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The Golden Wind Blows . . .

by Eido Shimano Roshi



From around the middle of September to the middle of October, the color of the leaves around Beecher Lake and Dai Bosatsu Mountain change from green to yellow and red. This has been true for countless decades. The wind becomes chilly and crisp, and this particular wind is called the Golden Wind.

*A monk asked Master Ummon,
“What will happen when the trees
wither and leaves fall?”*

*Ummon replied,
“The Golden Wind blows.”*

In the past, I have spoken on this koan many times, but today I am examining it from a slightly different perspective. It goes without saying that the monk was not asking about trees and leaves in the literal sense. Naturally, he was talking about our state of mind. When we are young, just like the trees in the mountains, we have many green leaves, such as ambition, anxiety, desire, uncertainty, as well as hopes and dreams.

When we experience a certain amount of human life, and have confronted difficulties and disappointments one after another, these leaves fall one by one, like the trees in the mountains. But when we become almost leafless, amazingly enough, we discover that we still have many hidden leaves: such things as attachment, fear of death, regret, and others.

When I read this koan, particularly in the autumn, every year I am compelled to introspect and ask myself: Can I honestly say ‘the Golden Wind blows’ in my heart?

So far the answer is,
“Not yet . . . not yet.”

When will I be able to say ‘the Golden Wind blows’ in my heart, at any time throughout the year, without experiencing any of the things I mentioned above? If there is any objective in life, this one is mine.

The other day, I received in an e-mail a short article about a therapist in Hawaii who had the ability to heal mentally ill prison inmates without even seeing them. At first, I was half-believing, half-doubting. But as I continued reading the article, I couldn’t help but agree with this doctor’s methods.

The article talked about “total responsibility.” In general, it means that we are ultimately responsible for what we think, speak, and do; and beyond that, things are out of our control. We are responsible for what we do, but not what anyone else does. Thus, we live in our own separated individual worlds, and within these small worlds, we cry with sadness and loss, and we smile with happiness and gain.

But having practiced zazen for almost my entire life, and having experienced many difficult things such as bitterness, accusations and unbelievable surprises, particularly as a foreigner coming to the U.S., my personal definition of total responsibility has changed from what I used to think. To me, total responsibility means that everything – literally every single phenomenon inside and outside of my being – is wholly a projection of myself.

It is entirely my responsibility when

things happen, including witnessing some troubled students come and go. We find it easy to blame them or dismiss them; “He’s crazy?” “She’s a piece of work.” But this is just a mere expression of our own frustration, and we don’t realize that by saying such things the situation often becomes even worse.

We don’t have the guts to accept that the problem isn’t with *them*, but it’s within *ourselves*. And to truly help others, there is only one way – that is, to improve ourselves.

More and more, I think and feel that we all live in three concurrent worlds: the smallest one is our own separate, individual world – the intimate things that we ourselves are the only ones to know; such as our childhood, school experiences, memories, friendships, and so on. For each of us, this is our own personal world, which nobody else knows as precisely as we ourselves do. The second world is the world which encompasses our society; the common cultural interests we share, and the basic feelings that we all experience together. The third world is the entire universe as one immense realm.

Within the first world, it is very easy to take personal responsibility, as its contents are solely of our own construct. We built these worlds from our own unique thoughts, feelings and experiences. There are also layers of karmic conditions accumulated over many lifetimes, even though we do not have a conscious memory of them. These are still the result of our own deeds, whether we acknowledge it or not. Within the third world, it is also relatively

'easy' to take total responsibility, because, as Zen practitioners, we are able to cultivate a state of mind through deep zazen in which any gaps or boundaries between ourselves and the vast universe often disappear.

The second world is the most difficult to accept and acknowledge our personal responsibility for. For example, the current president of the United States . . . is he also a projection of ourselves? In the Book of Rinzai, there is a saying: "Whether you are facing internally or externally, whatever you meet, kill it. If you meet a buddha, kill the buddha. If you meet a patriarch, kill the patriarch."

Now in reality, as long as you live within the second world, do you think you can expect to meet a buddha or a patriarch on Broadway? No. But without fail, from dawn to dusk, you are always meeting yourself. What Master Rinzai is saying, is to kill yourself; in other words, to change yourself. Everyone you see, whether they are a buddha, a patriarch, the President or whomever, these figures are none other than mirrors, reflecting your own self-image.

People often say zazen is difficult. The concentration required; having to endure excruciating pain . . . but that is not the point. Zazen is difficult precisely because it is so hard for us to accept these seemingly external phenomena as our own projections and reflections, or even our creations.

We often speak of compassion and wisdom. But concretely, what are they? Getting back to this Hawaiian therapist, he was asked how did he heal his mentally ill patients without ever seeing them face-to-face? He replied, "I just keep saying, 'I'm sorry' and 'I love you' over and over."

Some of you may agree immediately that this is *it*. And some of you may laugh at me. If you agree, the Golden Wind is already blowing in your heart. If not, your leaves are still attached to your tree.

Years ago, while I was attendant monk to Gempo Roshi, I went up to his quarters one day and witnessed a strange sight. He was kneeling on the floor, bowing deeply, and saying softly, over and over, "I am so sorry . . . please forgive me . . ."

When I asked him what was the matter, he told me that while entertaining a guest, he accidentally said something insensitive, and hurt his visitor's feelings. So he was apologizing to his guest by kneeling, facing in the direction of his house, and expressing his deep regret at having been hurtful, however unintentionally.

When I heard this as a training monk, I didn't get it. I thought he could wait until he next met the person face-to-face, and work to re-create a harmonious relationship. Or he could write an apologetic letter, or even make a telephone call. But once the guest's

heart was hurt, Gempo Roshi felt it very deeply in his own heart, too.

This story about Gempo Roshi, and the story about the Hawaiian therapist, are the same as Master Ummon's Golden Wind: it is *always* blowing in their hearts, as they always live in the world where there are no boundaries between 'self' and 'others.'

They have the *guts* to say "I am sorry," and in this way, are expressing deep love for each one of us.

To accept this love and say, "I'm sorry. I love you. Thank you," is far more difficult than attending Rohatsu sesshin. But we *have* to do this, otherwise the world cannot be changed.

I must mention one caution: in the Zen tradition, we often hear such expressions as 'suchness' and 'accept things as they are.' While these statements are true, they may be a bit misleading. There is an unspoken, underlying truth that things are changing moment by moment. Accepting suchness does not mean that no effort is necessary on your part. A spinning top appears to be stationary, despite its being in motion. It is precisely this motion that keeps the top suspended upright. In much the same way, the man of *buji* is the busiest man, as he needs to change himself and improve himself moment by moment. *This* is the significance of our practice.

The Golden Wind thus blows throughout the year and throughout our lives. ❖



Independence Day



by Roko ni-Osho Sherry Chayat

Thirty years ago, when Eido Roshi dedicated Dai Bosatsu Zendo, he did so as an offering to the United States of America on its bicentennial, in recognition of the struggle for independence, and the deep thought and debate that culminated in the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States—a Constitution modeled on the wisdom of the indigenous people who were here for thousands of years before the Europeans: the Haudenosaunee and their Great Law of Peace. Roshi knew that the best birthday gift he could offer to his adopted coun-

try was a place where insight into the relationship of independence and interdependence could be nurtured; where true independence could be realized.

