happen, and I would think, "Maybe this is it!" [Laughter.] I reached a point somewhere along the line where I thought, "Well, you know, some people may get this experience, and then again there are some who won't," and I thought, "It's just possible that I may be in the second category. I may be one of those people who just doesn't get this experience. But I am getting something from this anyway, so I think I will continue and get whatever I get." Somehow, after that, I started having very unusual experiences. Somehow, it's when you give it up. Then one day I "got" something, and the Roshi said that it was a kensho experience. It was not what I thought it would be. I'm sure that there are many varieties of this experience. But I realized that Harry McCormick as such, the person I had always referred to myself as being, does not exist and never did. But that doesn't mean that all of this disappears. It's still here, but the he who sees

and hears, sits and stands up and walks around the room....It's just indescribable. It was to such a degree--Everything was just as it was, but Harry McCormick was no longer there. I knew that the bell was going to ring, but there was no "I" to get up and walk around. I wondered, "Who is going to move my legs?" It's really true that something disappears. But when the bell rang, something got Harry McCormick up to walk around the room.

J: Is there happiness in this? Most people have not come to understand "themselves" in this way. All suffer and many are searching to some degree or another to find purpose, happiness in this life. Is happiness what this practice leads to?

H: [Laughter.] Well, I think it's a reasonable request for all the effort! But I don't think that there is any permanent condition. But in understanding this, there is happiness. Being appreciative of things is happiness; things that are a pain in the ass, aggravating. If you are angry with somebody, it does not necessarily give you the ability to change the condition, but it enhances the ability to change the point of view and see not only the other person's point of view but many points of view. To be able to do this in just one sitting is of towering importance. I don't think people reach a point where they walk on pink clouds, never getting aggravated or uptight. This is an ethereal idea some may have about spiritual practice. It's unrealistic. One thing Buddhism teaches is that there are no permanent conditions, every second is change. You know, sometimes Zen just helps get you through the day, forget happiness! [Laughter.] Sometimes even that can be happiness.

J: What is the essence of change?

H: That's a good question! [Laughter.] It's a good laugh, I guess. When you take a good shit in the morning. I can't say that I've found any good answers to major questions. Perhaps that's the crux of the answer. I know that there's a kind of unwritten rule in Zen that some things you shouldn't talk about, but what the hell. Once I had an experience where there was a very bright light emanating from everything. Just before it happened, the man doing zazen next to me was being pretty annoying. It was the way he was breathing--very loud. I thought to myself, "I can't tap this guy on the shoulder and say, 'Excuse me, sir, but will you please control your breathing?'" You just can't do that in the middle of sesshin, and you can't just get up and walk out of the room. There was nothing that I could do but concentrate harder, and then the "something" happened, the bright light began to emanate. The light wasn't the wonderful thing about it. The key word to express it is "intimacy," the intimacy with things around me, inanimate objects. The mountains around me were old friends. It brings tears to my eyes to recall it. It was a "something" which I had forgotten. This "something" is always here, but we don't see it. Everything is alive with it! It is the living Dharma. The feeling that I got at that moment was that this is dying, but there is no death. This is there, though you may physically die, and so there was no feeling of the fear of death.

Just sitting whether it is agony or ecstasy--there is something very courageous about that. There is no one preaching to you about what you should or shouldn't believe

and what will happen to you if you don't. There is something very noble about it. Whatever happens, this is the practice. I've never regretted a moment of it, and it has been very rewarding to me. I go back to what I said about repetition: I "got" what I got by repeating the practice of following my breath, sitting with my back straight... just following the Roshi's instructions. Do it over and over, and you will get what you get. You work with what you've got. That's what you do when you sit down.

Dai Bosatsu Zendo Kongo-ji

G. Murrell

There You Are!

by Kuraku Clark Strand

One day about ten years ago I happened to remark to a friend, "You know, nowadays it seems wherever I go..." at which point she blurted out, "There you are!" and laughed a long, long time. Her mirth was contagious and eventually won over my initial irritation. I have long since forgotten what I had intended to say at the time, but never the homespun wisdom of her remark: wherever you go, there you are.

