

From: Zen Studies Society <office@daibosatsu.org>
Subject: Transcript of the Announcement Made on July 2nd at Dai Bosatsu Zendo
Date: July 5, 2011 11:37:11 AM EDT
To: [REDACTED]
Reply-To: office@daibosatsu.org

The following statements were made on July 2nd, 2011 at Dai Bosatsu Zendo Kongo-ji, with about 45 sangha members from DBZ, New York Zendo Shobo-ji and the Zen Center of Syracuse in attendance.

Eido Roshi:

Good afternoon. Thank you for coming to Dai Bosatsu Zendo for this rather important meeting. The day after tomorrow will be July 4th. In 1776 this nation became independent, and just two hundred years later, in 1976, this Zendo was dedicated. Last year, on July 4th 2010, Aiho and I resigned from the Board of Directors after forty-five years of service.

Of course, everybody knows that this Zendo and Shobo-ji in New York were established because of thousands and thousands of people's help. But Aiho and I are the only two still here from the beginning to this point, still thinking and dedicating—rather, combusting—our Dharma passion.

We are in the midst of a transition period. This transition is nothing new for other places: in a monastery from former abbot to new abbot, in a company from former president to new. What is unique in our case is that The Zen Studies Society has never experienced an official transition.

When I took over the inactive Zen Studies Society from Dr. D. T. Suzuki, he had gone to Japan. During the transition from Dr. Suzuki's time to my time, the secretary was very happy to give to me all the documents and the corporate seal. In this case, during the past year – particularly the past six months – we all suffered. The Sangha suffered, the Board of Directors suffered, and I suffered. Unless we come to some kind of positive, corrective, and peacefully harmonious solution today, The Zen Studies Society, Dai Bosatsu Zendo and New York Zendo will all be in trouble.

Please do not think you are the only ones who suffered. We all suffered in one way or another. In my case, many sleepless nights continued and finally I got shingles, full of pain, which still continues. In the midst of this pain I asked, what is the best way to solve this painful situation – not only my physical pain, but the Sangha's pain? I thought this way and that, and came to the conclusion – and naturally everyone would agree – that the Dharma is the most important and it must continue.

In the meantime, I have received about sixty letters, telephone calls, faxes and person-to-person contacts saying, "Please continue to teach. I will miss you. Don't abandon us." I thought, this might be true, but suppose I were dying. If that were the case, these kinds of phone calls, faxes and letters would not have been written. Then I thought, it must be a kind of attachment in the Rinzai Zen tradition.

As you know, there is dokusan. That is a unique practice, and by doing so we struggle and we grow. Sometimes during sesshin we have dokusan three times a day. The more we meet, the more some kind of deep emotions may develop along with the Dharma. This could be called attachment. Then I thought, wait a minute – if I accept their request, their "Please continue," for

one more year, two more years, three more years, then the problem is the same, maybe even worse. I introspected and asked myself, am I attached to my students or not? The answer was yes. Some of you have been doing zazen and dokusan with me twenty years, thirty years. Naturally what could be called attachment by both parties grew. I thought, this is not the way to solve this transition period. I have to retire. I have to sacrifice and they have to sacrifice. Sometimes things have to be sacrificed.

After long days of thinking, I now have the following attitude: starting today, I highly recommend – I strongly suggest – that all of you become Shinge Roshi's students. That is the only way that One Sangha, like it used to be, can be created under her leadership. Of course, my style of teaching and her style of teaching are different, our personalities are different, and many other things are different. But the Dharma – which has been transmitted from Hakuin Zenji, to Gempo Roshi, to Soen Roshi, to me and to her – is not different. She is the only one, at this point, who can take on this big task and responsibility. I have confidence in her, and we are also responsible for encouraging her growth so that The Zen Studies Society's Chairman of the Board and Abbot will be Shinge Roshi only.

I have retired, but some of you may think, "Are there any exceptions?" No. I will stop doing dokusan and giving teisho in a formal way. Some of you may feel uncomfortable at first because you are not used to Shinge Roshi. I have experienced this personally. When I first went to Heirin-ji as an unsui, the Roshi over there was Shirosu Keisan Roshi. Three years later, I moved to Ryutaku-ji and became a student of Soen Roshi. Their teaching styles were very different, and for a while I was "not together." But there was karmic congeniality between Soen Roshi and myself, and later I thought that my period of confusion was a gift. By passing through that confusion I became stronger. In Japan, if an old Roshi is going to retire—for either health reasons or some other reason—there will be confusion among the training monks. Some leave, some stay, some are confused...but it ends up most of the time that half of them remain and half go somewhere else.

I don't want this to happen at Dai Bosatsu Zendo, but if I completely retire and you don't support Shinge Roshi, the life of DBZ will come to an end. This is nobody's wish. When I think of the fifty to sixty students who wrote me such passionate letters, I feel so bad. But if I am weak now, and take them back, this will not work. So, my thoughts and my feelings are always with you, whether you love me or hate me. This is the only way we can recreate One Sangha, with harmonious togetherness. For some of you it must be quite difficult to hear such a declaration. You may say, "How mean you are!" But this is the only way. This is the only way.

When I come here, Shinge Roshi and the residents always cheerfully welcome me. Although I don't attend sesshin anymore, and I will not do dokusan anymore – in any place – I do visit from time to time. This is my life! I gave my life to the Dharma and I hope that this can peacefully be continued here and at New York Zendo Shobo-ji. I think I have said clearly what my attitude is from now on, and beyond that, it is up to you.

Shinge Roshi:

I too want to thank everyone for coming. As Eido Roshi said, this has been a difficult time, and all of you are deeply affected. There is a lot of pain in everyone's hearts. We've tried to do the best we could in various situations, sometimes making mistakes. All of us know we have the amazing opportunity as human beings to make mistakes, and also to become Buddhas.

We are always growing through our difficulties, through our pain. This is how we grow. I don't imagine any of you would choose me over Eido Roshi, but here we have this in our lives. Change! Change is difficult. We have to embrace it. If we work together and you begin to feel there is no congeniality, then of course I understand. But I want to tell you I am here for you. I am here for this Dharma. I am here for Dai Bosatsu Zendo. I am here for the Zen Studies Society. I am here to give all I have. Nothing will be held back. If you don't want it, feel free to walk away. But think about what Roshi said.

Each one of you is responsible for keeping this beautiful place the gift it is for all of us and for all generations to come. The same is true of Shobo-ji. We must have a generous spirit. We must be willing to enter into these difficult periods of change. Embrace them. Embrace each other, even when we don't agree. That is how we grow. The only way we can requite Eido Roshi's great Dharma teaching is to walk together on this path, filled with gratitude and filled with deep vow.

Note: *Although Eido Roshi's students have previously been advised that they should write a formal letter stating their intention to continue their practice under Shinge Roshi's guidance, **this recommendation is not required** in order to initiate a teacher-student relationship or participate in dokusan with Shinge Roshi.*

[Forward email](#)



This email was sent to [REDACTED] by office@daibosatsu.org | [Update Profile/Email Address](#) | Instant removal with [SafeUnsubscribe™](#) | [Privacy Policy](#).

Zen Studies Society | 223 Beecher Lake Road | Livingston Manor | NY | 12758