Independence, and its associated word, freedom, have come to mean something very different over the past 230 years. Nowadays, many political and religious leaders act as if their deeds had no consequences. Individualism is the predominant creed. Responsibility based on mutual concern has almost vanished. The prevalent attitude is one of entitlement: “We live in the United States, so of course we should consume most of the world’s resources. Who better than we would know how to use them?” This is an undercurrent, often unexamined, that pervades every aspect of our lives. At a recent talk in Hong Kong, the British physicist Stephen Hawking said that the survival of the human race depends on its ability to find new homes elsewhere in the universe, because of global warming and the ever-increasing risk that a disaster will destroy the Earth. He suggested that humans could have a permanent base on the moon in 20 years and a colony on Mars in the next 40 years. However, “We won’t find anywhere as nice as Earth unless we go to another star system,” he said. More than half a century ago, e.e. cummings wrote, “There’s a hell of a good universe next door: let’s go.”

Our upside-down views about independence rest on absolute dependence, total addiction. How many times over the past 24 hours have we heard or said, “I need”? What gives dependence its force is this feeling that we lack something, and we need to find it. But the

lack is a black hole. Nothing out there—whether it’s a new car or a new lover or a new practice—can fill it, because fundamentally it stems from deep within. It is often spoken of as lack of self-esteem, a lack of self-confidence. And yet—“What do you yourselves lack?” asks Master Rinzai. Because of our erroneous equating of self with ego, we see the self as lacking, when all along it’s the edifice we’ve constructed—the ego-entity—that can never be enough. The fragile ego-entity that we think governs who we are—what Gehlek Rimpoche calls “this imposter”—insists on protecting its turf no matter what, and aggressively campaigns to command all available resources.

From the perspective of the environment, we may call it oil, and of course our addiction to fossil fuels is perhaps the biggest expression of this dependence. But oil is just the little gusher on the surface of things. Al Gore’s film *An Inconvenient Truth* is impressive not just for the way the basic principles of global warming are presented, so accessibly and with such strong impact, but because of Gore himself—his compassion, his clear conviction that only interdependence can bring about true interdependence. To understand the real causes of addiction, whether to oil or to the plethora of distractions we call reality, we need to knock down the artificial structure we’ve created out of fear and in so doing, discover that the self is void of substance, perfect and complete—emptiful.

True independence is interdependence. In this lies freedom. Nothing arises independently of anything else. Nothing

has a beginning that is not connected to everything. Nothing has an ending that does not affect everything. It’s all one. We do feel this. We come to the zendo, and something happens. We sit down and attend to the breath, and we feel this oneness, this beautiful interdependence that nourishes us, that supports this one mind, this one being. Every act that each of us does cannot help but affect not only all of us in this room, but all beings everywhere. This very sitting still, even when we want to move, is nothing but a bodhisattva act.

We are engaged in bodhisattva training moment after moment in the zendo, and outside too. Our practice is indeed inconvenient. An Inconvenient Truth! We often feel lazy: “Oh, I don’t want to get up this morning.” Sometimes I think the reason so many Jews are attracted to Buddhism is because of its inconvenience. This is probably not kosher as interreligious comments go! In Judaism there is a well-known phrase, “It’s hard to be a Jew.” The prevailing culture doesn’t support it. There are many regulations if one really wants to be an observant Jew. Dogen Zenji was a good Jew in that regard! Why are there all these rules? In Judaism it is expressed as, “Opening to You (God).” Every regulation, every stipulation, is a prayer. When someone comes back from a trip, what does she say? “Thank you, God, for allowing me to return safely.” When someone wakes up in the morning, his first words are, “Thank you, God, for granting me a new day.” When someone buys a new teapot, “Thank you, God, for the ability to buy this teapot.” It’s a very different way of living, one that many may regard as inconvenient. One is

required to stop, to open to God. One can never just take something for granted. Of course these days, this is not the way most people observe Judaism; they spend \$50,000 on a Bar Mitzvah instead.

We begin our chanting each morning with *Attha Dipa*. How much more direct could it be? You are the light itself! This was the Buddha's final teaching. And many times before that in his teachings Shakyamuni said, "Don't depend on what I say. Find out for yourself!" This is the only religion in the world, I think, where the founder says, "Don't take my word for it, have your own experience!" It's not doctrine, it's not dogma. There is no formula for the realization of supreme enlightenment, Subhuti. You've got what it takes. What does it take? WAKE UP! We find so many distractions, so many ways to avoid realizing our own light. We crave dependence even as our egocentric ideas of independence trap us in alienation. We think, my life, what am I going to do, how can I distract myself from the inconvenient questions. *Attha Dipa*: "You are the light." *Viharatha*: "Do not doubt." There is nothing else to rely on. *Attha Sarana*: "You are the refuge." We are home, already home, we are the refuge itself, just as we are, even with all our views about how we are insufficient or lacking or full of shit.

"You are the light. You are the refuge." What about this you? This is where we get tripped up! Who is this *Attha*? Thinking it's that imposter, the ego-entity, we feel overwhelmed by the way we keep falling into the same old traps, perpetuating pain and misery for ourselves and others. We feel shame at our sense of impo-

tence as war continues in our name. And finally, sick and tired of being led around by our self-absorbed negativity and craving, we resolve to put an end to them. With this resolve comes renewed commitment to break free of all the artifices, all the edifices, all the barriers—and a new-found compassion for ourselves. Ah! *Attha Dipa*! *Dhamma Dipa*: "Light of the Dharma." *Dhamma Sarana*: "Refuge of the Dharma." Where is the refuge of the Dharma? Buddha, Dharma, Sangha: the Three-fold Refuge. In this life, in this interconnected life, right here, right now, with no doctrine, no dogma, the light of Dharma is pouring through us, in spite of ourselves. We can't keep it away! Struggle as we might to avoid waking up, we just can't. We're home. Right where we are IS the refuge. Believe this. This is an interesting word, believe. Someone might ask, "What am I going to believe, if there is no doctrine?" This is why we sit, with a questioning mind. This is why we sit, with profound introspection, instead of theoretical speculation.

Someone told me, "I am thinking about how to carry my practice into everyday life. I can't be a monk in my present situation, so how can I best live this *Attha Dipa*? It seems that the kitchen is the best place to realize it." Let's think, what does our kitchen look like, right now? It's indeed a wonderful lay practice to be attentive to the kitchen. You come home and just fling your keys down on the table. But the keys do not live on the kitchen table! No, no, no, that is not their home. And then perhaps you are holding a stack of papers and you recklessly throw them down along with the keys, and they sit among the crumbs and spilled coffee.

There is a wonderful Buddhist saying, "When alone, conduct yourself as if in the presence of others. When in the presence of others, conduct yourself as if alone." If you think that others can see you, probably you won't pick your nose. When with others, are you worrying about what kind of image you have? Let it go. Just be true to this maxim, and you'll have no problem. The point is not to have some kind of inner Storm Trooper haranguing you, "Keep the kitchen neat! Do not put your keys there, hang them on their special hook!" The point is that we can feel the keys are a part of our interconnected universe; we can hear the carelessly strewn papers crying. How can we awaken to the reverential heart-mind that we truly have, that is our birthright, if we are so dismissive of what we call "insentient beings!" There is no such thing. We are in Indra's Net, and everything we have is given to us to take care of. Everything we do affects everything else. So let us be true to our birthright: shining buddhas shining upon and reflecting other shining buddhas.