Even today it seems impossible to stray very far from this basic fact without deluding myself and others. Before I came to kessei at Dai Bosatsu Zendo, many of my friends naturally asked why I wanted to spend one hundred days training in a Zen monastery. The truth was I didn't know. Whatever reasons I could come up with turned out to be delusion the moment they came out of my mouth. I would reply, "I'm going to DBZ to deepen my practice," while thinking to myself, "How can practice be deepened, and where does it begin and end if not right here?" In the end I knew that I honestly didn't know. I wasn't certain I knew even that! Unable to get back the old words and phrases with which I used to justify my existence, I did just what I had done ten years before: I got on a bus.

Doubt, frustration, and aspiration: I left the city with these, my three oldest friends. If nothing else, Zendo life brings you face to face with yourself. There are fewer distractions than in the city and nowhere else to turn. Avoidance, when and where it occurs, is rather obvious.

The approach to life here is very practical. There's plenty of work to be done, all of it seemingly essential. In cold weather the furnace must be loaded several times a day, and for that you have to cut and haul wood down from the mountain. In early spring the maple trees must be tapped, the sap boiled down to syrup and bottled for sale in nearby towns or for monastery use. Yesterday I picked and washed leeks. Today, thanks to the cooperation of several other people, they're on the table for lunch.

Then, of course, there's the sitting--usually about five hours a day and sesshin once a month. This is as much a bread-and-butter matter as the daily work. Roshi offers instruction and inspiration, but to really benefit you must do it for yourself. So you renew your effort again and again, discovering and rediscovering the essential spirit of the practice.

Somehow all of this works together to cut through the ambivalence and irritation that spring from concern with non-essential things. Difficulties become opportunities, free time and companionship become precious. The true value of ordinary life is made clear, and in this way practice does gradually deepen.

When I left New York Zendo in March, my friends there wished me a "flowering spring." It is now mid-May and, despite a late snowfall last week, the trees are beginning to bud. The daffodils are past their peak already, but today I discovered a wild iris just about to bloom. I still don't know why I'm here. Somehow, it doesn't seem to matter. Strange how I keep coming here just to feel this way.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS JULY-DECEMBER 1987

June 27 - July 4	July Fourth Sesshin
July 6	Spring Kessei Ends, Guest House Opens
July 16-20	Macro/Shiatsu Workshop*
August 7-9	Christian-Buddhist Workshop**
August 15	O-Bon
September 15	Guest House Closes
September 19	Fall Kessei Begins
Sept 26 - Oct 3	Golden Wind Sesshin
October 16-18	Zazen Workshop
Oct 31 - Nov 7	Harvest Sesshin
Nov 30 - Dec 8	Rohatsu Sesshin
December 10	Fall Kessei Ends

DAI BOSATSU ZENDO SCHEDULE OF FEES

Kessei	First:	$1,200
	Second:	$1,000
	Third:	$700
	After:	$500
Sesshin	Sangha:	$230
	Others:	$250
Workshop	All:	$75
Room and Board	Sangha:	$20/Day
	Others:	$22/Day
Guest House	Single:	$65/Day
	Double:	$120/Day
	Week = Six Days	

*FOUR DAY MACROBIOTIC/SHIATSU WORKSHOP

This workshop (July 16-20) will be led by Susan Krieger, a macrobiotic consultant, shiatsu therapist and teacher. The focus will be on healing through food, macrobiotic philosophy, shiatsu practices, and corrective exercise. The fee is $230. Pre-registration is required: call DBZ (914) 439-4566 or Ms. Krieger (212) 242-4217.

**CHRISTIAN-BUDDHIST DIALOGUE

This, the second Christian-Buddhist Dialogue held at DBZ, will be conducted by Eido Roshi and Fr. James Michael Doyle as well as the residents of DBZ. The minimum suggested contribution is $75. Those attending should plan to arrive by 6 PM, Friday, August 7. Call DBZ for further information.

DBZ OFFERS TAPED TEISHO SUBSCRIPTIONS

For $36.00 you will receive six of Eido Roshi's teishos on cassette (one from each of our six yearly sesshins). These are sent out at two month intervals.

Also available are cassettes of specific teishos ($8.00 each). All we need is the month/day/year. If you are not sure of the precise date, then tell us the koan collection and case number that was the text of the teisho. If you want all teishos from a particular sesshin, tell us the name of the sesshin and the year. Place orders to Dai Bosatsu Zendo, HCR 1 Box 80, Lew Beach, NY 12753. $1 postage per cassette for orders outside the U.S.

