

## Re: Sexual misconduct by Buddhist teachers (was Eido Tai Shimano)

by **Carol** on Tue Jan 11, 2011 4:03 pm

Calling on Grace and Joan to "butt out" when clearly the ZSS board needs all the pressure it can get to get over the hump into truly confronting the consequences of Eido Roshi's remorseless actions, is very strange. A number of American Zen teachers are writing letters -- many are published on [Monkey Mind](#). I'm sure I'm not alone in gratitude to them for (finally) stepping up, speaking out, and not backing down. Failure to do so by so many for so long has been a blot on American Zen.

That's not to say that any one person's views about what must be done can be taken as the final word ... but the range of opinions about that should be fully expressed lest ZSS's history of doing too little, too late be seen as acceptable. Even this past year, while addressing the issue with more seriousness than before, they pulled back from removing Eido Roshi from teaching on the premises, allowed him to do a Jukai ceremony and to teach sesshin, all after the Faith Trust Institute recommendations came out. This certainly gave credence to those who fear the whole thing is a farce without substance.

I have MUCH sympathy for those close to Eido Roshi, for the love they feel for him as their teacher who has been instrumental in their awakening to the Dharma. I also share with many others a deep disquiet about those same people rationalizing or minimalizing or discounting the suffering Eido Roshi has caused over decades of sexual misconduct and other abuses of power that were well-known even before the Shimano Archives went public.

The conflict must be resolved in favor of clear ethical standards ... which means at a minimum removal of Eido Roshi from any position at ZSS, admitting and disavowing his conduct, making humble apologies not just for him but for ZSS, and to the extent possible making restitution.

I sometimes wonder what it would be like if one of my children or parents

were to commit a murder? (I thought of it again in regard to the suffering parents of the young man who just did the shootings in Arizona.) How could I abandon them in their time of need? I couldn't. But neither could I permit them to evade the consequences of their actions, even if it meant I had to sit with them and bear witness to their execution.

I think this whole thing is a huge challenge to all of us who practice Zen ... to examine our opinions and beliefs and feelings and judgments, our shortcomings, our tendencies to avoid conflict while projecting ill-will onto others who are also working through their opinions, beliefs, feelings, judgments and shortcomings. This situation calls for action, firm action, and we're not used to that. We've cultivated a culture of equivocation rather than equanimity.

It's a very hard koan. How to act when circumstances demand action, while remaining compassionate in our hearts and not giving in to greed, hatred and ignorance. So, when we see someone like Eido Roshi -- delusional -- doing great harm and excusing it by raising the false flag of "the unconditioned", we'd best wake up. We'd best listen to those sounding the alarm, however unpleasant and jarring the sound. To think that silencing the alarm will eliminate the danger is also delusion.

So, I'm truly grateful to Joan and Grace and all the other Zen teachers who are not letting this go away, who are speaking out to the ZSS board and publicly. It was a long time coming.

Gassho,

Carol

*This solitary brightness hears, understands and teaches the Dharma. ~Linji*