Here in Syracuse, our neighbors the Haudenosaunee begin and end every

gathering, whether ceremonial or secular, with thanksgiving. This thanksgiving and the mind of *Attha Dipa* are one and the same. A thankful heart naturally feels respect for every being, whether regarded as sentient or not. The Haudenosaunee *Thanksgiving Address* is based on the belief that the world cannot be taken for granted, "that a spiritual communication of thankfulness and acknowledgement of all living things must be given to align the minds and hearts of the people with nature. This forms a guiding principle of culture." The section called "The People" is chanted thus:

"Today we have gathered and we see that the cycles of life continue. We have been given the duty to live in balance and harmony with each other and all living things. So now we bring our minds together as one as we give greetings and thanks to each other as people. Now our minds are one."

Sitting together, finding out for ourselves the truth of Buddha's awakening, now our minds are one. Thank you.❖



Just Sit and Expect Nothing

by Myochi Nancy O'Hara

If I were stranded on a desert isle, one book I would want to have with me is the Tao te Ching. I read and reread and reread this text and never tire of its message. In fact, whatever passage I open to on any given day can apply to whatever is going on in my mind and around me at that time. Sitting zazen, especially during sesshin, can be likened to sitting alone and stranded on a patch of earth in the middle of the ocean. And though I cannot bring a book to my cushion, I can and do and must bring the essence of the Tao each time I take my seat.

One passage that captures the practice of zazen and describes what we do on the cushion is the second part of chapter 15:

*Do you have the patience to wait
till your mud settles and the water is clear?
Can you remain unmoving
till the right action arises by itself?*

*The Master doesn't seek fulfillment.
Not seeking, not expecting,
she is present, and can welcome all things.*

In this version by Stephen Mitchell, I particularly like the use of the feminine, which puts a soft touch to the sometimes Sisyphean task of "not seeking, not expecting." How can we be expected to not seek, not expect? Isn't that what gets us to the cushion in the first place?

When I first heard "expect nothing," it was an exhortation from Eido Roshi the

very first time I set eyes upon him and heard him speak. It was at New York Zendo Shobo-ji soon after his return from his 1988-89 sabbatical to Japan. He was giving a Dharma talk. I was in my first year of Zen practice and completely clueless. I don't remember what else he talked about that day. I only remember "expect nothing." Three times he said it: "expect nothing! expect nothing! expect nothing!" and it has resounded within me ever since. Shocked upon hearing it, I sat stunned, wondering how does one do that? Yet somewhere underneath the shock was relief. My life up till then – I was getting perilously close to 40 – had been all about expectation. What I heard that day was: change how you be. "Stand on your head and spit wooden nickels" would have been an easier assignment. But expect nothing? Seventeen years later I am still working with this koan – for me it's simply a longer version of MU.

Other translations of the Tao, perhaps more poetic and less immediately understandable, help to deepen my awareness of this 'expect nothing' koan. D. C. Lau translates chapter 15 as:

*Who can be muddy and yet, settling,
slowly become limpid?*

*Who can be at rest and yet, stirring,
slowly come to life?*

*He who holds fast to this way
Desires not to be full.*

It is because he is not full

That he can be worn and yet newly made.

Slowly become limpid (clear, lucid, unworried); slowly come to life. Is this not what happens on the cushion? Do we not become newly made? If we sit long enough, yes. Here we're told that holding fast to this way IS the way to expecting nothing.

D. C. Lau's translation of chapter 15 opens yet another door:

*And yet who else could quietly and
gradually evolve from the muddy to the clear?
Who else could slowly but steadily move
from the inert to the living?
He who keeps the Tao does not want to be full.
But precisely because he is never full,
He can always remain like a hidden sprout,
And does not rush to early ripening.*

Buddha tells us at the end of the Diamond Sutra that if one wants to gain great merit it can be done by reciting and explaining for the benefit of others only four lines from the sutra.

*Think in this way of all this fleeting world:
As a star at dawn, a bubble in a stream,
A dewdrop, a flash of lightning
in a summer cloud,
A flickering lamp, a phantom, and a dream.*

Roshi says it takes 30 years of sitting on a cushion to gain some glimmer of understanding. "He can always remain like a hidden sprout, And does not rush to early ripening." When I lose my patience with practice and go whining to Roshi with "when, Roshi, when?" he will always say

to me in one way or another: just sit and expect nothing! Sometimes he says "suffer more," but that's for another time.

I've had the good fortune over the past 12 years to be able to introduce many people to the practice of zazen. I always say to them, if you take nothing else away from this experience, take this: just sit and expect nothing. So, not only is this my long version of MU, it's my short version of the four lines from the Diamond Sutra. But I've only been sitting for about 18 years so I've got a long way to go to 30. I am slowly, very slowly, ripening.

Dai Bosatsu Zendo, on the other hand, has reached its 30th year and is just settling into its mountain cushion. This is the real beginning of Rinzai Zen in America. Not yet ripe, I cannot help but ask: what will it look like in another 30 years? Who will I be when I turn 30? Only with the readiness of time will I know. Until then, I will just sit and expect nothing. ❖



Shaking Soyen Shaku

Daiden Chuck Young

A decade ago, when I was becoming seriously interested in Buddhism, I visited my cousin in Maine and we took a tour of the Sabbath Day Lake Shaker Village. Founded in 1747 in Manchester, England, the Shakers (or United Society of Believers) came to the United States in 1774, where they held ecstatic worship services and espoused a theology of pacifism based on Jesus' dictum to "Love thy neighbor." Other Christians naturally formed mobs to beat and stone them, but the Shakers managed to start several communities, mostly in the Northeast, with about 5000 followers at their peak before the Civil War. They worked hard, stayed close to nature, emphasized direct spiritual experience over text, wrote some of the greatest hymns in Christianity ("Tis a gift to be simple, 'Tis a gift to be free") and made starkly functional furniture that is prized by antique collectors today. As I walked around the Shaker communal farm in Maine with its beautiful old buildings and herb gardens, I thought, "Wow, this place has a certain DBZ vibe."

During the 30th anniversary celebration for Dai Bosatsu Zendo this past summer, I found myself thinking about the Shakers again. There are exactly four of them left in the world. Unless they make some converts soon, that's going to be it. Their communities live on as museums and tourist attractions, their spirit continues as a current in the deep river of American counterculture, but in the physical realm, the Shakers are history. "Is Buddhism in the West going to last longer than the Shakers?" I wondered. "Are we rooted on this mountain or are we going to blow away in the winter wind?"



I don't know, of course, and when I consider such questions, I'm sure to lose my place chanting the Heart Sutra.

Sometimes I find it easier to imagine a future for Buddhism than for humanity. As a species, we face two imminent threats to our existence: tens of thousands of nuclear weapons which are controlled by sentient beings with deeply delusional motivations; and an economic system which by law and by philosophy must maximize profit over all other considerations, including global warming and other environmental catastrophes. Trusting in the dharma requires a long leap of faith when reading the newspaper. Either we solve these problems, or we go extinct, and who knows how to solve these problems?

The first Zen master to visit America, Soyen Shaku, arrived at the World Parliament of Religions in Chicago 119 years after the Shakers got here. Having assimilated (however imperfectly) abolitionists, transcendentalists, spiritualists, Mormons, socialists, anarchists, visionary poets and hundreds of Christian sects that took wildly varying views of the Bible, America was a bit more mature in its reaction to difference and refrained

from greeting Soyen Shaku with lynch mobs. The early counterculture had cleared a space in the wilderness for Buddhism, and he returned in 1905-6 to plant a few seeds, here translated by D.T. Suzuki in *Zen for Americans*:

"Science is steadily making its progress in various fields of human knowledge, and our intellectual sphere is being constantly widened; while pious, God-fearing religionists are still dreaming of the by-gone days, when their forefathers were engaged in the so-called holy wars, or when they were conducting the most atrocious, most diabolical outrage against humanity called the Inquisition. These facts often make me pause and think of their ultimate significance, wondering how slow man's progress is in things spiritual."