THE SOEN ROKU: THE SAYINGS AND DOINGS OF MASTER SOEN is available from The Zen Studies Society Press.

The book contains six of Soen Roshi's tei-shos and many of his haiku in Japanese with translations by Eido Roshi.

Included is a collection of reminiscences by his students of their encounters with him. The selections vividly illuminate the effect of Soen Roshi's personality and teaching on his American students.

The cost of each volume is $15. Please add $2 for postage ($5 outside North America).

When visiting DBZ, please consider that the climate is cooler than NYC. Work boots (or old shoes), work clothes, and rain gear are advisable.

New York Zendo Shobo-ji

L. Milton

New York Zendo offers people a place to learn and practice zazen (meditation) in the metropolitan area. There are two five-month training periods yearly. Each includes a program of daily zazen, a workshop, and several weekend sesshins (retreats). The opportunity exists to study with Eido Roshi here as well as at Dai Bosatsu Zendo.

Newcomers to Zen practice must attend three Thursday evening meetings for zazen instruction and zendo orientation before coming to any of our other scheduled meetings. Arrive at the zendo between 6:15 and 6:45 pm, wear loose-fitting clothing, and plan to be here until 9 pm. An informal tea will follow. A $3 contribution is requested at every zazen meeting at NYZ; $5 on evenings when Eido Roshi speaks. After three Thursday evening meetings you are invited to attend our other scheduled sittings. The hours are printed below.

Membership at New York Zendo involves a commitment to serious study and regular financial support. Sangha members receive a reduction in sesshin and kessei fees at both NYZ and DBZ. Those accepted as new members must attend the weekly Buddhist studies class for one training period. Tuition for this program is $150; thereafter members pay $30 monthly dues. See a resident for further information.

Buddhist Studies classes are given Friday evenings during the second zazen period and are open to anyone who has attended three Thursday night meetings. Contact the zendo for details.

DAILY ZAZEN SCHEDULE*

	Morning	Afternoon	Evening
Monday	6-7:30		7-9
Tuesday	6-7:30	2-4	
Wednesday	6-7:30		7-9
Thursday	6-7:30		7-9
Friday	6-7:30		7-9
Saturday	closed		
Sunday	9-12:00		

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS JULY '87 - JANUARY '88

July 10	Training Period Ends
August 7	Training Period Begins
August 16	Shobo-ji Day Sitting**
August 23	Workshop+
September 11-13	Anniversary Sesshin
October 9-11	Columbus Day Sesshin
November 13-15	November Sesshin
December 12-13	Zen Arts Sale
December 18	End of Training Period
December 31	New Year's Celebration++
January 8	Training Period Begins

*Arrive 15 to 45 minutes before zazen begins.
**Doors will open at 8:30. Sitting is from 9:00-5:00. Lunch is provided.
+Mandatory for all provisional students.
++Doors will open at 10 pm. Arrive by 11:15.

WEEKEND SESSHINS: Students are strongly encouraged to attend full-time, but those who cannot may attend part-time (9-12 for teisho only or 9-5 Saturday and/or Sunday). Non-members must reserve their places by paying in advance. Sign up by the Wednesday

before sesshin. Weekend sesshins begin on Friday evening at 7:00. Arrive between 5:30 and 6:30. **All** participants must attend the Friday evening, which includes first-timers' orientation.

A BENEFIT FOR NEW YORK ZENDO will be performed by The Leonardo Trio at Barge Music in Brooklyn, N.Y. on Sunday, September 20 at 7:30 pm. The trio is a collaboration of three award-winning chamber music artists who perform the wide range of repertoire for the piano trio. Reserved seats/$25; General seating/ $10. For further information please call New York Zendo 212/861-3333. Thank you.

NEW YORK ZENDO SCHEDULE OF FEES

		MEMBERS	NON-MEMBERS
Sesshin:	Full-time	$35	$45
	9-5 or teisho	$20/day	$25/day
Workshop		$10	$20
Shobo-ji Day		$5	$10

Please note: all donations made to The Zen Studies Society, Dai Bosatsu Zendo, or New York Zendo such as sesshin/kessei fees, monthly, daily or special contributions are tax deductible.

THE ZEN STUDIES SOCIETY, INC.
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The Journal staff wishes Gerard Murrell a very happy life down in New Orleans. Thank you very much for your contributions to this publication. It has been a great pleasure working with you.

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