

PRIMARY POINT

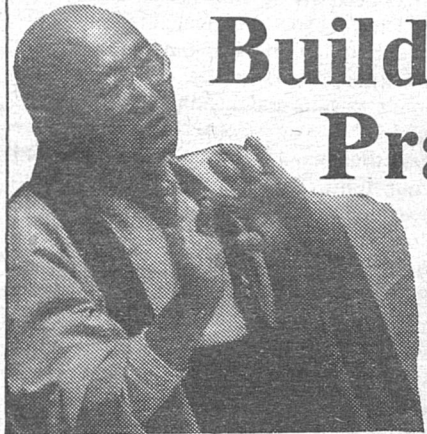
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Soen Sa Nim's New Teaching in Europe:

Four Posts to Build a Strong Practicing House



Zen Master Seung Sahn

by Do Mun Sunim,
Abbot, Paris Dharma Center

Photo by Do Mun Sunim

The Buddha used expedient means to enlighten all beings. In 1972, when Zen Master Seung Sahn first came to the West, he adapted Korean Buddhism for the minds of his American students. On recent trips to Europe, he has been changing his teaching style to meet the needs of European students, and to reflect the changing condition of human beings and the world. He calls this "the teaching of the Four Posts" and has called upon the abilities of Dr. Danette Choi, founder of Hawaii Dharma Temple in Honolulu, and an American Kwan Um Zen School monk, Mu Sang Sunim.

Zen Master Seung Sahn's style has always been to first teach students their correct direction, then help them develop a strong personal center. In the past, if someone asked Soen Sa Nim (which means "honored teacher") about practicing the martial arts to make one's center strong, he always said, "That's only technique. Why you do it is most important."

Soen Sa Nim is very proud of the School's teaching which unites formal practice, kong-an study, and everyday life, not only in theory and formal practice, but also in the very structure of life at the School's Zen centers. In Dharma talks and interviews, he teaches correct cognition. But he has always said, "Only understanding cannot help you. Getting a strong before-thinking center is necessary. In the past, a person could hear one word, go to the mountains and just sit for three years and attain true nature. But nowadays human beings' minds are too complicated. Also this world is very complicated and changing very fast. It is not possible to just sit and become clear. If you want to attain true nature, if you want to change with this universe, you must find a way to quickly connect your energy and universal energy."

In 1982 Soen Sa Nim started a very strong regime of doing 1000 bows a day and getting up every night from midnight until 2 a.m. for special practice. During that time he developed Soen Yu (Zen Wind) and Soen Pung (Zen Dharma play). He has been refining and elaborating these ever since. They are a series of exercises designed to

quickly cut thinking, connect our energy with the energy of the universe, and help us return to our true nature. They are like old Taoist practices, but the direction is to learn how to use this energy. Kwan Um Zen School monk Mu Sang Sunim has been studying and practicing these techniques for the past four years with Soen Sa Nim and is now master of Soen Yu. Last fall Soen Sa Nim asked him to teach these practices in Europe.

Many people experience deep blockages in their lives and practice, blockages that are physical, emotional, spiritual and in relationships. Soen Sa Nim has been encouraging Dr. Danette Choi (see the previous issue of *Primary Point* for an article on her background) to spend more time in Europe teaching people. This past fall, in all of the School's workshops and retreats in Spain, England and France, the first unified teaching of the Four Posts was offered, as Soen Sa Nim said, "to build a strong practicing house."

The Four Posts were (1) Mu Sang Sunim teaching Soen Yu and Dharma play; (2) Dr. Choi giving Dharma talks, personal coun-

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NANCY WILSON ROSS 1901-1986

The internationally acclaimed editor of *The World of Zen* and author of numerous books and articles on Buddhism, Nancy Wilson Ross (who was known to many people as Mrs. Stanley Young) died in Vero Beach, Florida, on January 18. She was 85 years old.

The famous Buddhist scholar Sir Herbert Read said of *The World of Zen*, "This is the book we have been waiting for—one that would gather into a single comprehensive volume the main features of an Eastern philosophy that is becoming a creative force in the Western World. Zen is a way of life, of universal relevance, and this volume, which makes it accessible, is likely to have a wide influence on our culture."