Note how precisely Soyen Shaku has the problem nailed, long before the horrors of the 20th century dwarfed the insanity of the Inquisition.

"Humanity...will sooner or later come to the knowledge of a supreme moral and spiritual power which governs the universe and whose commands we are compelled under penalty of annihilation to respect and obey. Whatever circumstances may lead to a difference of conception as to the detail of the operation, the power of religion is fundamentally love--love that does not exclude nor discriminate nor particularize; and this kind of love is realizable only when we recognize naturally and rationally and humanly the divinity of all existence and the universality of truth, in whatever diverse aspects they may be considered and by whatever different paths they may be approached."

Soyen Shaku's generation, lacking the

tools we now have in America, had no choice in being "later" to realize the divinity of all existence. In the 21st century, we have the tools to be "sooner." It's that, or there won't be a 22nd century. Like the great prophets of the Old Testament, like Buddha, Soyen Shaku saw it coming, warned us and pointed to the way out.

Intellectual knowledge can be acquired through an outside agency; we of latter days may be far wiser in this particular respect than all our venerable moral and religious teachers of bygone ages, such as Socrates, Plato, Buddha and Christ. But the spiritual region lies within, and each of us must strive, through our own efforts and not through any outside agency, to unfold ourselves and bring about enlightenment. We may have high ideals, but let us remember they can be realized only after long discipline and untiring exertion. Let those therefore forever strive--those that wish to follow the fundamental idea of Buddhism." Then he quotes the Dharmapada:

*When the scholar driveth away sloth
by earnestness,
He attaineth the palace of wisdom,
Sorrowless in the sorrowing world,
And the wise one, he looks upon
the ignorant,
Even as one on the mountain-peak
looks upon one on the ground.*

From the seeds that Soyen Shaku planted a century ago, the Dai Bosatsu Zendo has grown on this mountain-peak in the Catskills. We now have the tools to change ourselves and the world. All we need is our own discipline and exertion. And maybe next O-Bon we can say a prayer for our friends the Shakers. ❖

Misogi-no-Kokyu-Ho: A Spiritual Treasure

By Yuho Carl Baldini

In Japan, near Tokyo, there is a training hall named Ichikukai dojo, where once per month, for four days, senior and intermediate members gather with new initiates to enter the world of *misogi-no-kokyu-ho*, a form of body-mind-spirit purification. An important practice from the Shinto tradition, *misogi-no-kokyu-ho* may be translated as “purification through breathing.” In the four day “*shogaku shugyo*” (first-time experience) of *misogi*, students wear traditional martial arts practice uniforms and formal-wear called *gi* and *hakama*. Eating consists of three meals per day of a barley-rice mixture, soybean paste, salted plum, and radish pickles. Students sleep on *tatami* mats. With strong encouragement and pressure from senior members, new initiates sit in the kneeling posture of *seiza*, practice deep breathing exercises, and chant eight syllables with all of their might; “*To Ho Ka Mi E Mi Ta Me*.” Training is arduous, emotionally straining, and physically exhausting. Yet it is a unique opportunity to break through self-imposed limitations and egoistic personality defenses. With the intense stimulation of *misogi*, primal life force deep in the lower abdomen is activated and the potential to directly experience the root of one’s being is at hand.

In the following paragraphs, I will describe the nature of *misogi-no-kokyu-ho*, the importance of this practice for modern man, and the recent introduction of this practice to the west. Since it is true that my practice and understanding of *misogi* is still immature, it seems essential to rely upon subjective personal experience in order to convey an adequate feeling for the *misogi* encounter to the reader. I sincerely hope that this article will stimulate curiosity in order to encourage a deeper and more personal investigation of *misogi*.



I first learned about *misogi* practice because of an interest in martial arts. In late adolescence I became fascinated with the books of Koichi Tohei, a famous master of the martial art of Aikido. Tohei, a sickly young man, believing that his death was near, desperately sought *misogi* for his own spiritual edification and clarity. Upon obtaining acceptance at Ichikukai dojo, Tohei was first introduced to Rinzai Zen (which is also practiced at Ichikukai on a regular basis) and then allowed to practice *misogi*. After experiencing both disciplines, Tohei became a devoted student at Ichikukai dojo. I was amazed to learn that as a by-product of his training, Tohei’s life-threatening infirmities were cured. I was equally impressed to learn that he went on to become one of the most skillful martial artists in Japan. Tohei Sensei’s story had great appeal to me since I too had been a sickly child who had aspirations in the martial arts. However, after reflecting on Tohei’s description of *misogi*, I became discouraged; the training sounded so severe and archaic that I assumed (incorrectly) that it could not possibly exist in the modern world. In addition, I could scarcely imagine practicing in Japan with no means of introduction to the dojo and no Japanese language ability. *Misogi* seemed to be an inspiring yet outdated and idealistic practice for spiritual warriors of ages past.

I forsook any idea of doing *misogi* at Ichikukai dojo, but continued my study of martial arts. Years later, I came to be under the discipleship of T.K. Chiba Sensei in the martial art of Aikido. I was surprised to learn that Chiba Sensei himself had been a live-in student at Ichikukai. One afternoon after Aikido and zazen practice, he looked deeply into my eyes and said, “You should go to Ichikukai and experience *misogi*.” After getting over my shock of this sudden invitation, I remembered my earlier attraction to *misogi* training. As life circumstances were arranged, at that time I was planning to live in Japan for two years while teaching English. It seemed that the opportunity of a lifetime was being granted in the form of a personal introduction to Ichikukai dojo from Chiba Sensei. I decided that as soon as possible, I would practice at Ichikukai.



My first experience at Ichikukai was as an initiate at *Shogaku shugyo*, the 4-day session mentioned previously. As I expected, the training was grueling; all of the initiates sat in *seiza* all day, chanted with what seemed like all the power that our bodies could muster, and were spurred on by senior members shouting and striking our backs to encourage deeper exhalation. Yet the experience was exhilarating. At the end of *shogaku shugyo* I experienced a profound feeling of aliveness and I became more deeply

intrigued with the potential of the human breath as a means of going beyond one’s limits. In addition, the dojo possessed a deeply impressive feeling of sincerity that seemed to pervade every corner of the building and garden. Since I was living near Tokyo, I was able to attend regularly, taking part in Zen *sesshin*, *misogi* practices, cleaning, and special seasonal training.

Over the course of time at Ichikukai dojo, it was equally satisfying to train while acting as an assistant to the initiates. Through experience, I became aware that part of the success of the first-timers lies in the commitment of the assistants to help them pass beyond their limits. In order to facilitate this “breakthrough,” it was clear that it was necessary for the assistants to exert themselves strongly, if not completely, forming a condition of mutual benefit for both the beginner and experienced person. Through this intense practice, both new and seasoned practitioners seemed to locate a source of inner strength in the midst of what appeared to be (at least on the surface) exhaustion. By the end of the four days, initiates were able to breathe with a more unified body-mind-spirit and their faces were shining and refreshed. Often, during a short mandatory speech at the farewell party, the new members shed tears of joy while expressing their gratitude for the *shogaku shugyo* experience.

