



Genjo

Posts: 31

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antispam: No



Re: Sexual misconduct by Buddhist teachers (was Eido Tai Shi

by Genjo on Wed Jul 13, 2011 6:45 am

Genjo wrote:

Shodo wrote:

<http://www.shimanoarchive.com/PDFs/2011...cement.pdf>

Anyone know what this is about...?

We shall see.

Genjo

Dear Dharma Friends,

On July 2, 2011, Eido Shimano Roshi, the retired Founding Abbot of Shobo-ji and Kongo-ji, and his successor Shinge Roko Chayat Roshi made a "Special Announcement." A transcription of the substance of the announcement made during a public forum at Dai Bosatsu Zendo can be found at:

<http://www.daibosatsu.org/images/meeting.pdf>

In this announcement, Eido Roshi acknowledged that he would no longer hold out the possibility of continuing a dokusan relationship with senior students, about sixty of whom have asked that he continue to teach and give dokusan. Furthermore, he strongly encouraged all these students to become Shinge Roshi's students and to fully support her leadership. He also acknowledged that there will be no exceptions and that he will not attend sesshin, or give Teisho or dokusan when visiting Dai Bosatsu Zendo Kongo-ji (DBZ) from time to time. These steps may appear to be the natural consequence of the retirement of a teacher, new and current students are transferred to the new teacher, but it is also true that many students have been holding out the hope that Eido Roshi might become like a professor emeritus and occasionally attend sesshin, give Teisho and dokusan for students. So, I believe this announcement represents a major hurdle for the healing of the ZSS Sangha.

However, even though Eido Roshi in his remarks acknowledged that "we all suffered" particularly in the last six months since his retirement, and Shinge Roshi acknowledged that we all have faced pain and difficulties during this transition, neither of them mentioned the reasons for his precipitous retirement. There was no direct acknowledgement of the harm that was done to this sangha because of decades of ethical breaches by the founding abbot, not to mention the harm done to the many female students that had to suffer his advances or his requests to keep affairs secret.

I was not in attendance, but it was reported to me that Eido Roshi put the five members of the ZSS board who were present for the announcement on the spot by asking that he be given a key to the New York Zendo Shobo-ji (NYZ) a couple of blocks from his condo on the upper East Side of New York City. The purpose of wanting a key became very clear when the board received a letter dated July 5th requesting that he be allowed to continue to lead zazen, teach Zen classics, lead Japanese Dharma classes, and offered to nurture the next generation of students. The ZSS Board promptly said no thank you.

Since his retirement December 8th, 2010, Eido Roshi has resisted clearing his rooms at both DBZ and NYZ, this resistance comes from his natural desire to be a grandfatherly figure and presence at both locations that he was so instrumental in founding. Eido Roshi's desire to let True Dharma continue is very genuine, and naturally he wants to help all he can. And if this were a normal retirement his efforts would be more than welcomed, they would be treasured. However, given the real dilemma created by his ethical breaches, the need for the ZSS sangha to heal in peace and for new leadership to have the opportunity to grow and develop it seems obvious to me that he must clear out his rooms and be restricted from being a grandfatherly presence or holding a professor emeritus status or function.

Yes, he will always be the founding abbot, and I won't hesitate to call him my Dharma Father, or give him deep thanks and gratitude for being a clear vessel of the Dharma. However, one of the beauties of Buddhism is that we are all primarily Buddhas, there is nothing to attain, and we are all vessels of the Dharma. As Eido Roshi has also taught me we are also all "bumpkins." I believe all of us have a crazy hot core that when not healthfully managed and channeled can cause symptoms that harm others and ourselves. This has certainly been true in my life. In my view, the ZSS needs a break from Eido Roshi's presence. It is abundantly and tragically clear that he does not yet have a clear understanding of how much damage he has done to the ZSS and American Zen. Without this understanding, which even a long break may not provide, I believe his continued presence, all be it highly limited and restricted, will hinder the deep healing needed to attract new students or generate a genuine opportunity for former students to return.

On this point the ZSS Board disagrees with me, and because I can no longer be harmonious with their course, I have decided after deep reflection, that I must withdraw as a sitting member of this board. Therefore, I submitted my resignation this evening. Overall, it has been a great blessing in my life to work with such a dedicated and determined group of people. I pray that any hard feelings generated by my departure, will quickly dissipate. It is my intention to attend two sesshins a year at Dai Bosatsu Zendo and I will be at the upcoming DBZ All August Sangha meeting. If a committee is convened at the August meeting to assist with the development of new bylaws, I will volunteer to join it, as I am still committed to assisting the ZSS becoming a membership-based organization, where at least the majority of the board is elected by the membership. May True Dharma grow and flourish at both DBZ and NYZ.

With palms together,

Genjo Marinello

Abbot of Dai Bai Zan Cho Bo Zen Ji (Chobo-Ji) temple, Seattle, USA; psychotherapist and certificated spiritual director.

<http://www.choboji.org>