A member of the board of the Asian Society of New York City, Ms. Ross was the author of *Three Ways of Asian Wisdom and Buddhism: A Way of Life and Thought*, in addition to a number of novels including *The Return of Lady Brace*. She wrote an introduction to Yukio Mishima's *The Temple of the Golden Pavilion*, a novel about a Buddhist priest.

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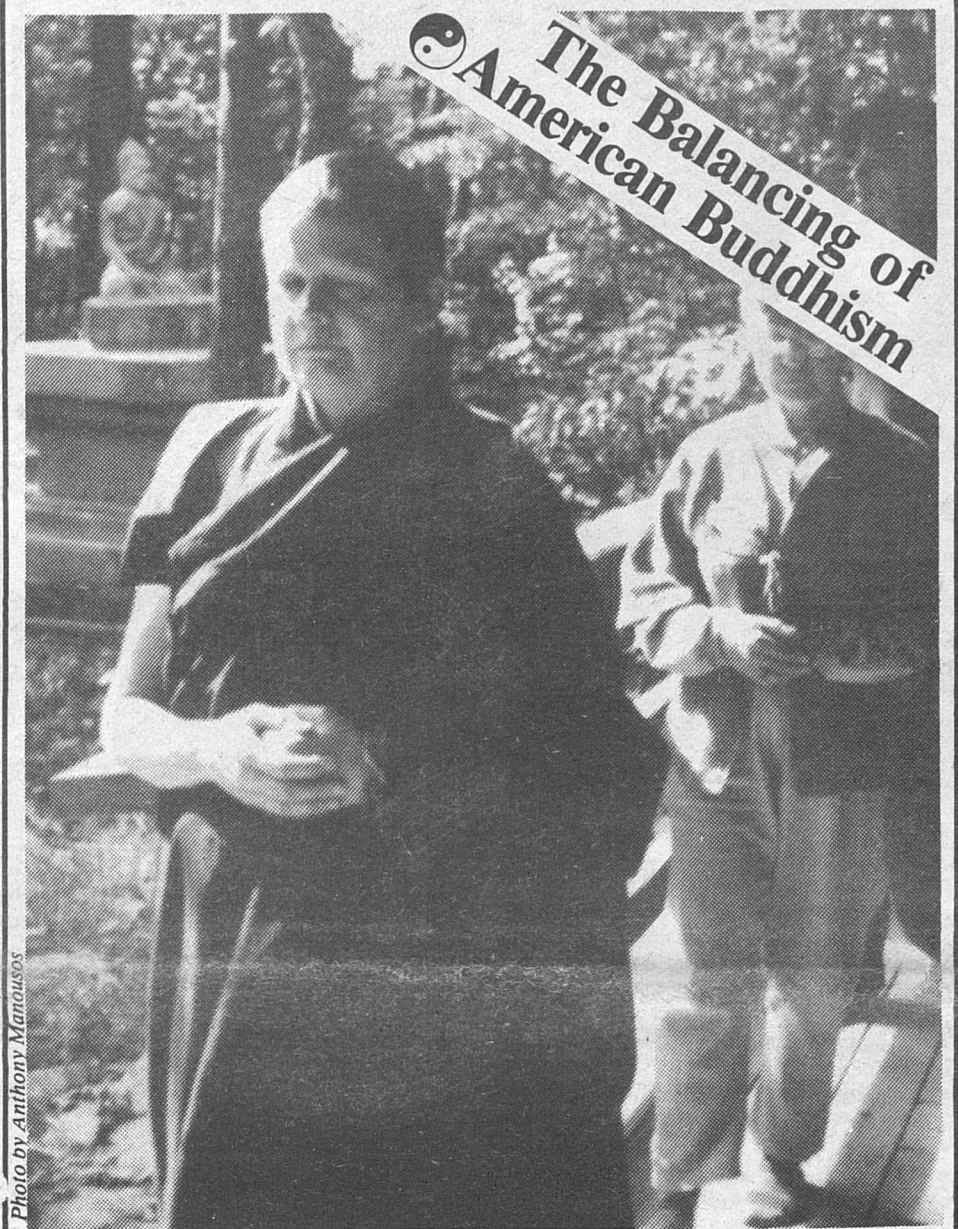


Photo by Anthony Manausos

PEMA CHODRON leading walking meditation at the September conference.