It was also a privilege to be in the company of the hardworking old-time members who seemed to exude inner strength, confidence, sincerity, and kindness. Without complaint, the core members of the dojo exerted tremendous efforts in order to open the dojo to all people interested in *misogi* and Zen. They appeared to be living examples of the results of consistent and sincere practice. Overall, I felt that *misogi* breathing was helpful to developing

strength in Aikido. As mentioned earlier, this was a great initial attraction to misogi training. However, as practiced progressed, it became clear that there was a much deeper purpose to the practice of misogi than martial prowess. Perhaps this excerpt from a treatise written in 1922 by Ichikukai students can convey the mission and spirit of the dojo and misogi:

“Our practice of misogi shugyo is the desperate, ravenous, fierce and relentless seeking of truth and purity... This training is a way to devote body and soul to that quest.

Today’s world is a mess of mixed-up ideas, and young people feel lost. While misogi shugyo does not necessarily solve the problem completely, we believe it does offer a way out of the confusion.

Materialistic and emotional concerns have become convoluted and strange, leaving a world populated by masks and empty husks. Many people still huddle behind those masks; alone, afraid, and without hope. Misogi shugyo is about exploding this dualistic life, and distilling from it the true, genuine and natural state...”

-Treatise entitled “Toward the Building of a New Training Hall”

This treatise was written in 1922, yet it appears that this kind of practice may be more appropriate and necessary than ever before. Living in a world enmeshed in dualistic thinking, with the threat of obliteration of mankind by massive weaponry ever-present, we are in need of methods to strip away false veneers that may be socially acceptable, yet obscure true human nature and potential. In times past, misogi at Ichikukai dojo was virtually secret; no advertising was done and personal introduction was the standard means of entering the dojo. Fortunately, misogi practice may be more readily accessible

than ever before. Of course, shogaku shugyo can still be experienced at Ichikukai dojo in Japan. In addition, interested students now have the opportunity to have a taste of misogi training in America.

Brooklyn Aikikai is one of few (or perhaps the only) traditional school where Aikido, misogi and zazen are practiced under one roof. The chief instructor of the dojo, Robert Savoca Sensei, is a fully certified teacher of Aikido under the guidance of T.K. Chiba Sensei, a Zen student of Eido Shimano Roshi, and a misogi student of Kotaro Hiruta Sensei, the current master of Ichikukai dojo in Japan. Savoca Sensei has devoted his life to the exploration, protection, and sharing of this path. At Brooklyn Aikikai, students may practice Aikido, zazen and a short form of misogi. Interested and qualified students also have the opportunity to be introduced to the 4-day shogaku shugyo training at Ichikukai dojo in Japan. It is important to note that the first master of Ichikukai, Tetsuju Ogura Sensei, was a life-long student of Rinzai Zen, a martial artist, and a high-ranking disciple of the famous sword master Teshu Yamaoka. With gratitude to the patriarchs of the ancient disciplines, Brooklyn Aikikai seeks to embody the tradition of sincere and honest training that continuously forges the body and polishes the heart with a vibrant and vigorous spirit.

The future of misogi appears to be bright in other arenas as well. The present master of Ichikukai dojo, Kotaro Hiruta Sensei, a professor of nuclear physics who completed part of his studies at Texas A&M, has taken further steps to expand the practice of misogi outside of Japan. He has recently purchased property in upstate New York, on which will be established the International Keizen Center where misogi and Zen training will be offered in the future. In addition,

Hiruta Sensei is helping to sponsor a training hall in Bulgaria where Zen and misogi will be practiced.

Misogi-no-kokyu-ho as a method of purification and spiritual awakening has a long and honorable history and is still rigorously practiced in modern Japan. In the 21st century, this training is perhaps more valuable and relevant to humankind than ever. For those who live in the west and seek with a sincere heart, an introduction to misogi training is now closer than ever.

Let True Dharma continue. ❖

Students who are interested in Brooklyn Aikikai and/or misogi training may contact Robert Savoca Sensei at (718) 643-6044, website: www.brooklynaikikai.com or contact Yuho Carl Baldini at 631-848-9282.

In addition, interested persons can view Ichikukai Dojo’s website at: <http://members2.jcom.home.ne.jp/ichikukai/eindex.html>

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A Letter from Sister Jeannine

Dear Roshi,

It is with regret that I write to you today. I waited a long time in the hope that things would change and it did not.

Against myself I have to admit that I cannot continue to go and make sesshins anymore; my body cannot do it. It is a hard decision because it seemed to be my life and I loved it. The words of the Bible come to me constantly: “There is a season for everything, a time for every occupation under heaven.” A time for me to have gone to Dai Bosatsu Zendo and make sesshins and now a time to let go....

It is hard and painful and yet peace and gratefulness is with me. What I have done I did it with all my heart with my whole being. With the practice of Zen, I understood in a deeper way my Christian beliefs. And for this Roshi, I thank you with all my heart for your help and teaching.

I also thank the whole Sangha for their support and examples. As for my health, I am certainly much better than last year. At least I can walk and work a little but not too long at a time. My back is very weak, I have to rest every ten minutes and then it gets better.

With a grateful heart, thank you again Roshi for these 33 years of teaching and training me in the Zen way. I will always stay your student and continue as best as I can my Zen practice.

Gassho,
Jinin, Sr Jeannine Boutin D.W.

Zen in Action

by Soun Joe Dowling

Within the Zen Studies sangha, there has been a strong spirit of samu (work practice) the past few years. Many people have come together on the samu weekends to maintain and sustain our mountain monastery. Support has come from all parts of the sangha – a steady flow of members from New York Zendo, members of the Brooklyn Aikikai, the Syracuse Zendo and numerous friends of Dai Bosatsu Zendo. Some samu workers come from the local community, while others are from as far away as Connecticut, Pennsylvania, Baltimore and Washington D.C. The level of energy has been as amazing as the amount of effort that is needed to nourish such a property as DBZ.

Samu might also be described as zen in action; it is zen off the pillow, accomplishing the things that have to be done in an efficient manner. When we do samu we bring some of the same concentration and focus to the task as we do in our zazen. And, since samu is working for the dharma and not the dollar, the effort has been open-ended and expansive. A spirit of cooperation manifests itself in the selflessness of volunteering for others, and samu participants are thus flexible and willing to adapt naturally to whatever role the work situation at hand demands.

Our samu activity engages us in various outdoor activities (doing the wood, beautifying the surroundings, making repairs) and indoor activities (cooking, cleaning and maintaining the Zendo and Beecher House). Each activity is labor intensive and requires organizational effort and individual energy. Trusting in the experience, in

the zen way, somehow the energy grows and the possibilities are unlimited.

If you want to be involved in a samu weekend at Daibosatsu e-mail Soun Joe Dowling at joedwl@aol.com or call Jokei at DBZ. ❖



Little Jizo in Shikoku

by Fujin

I have just returned from a pilgrimage in Shikoku Island, Japan. I walked for nine days up to the 23rd of the 88 temples which are circling the island. Though I am not ready to write a full report on the many encounters that were part of my journey, I would like to share just one of them. Before leaving for Japan, I read as much material as possible containing other pilgrims' advice on the famous pilgrimage. Once I was on the trail, a remark I had read kept resounding in my mind, as I found it so true, and being proved several times a day. Someone had told a Buddhist priest that they were about to walk the pilgrimage, upon which the priest told them, "You will find the best and the worst of human nature. Do not be deceived by either of them." Quite often I found 'the best' and minutes later 'the worst', sometimes even simultaneously in a single event. One day in late afternoon as I was (supposed to be) approaching temple #18, the road seemed to wind endlessly, without a single sign that this was indeed, the pilgrims' walking trail. I felt pretty sure I had missed one of those tiny walking henro (pilgrim) stickers and was walking on the 'car road' instead, which quite often ends up being much longer. The more we walk on the trail, the sharper our intuition seems to become, maybe picking up the experience of hundreds of other pilgrims before us, or just being more attuned to common sense. In any case, I felt I had been walking for a little too long, and decided to ask my way around. As light rain had started to fall, cars were racing down hill, and no passer-by was on the road. I finally saw a sign saying, "Jizo Ji", obviously a temple's name. Though this was not temple #18, I thought at least someone must be there, and why not pay respect to a temple that is

not officially part of the pilgrimage. It had become part of my pilgrimage at least. After chanting to the Hondo (main altar), I turned around to find help. No one was in sight, but a couple of kids. The boy approached me, and started to ask me many questions in rough Japanese, actually quite in a disrespectful way. I decided to answer him in the best Japanese I could. "Where are you from? How old are you? Why are you dressed in such a dirty way? (As it was raining, my feet and legs looked pretty ragged) What will you do after you finish the pilgrimage...?" He seemed restlessly curious about me, yet was barely paying attention to any of my answers. Then he asked me a few questions regarding money: "How much money do you have with you? Are you going to give some to this temple? Where do you sleep at night and how much does it cost per day...?" At this I felt like replying differently, and finally said to him: "Why are you so interested in money? Money is not so important. The heart is far more important, don't you think so?" Upon hearing this, his face suddenly changed. He nodded, but I had the feeling that he had never heard this kind of statement before. After a pause, he asked in a different tone, "Where are we going when we die?" I said, "That's exactly why we do shugyo (religious practice): in order to find this out". He looked pensive for a while. He asked me what was written in my hat, and after I helped him reading my Dharma name, he said, "What a great name you have!"

I then went to the temple's living quarters and asked my way to temple #18. As I walked away, the boy stood at the gate and putting his palms together in a cute and clumsy way, he saw me off. ❖

New York Zendo Shobo-ji News

Teisho and Dokusan

Beginning this year, outside of Weekend Sesshin, Eido Roshi has been giving Teisho on the *Tettekai Tosui* (Blowing the Iron Flute Upside-Down). In addition, Roshi has been offering Dokusan on Wednesday evenings and Saturday mornings for NYZ members. Please see our website for upcoming dates.

Memorial Service for Dr. D.T. Suzuki and screening of "A Zen Life"

On Wednesday, October 18th, Eido Roshi conducted a memorial service for Yafuryu-an Dr. D.T. Suzuki, commemorating his passing forty years ago. That evening, the premiere of a new documentary film about Dr. Suzuki was screened at New York Zendo, presented by creator and director Michael Goldberg. Eido Roshi spoke about his meetings with Dr. Suzuki, and about the early history of the Zen Studies Society, an organization initially set up to fund Dr. Suzuki's work. Michael Goldberg financed his own film, which took over five years to make. Through various interviews with well-known scholars and teachers, Dr. Suzuki is lovingly brought to life. Entitled "A Zen Life," the film has had success on the independent film scene and is a most interesting and informative history of one of the pioneers of Zen in America. Michael was presented with a contribution from NYZ for his work.

Condolences to Eido Roshi and Aiho-san

This spring, Eido Roshi's youngest brother, Mr. Yasuo Shimano, passed away on April 27th after battling cancer for a year. He was the President of the Sakura Company in Japan. Eido Roshi traveled to Saitama-ken to attend the funeral service, which was attended by over 600 people, including many employees of the Sakura Company.

This fall, Aiho-san's oldest sister, Ms. Sadako Tsubota, peacefully passed away on October 25th. She had been ill and in hospital for many years. A funeral service was held for her on October 28th. Ms. Tsubota hand-wrapped 300 boxes of Ranshu-koh incense and donated them to New York Zendo as gifts for the opening of Shobo-ji in 1968. She was also present at the opening of Dai Bosatsu Zendo in 1976.

New York Zendo Shobo-ji and Dai Bosatsu Zendo each held separate memorial ceremonies and services for them. Aiho-san made a contribution to NYZ and DBZ in memory of her sister.

School Visits

In the spring, Professor Susan Landesman, teacher of Asian Religion at Drew University in New Jersey, brought 15 of her students to Shobo-ji. The morning included zazen instruction, zazen, kinhin and a Dharma Talk by Eido Roshi. It concluded with a question and answer period, which is always very lively.

This fall, for two days, NYZ hosted 45 high school students each day from Pennsbury High School in Bucks County, Pennsylvania. Natalie Jordan, teacher of World History and Culture, has been bringing her class of 10th graders to NYZ for several years now. Though sophomores, they all sit quite well and leave the zendo with an experience they will never forget.

Segaki Service

On June 18th, NYZ Shobo-ji held its annual Segaki Service with 45 people attending. Eido Roshi gave a Dharma Talk on the significance of Segaki and the impact that our zazen has on the deceased. He also spoke about the passing of his brother and how impermanence is one of the key aspects of Buddhism. Aiho-san Yasuko Shimano prepared a special meal.

Soyen Shaku / Tani Kogetsu Roshi Weekend Sesshin

In order to honor the impact that Tani Kogetsu Roshi had on Zen in the West, and in particular on NYZ and DBZ, the name for Soyen Shaku / Kaigen Weekend Sesshin was changed to Soyen Shaku / Tani Kogetsu Roshi Weekend Sesshin. A memorial service was held for both Patriarchs who passed away in the month of November. November 1st, 1919 for Soyen Shaku Roshi, and November 21st, 1994 for Kogetsu Roshi. During Teisho, Eido Roshi introduced Kogetsu Roshi, and spoke of his friendship with the former Abbot of Shogen-ji. He spoke about his early travels with him in America, his one-year sabbatical in Gifu, and stories related to Kogetsu Roshi's teaching. Three key points that exemplified Kogetsu Roshi were his generosity, his tenderheartedness, and his passion.

Jukai Congratulations

Congratulations to two NYZ students who received Jukai from Eido Roshi on November 4th. Yanti Hertanto received the name Ranshu (Orchid Raft), and Junko Fujii received the name Yusen (Eternal Spring). Ranshu and Yusen took the ten precepts as Lay Buddhist practitioners and received a Rakusu as a symbol of their commitment. We wish them well on their new lives as Buddhists.

Upcoming Events

From December 15th through January 5th, the Zendo will be closed for its winter interim period. The Winter/Spring Training period will begin on Saturday, January 6th with an All Day Sit with Eido Roshi in attendance. A Japanese Dharma Class will be presented on Saturday, January 20th.

New Year's Eve Celebration – Year of the Boar

New York Zendo will host its annual New Year's Eve Celebration and Chanting on Sunday, December 31st. Doors open at 6:15pm, and the program will begin with zazen from 7:00 – 9:30, followed by a break period. Zazen will resume from 10:30 – 11:15, followed by chanting of "Enmei Jukku Kannon Gyo" 108 times. During the chanting, each participant rings the gong and offers incense, thus ensuring an auspicious start to the Year of the Boar. Refreshments will be served. Please note that Eido Roshi will be attending the New Year's Eve Celebration at Dai Bosatsu Zendo this year.

Dai Bosatsu Zendo News

Spring Kessei 2006

Spring Kessei 2006 began on April 6th with the following residents: Rev. Fujin Butsido Zenni (Shikaryo/Inji), Rev. Jokei Kyodo Zenni (Fusuryo/Inji), Jushin David Seaman (Ino), Seizan Tomoaki Sasaki (Tenzoryo/Gyorin), and Zenchu Simon Manzer (Assistant Tenzo/Jokei). Stefan Streit (Jisharyo) also returned and was with us until May. New students joining for Spring Kessei included Shinkon Peter Glynn (Assistant Jisha) from

California, and Angelika Von Renteln and Stefanie Schelp from Germany. Part-time Kessei students included Shoen Hisako Inoue (dutifully taking on the Jisha responsibilities upon her arrival in June), Junsho Shelley Bello, Erin Roycroft and Fred Forsythe. Alexis George joined us for one month, travelling all the way from the Virgin Islands for his first taste of Zen practice. All sesshins were well-attended.

30th Anniversary of Dai Bosatsu Zendo

On July 15, 2006, the sangha gathered to celebrate 30 years of Zen practice, 30 years of struggle and dedication, but mostly to celebrate the transmission of Zen Buddhism to the West. It has been only 30 years, but it feels like much longer to those who were here from the beginning. People and events have come and gone, but the core of the practice remains the same.



As the event approached, many talented and generous spirits rushed to help create an unforgettable celebration. To list them all here would take pages and pages, so listed here are the most prominent for those sangha members who could not be present on that day.

On July 4th, we installed and dedicated a new stupa for Gempo Roshi in Sangha Meadow, where it now faces Soen Roshi's and Nyogen Senzaki's stupa. It reads "Gempo To" ("Gempo Stupa"), inscribed in his own calligraphy.

We received two beautiful wooden figures of Buddhist deities, each carved by sangha friends in Japan. Benzaiten and Fudo Myoo were dedicated in a special ceremony on July 15th, and are currently on the altar in the Dharma Hall.



Benzaiten (carved by Mrs. Myoyo Tanaka) is one of the Seven Lucky Gods in Japan – she is the Goddess of Music, Poetry and Learning, as well as the Goddess of the Sea and a Protector of Children (see first photo). She will be installed outdoors in an authentic Shinto shrine in the near future, where she will continue to protect and inspire us for generations to come.

Fudo Myoo (carved by Mrs. Soshin Nakai) is a personification of Dainichi Nyorai (Sanskrit: Vairocana Buddha) and one of the main figures of the Shingon sect. He converts anger into determination for awakening, and is represented with a furious, glaring face (see second photo). Fudo seeks to frighten people into accepting the teachings of Dainichi Nyorai. In his right hand he carries a kurikara (devil-subduing sword, which also represents wisdom cutting through ignorance), and in his left hand he holds a rope to catch and bind up demons.

Hiruta Sensei, the leader of Ichikukai Dojo, went to two sacred temples in Japan and received an o-fuda (a piece of rice paper featuring inscriptions of the deities and the location where they reside) from each place. Shinobazu no Ike (Ueno, Tokyo) hosts a statue of Benzaiten, and Kawasaki Daishi (Kawasaki City) enshrines a statue of Fudo Myoo. More than a mere souvenir, an o-fuda also carries a blessing from the temple it comes from. These 2 o-fudas were kept on an altar in Ichikukai Dojo for a while, before being carried by the members of the dojo to Dai Bosatsu Zendo on July 15th. The Shinto shrine and the two statues were purified and installed in a misogi ceremony performed by Abe-san and members of Ichikukai Dojo, plus Robert Savoca, Yuho Carl Baldini and members of Brooklyn Aikikai (see Yuho's article for more details).

Over 200 sangha members gathered on Dai Bosatsu Mountain, including many long-time students and special guests such as Japanese Ambassador Sakurai, Yamada Sensei of Urasenke Tea School, and Melvin McLeod (editor of *Buddhadharma* and *Shambhala Sun* magazines).

About 60 sangha members gathered for sesshin prior to the celebration. Yamakawa Sogen Roshi of Shogen-Ji joined us for the last four days, offering two teishos and dokusan.

With much gratitude and a renewed spirit, let us March On for thirty more years!

Ordination

On March 21st – Dai Bosatsu Mandala Day, as well as the Vernal Equinox – Jokei Megumi Kairis was ordained as a Zen Buddhist nun in a simple yet beautiful ceremony conducted by Eido Roshi. She was given the name Kyodo, which means "The Way of Reverence." The intimate ceremony was attended by Jokei's family, spiritual guardian Fujin Butsudo Zenni, and DBZ residents. Aiho-san, Seigan Zenji and several dear sangha friends from New York Zendo Shobo-ji also came to DBZ on that quiet, snowy day to provide support and convey their best wishes.

Work-Exchange 2006

The busy summer season at DBZ did not end with the 30th Anniversary Celebration; on the contrary, it kicked off an extremely productive period for the monastery. With groups coming for Open Space retreats, Intro to Zen Weekends, Samu Weekends and other programs and events, we gratefully welcomed the help of many students who joined our residents in contributing a helping hand. Participating in the Work-Exchange program this spring/summer were: Rev. Kinzan Christopher Pallm, Daishin Pawel Wojtasik, Shunsho Judith Molis, Jimin Anna Klegon, Shofu Steve Lakeman, Denshin Bruce Ackland, Reiun Steve Hartstack, Alicia Hartstack, Chimon Bill Mitrus, Chosei Heidi Flint, Jakuden Seema Christie, Yusen Junko Fujii, Manu Sassonian, Peter Lombardi, Kristen Mangione, Ryoko Sugawara, Steve Dahlem, Harry North, Adam Marelli, Ben Mayock, Elizabeth G. Lee, Arie & Natasha Cohen (who travelled all the way from Israel!), Takako Yamanaka, Yasuko Sato, Noriko Kawashima, John Lynch, Jocelyn Perry, Carlos Rivadeneira, Vajra Spook, Tim Hale, Emily Giordano, Matt Klein, Dan Perry, Ken Takeda, Shin Park, and Azhaday Asiadei.

O-Bon 2006

This summer, for the first time in three years, our annual O-Bon ceremony was unhindered by inclement weather. A stunning array of stars accompanied us as Eido Roshi led the lantern procession to Beecher Lake, where we set our lanterns afloat, and chanted for our ancestors and loved ones' safe journey to the other shore. Interestingly, this year, the spirits did not want to leave! An unusual breeze in the air and currents on the lake brought the lanterns back towards us instead of carrying them away.

This year, Aiho-san came to DBZ to add a loving and festive touch to this special holiday, preparing a gorgeous feast of traditional Japanese dishes with dedicated assistance from Seigan Zenji and Seizan Koji.

Summer Jukai Sesshin in Zürich and Introduction to Zen in Geneva

This August, at the Stiftung Felsentor zendo and retreat center in Lucerne, during the annual 5-day Summer Sesshin with Rev. Shokan Undo Zenji and the Rinzaï Zen Gesellschaft community of Zürich, five students took lay Buddhist precepts and received Dharma Names from Eido Roshi in a special Jukai ceremony. Congratulations to these five newly-born Buddhists, who also had the great fortune to travel to Dai Bosatsu Zendo for the very first time to participate in Rohatsu Sesshin this December.

Freddy Kuhn	Jundo	"Pure Way"
Sandy Kuhn	Taikyu	"Everlasting Peace"
Susanne Nyffenegger	Shonen	"Twilight Reflection"
Ute Stocker	Jikyū	"Natural Rest"
Mirjam Tanner Al-Jabaji	Jimyo	"Compassionate Clarity"

While Eido Roshi was in Switzerland, he also conducted an Introduction to Zen Weekend retreat in Geneva, co-coordinated by Omar Danial and Nigol Koulajian. After attending a few sesshins at DBZ and becoming acquainted with Eido Roshi and his teachings, Omar strongly wished to share the power of zazen practice with a demographic he felt was in dire need of some Dharma guidance. A very special thank you to Shokan Zenji and to Dr. Maiku Michael Weissert for their invaluable support throughout this and many other sangha activities, and to Omar for his gracious hospitality and enthusiasm in providing an opportunity for people in Geneva to engage in Eido Roshi's Dharma Mission.

Fall Kessei 2006

Fall Kessei 2006 began on September 12th with the following residents: Rev. Fujin Butsido Zenni (Shikaryo/Inji), Rev. Jokei Kyodo Zenni (Fusuryo/Inji), Seizan Tomoaki Sasaki (Tenzoryo/Gyorin), Zenchu Simon Manzer (Assistant Tenzo/Ino) and Shinkon Peter Glynn (Jisharyo). New to the residential community are Emily Giordano (Assistant Jisha), who joined us in August, and Bart Blank (Jokei), who has traveled from the Netherlands to be with us this Fall. As the temperatures began to drop, the warm community togetherness was bolstered by Rev. Ippo Keido Zenji and Jakuden Seema Christie, who stayed with us in October while Fujin was on her pilgrimage in Japan. Settan Vasily Apostolidis and Andrea Rook both arrived in October and will be completing the training period with us. Tenrai Fred Forsythe also rejoined our residential community in November. Finally, we

are happy to welcome back one of Dai Bosatsu Zendo's original resident students: Jinen Nancy Woodard, who, since arriving for the 30th Anniversary this summer, has provided the residential community a valuable sense of continuity with DBZ's rich history. It has been fascinating to learn how much DBZ has evolved throughout the past 30 years, yet there are still many aspects of sangha life that remain unchanged and untouchable over time.

Harvest Jukai Sesshin 2006

On November 4th, the last day of Harvest Sesshin, a Jukai ceremony was performed for five of Eido Roshi's students. Roshi, in his encouraging words, used a text by Soyen Shaku as a reference and reminder to his students:

Buddhists make ten affirmative propositions, thus . . . It is good to:

1. Save any living being
2. Practice charity
3. Be clean minded
4. Speak the truth
5. Promote friendship
6. Talk softly and gently
7. Be straightforward in speech
8. Be content with one's possessions
9. Be meek and humble
10. Think clearly and rightly



"In these various enumerations of Buddhist virtues, what is most unique are perhaps the virtues of strenuousness and those of contemplation and enlightenment. To be good Buddhists, we must not be indolent, whiling away our time to no purpose. Mere piety will not do, so long as there is some work to be accomplished for the sake of humanity and civilization. Love, again, must be accompanied with enlightenment, for the affection is very frequently wasted on account of its blindness. God fearing is recommendable, but without contemplation we wail to recognize the purport of our own position in the system of the universe. Mere passion leads to fervor and violence if not properly guided by contemplation which brings enlightenment, revealing the reason of existence and purifying the heart of ignorance."

– Soyen Shaku Roshi

That day, Mr. Hiroyuki Itsuki – essayist, author, and a major spiritual voice in Japan – came to Dai Bosatsu Zendo, accompanied by a television crew from NHK (a national Japanese broadcasting station), to witness and film the ceremony. This group has been filming the history of Buddhism and its movement from India through Southeast Asia, Tibet, China, Korea, Japan and onward to America and Europe. Two years ago, Itsuki received a prestigious award from Bukkyo Dendo Kyokai (The Society for the Promotion of Buddhism) along-

with Eido Roshi, for individuals who have made a significant impact on disseminating Buddhism from East to West. Mr. Itsuki interviewed Eido Roshi, as well as senior students and the new Jukai students for the film.

Zen Studies Society Fundraising 2005

Our annual fundraising drive brought in a total of \$50,569, of which 1/3 was allocated to New York Zendo and 2/3 to Dai Bosatsu Zendo. The Zen Studies Society wishes to thank all sangha members whose generous contributions enable us to have two beautiful places to live, to learn, to practice, and to support Eido Roshi and Aiho-san in their extensive Dharma work for years to come.

New Year's Celebration at DBZ

We invite you to join us for this joyous event. The festivities will include zazen, a chanting ceremony, a Dharma Talk by Eido Roshi, and of course a traditional Japanese-style New Year's feast (osechi ryori). We will greet the new year at midnight by ringing the bonsho 108 times. Overnight stay and brunch on New Year's Day will end the celebration. For more information, or to make your reservation, please call the DBZ office.



NEW YORK ZENDO SHOBO-JI

SCHEDULE 2007

JAN	Dec 31-Jan 1 6 20	New Years Eve Celebration (Eido Roshi at DBZ) New Years All Day Sit (with Eido Roshi) Winter/Spring Training period starts Japanese Dharma Class
FEB	10 21	Parinirvana All Day Sit Mandala Service
MAR	3 16-18 21	Japanese Dharma Class Soen/Yasutani Roshi Weekend Sesshin Mandala Service
APR	18 21	Teisho by Eido Roshi Mandala Morning Service/Japanese Dharma Class
MAY	4-6 23	Gempo Roshi/Nyogen Senzaki/ Kengan Goto Memorial Weekend Sesshin Mandala Service
JUN	9 10 20	Japanese Dharma Class Only Summer All Day Sit (with Eido Roshi) Mandala Service
JUL	3-4 14 29-Sep 5	Closed for Independence Day Segaki All Day Sit, Spring Training period ends Closed for Summer Interim
AUG	22/23 29/30	W/Thu Open for regular evening zazen W/Thu Open for regular evening zazen
SEP	6 8 14-16 19	Fall Training period starts, Teisho by Eido Roshi Japanese Dharma Class Shobo-ji 39th Anniversary Weekend Sesshin Mandala Service
OCT	20 21	Japanese Dharma Class Only Bodhidharma All Day Sit (with Eido Roshi)
NOV	10 16-18 22-24	Japanese Dharma Class Soyen Shaku/Kogetsu Tani Weekend Sesshin Closed for Thanksgiving
DEC	1-8 13 14-Jan 8 31/Jan 1	Rohatsu Week: 1 sit added Fall Training Ending Teisho by Eido Roshi Winter Interim, Zendo Closed M-Tue New Years Eve Celebration

DAI BOSATSU ZENDO KONGO - J I

SCHEDULE 2007

JAN	Dec 31-Jan 1 12-15	New Years Eve Celebration with Eido Roshi Martin Luther King Jr. Weekend Sesshin
FEB	17-18	Parinirvana All Day Sit
MAR	7-11	March –On 5 Day Sesshin
APR	5 7-15 27-29	Spring Kessei Begins Holy Days Sesshin Intro to Zen Weekend, Samu Weekend
MAY	11-13 18-20 26-Jun 3	Intro to Zen Weekend Samu Weekend Memorial Day Sesshin
JUN	15-17 22-24 30-Jul 8	Intro to Zen Weekend, Samu Weekend Samu Weekend Anniversary Sesshin
JUL	10	Spring Kessei Ends
AUG	3-7 11-12	Summer Samu 5-Day Sesshin O-Bon
SEP	12 21-23 29-Oct 7	Fall Kessei Begins Intro to Zen Weekend Golden Wind Sesshin
OCT	12-14 27-Nov 4	Intro to Zen Weekend Harvest Sesshin
NOV	22-23 30-Dec 8	Thanksgiving Celebration Rohatsu Sesshin
DEC	10 31/Jan 1	Fall Kessei Ends New Years Eve Celebration