Four noted American women Buddhist teachers explored the changing face of American Buddhism in a conference entitled "The Balancing of American Buddhism" held last September at the Providence Zen Center in Cumberland, RI. The conference, the third in an annual series focusing on women Buddhist teachers, drew over 120 participants for the weekend of talks and discussions. Preceding the conference, Maurine Myo On Freedgood, Roshi, of the Cambridge Buddhist Association, led a three day Zen meditation retreat attended by 45 people.

In this issue of *Primary Point* we present three of the talks and a sizeable portion of the lively Saturday night panel discussion with all four teachers. Unfortunately, transcribing and editing were not able to be completed on Ruth Denison's talk in time for this issue. It will be included in the May issue. Complete transcripts of all the talks and panel discussions may be ordered at \$2.50 each from The Director, Providence Zen Center, 528 Pound Road, Cumberland, RI 02864.

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seling and Zen energy healing; (3) Tony Sager (Providence Zen Center Director) and Do Mun Sunim (Paris Zen Center Director) teaching the formal practice style of the Kwan Um Zen School (chanting, bowing, sitting and together action living) and "don't know" mind; (4) Soen Sa Nim giving interviews, Dharma talks and the overall direction.

they are a well-known meditation training center and model for spiritual communities throughout Spain. Twenty children, including toddlers, live together in a separate brightly colored building. They have their own complete house, shared 4 children to a room, eat together, have a large bathroom with little sinks and toilets, and are taken care of by 2 or 3 young adults who live with them.



Soen Sa Nim, Dr. Danette Choi and Joan Insa teaching at Arco Iris ("Rainbow Path"), Spain, in October 1985.

Soen Sa Nim's teaching is very wide and simple. But in just sitting, he says, people get caught between repressing their karma and acting it out. "Vacillating between the two," he said, "you cannot get anywhere. So the Four Posts are necessary. Soen Yu exercises are simple but powerful. Dr. Choi's perception of people is deep, meticulous and has the direction of helping people find their true nature and save all beings. Our School's great together-action teaching always connects kong-an study, formal practice, and everyday life. The Enlightened action of a Zen Master is the embodiment of a simple clear mind."

Teaching in Spain

Europeans have a long intellectual history and are very sophisticated spiritually. Many people are now deeply dissatisfied with their tradition and are turning to Buddhism in its many forms. Along the way, we met many people who are studying Buddhism, have founded centers or communities, and are hungry for spiritual practice and good teaching.

After visiting West Germany and Poland in October, Soen Sa Nim, Mu Sang Sunim and Tony Sager flew to Palma de Mallorca, Spain. They were met by Dr. Choi and myself, who had arrived from Paris a few days earlier. Dr. Choi had spent busy days giving personal counseling and had led a long Dharma play session for Zen Center members in a beautiful house in the mountains above Palma which belonged to Pilar Barcelo and Pedro Pomar.

With Joan and Antonio Insa and other members of the Palma Zen Center, we held a large retreat. Mu Sang Sunim taught Soen Yu. Soen Sa Nim and Dr. Choi gave two public talks followed by healing sessions. In the crowded quarters of the Zen Center, about 140 people attended each event. A Sunday visit to the house in the mountains ended late at night, with lots of talk about kong-ans, and lively Dharma combat in Spanish and English over wine, cheese, almonds and olives.

After a week in Palma, we flew to Barcelona and drove up the coast to Arco Iris, "Rainbow Path," a meditation community in the mountains 3km from the sea. Forty adults live together in an old Spanish mansion. Living, eating and working together,

The community also built a large simple Dharma room, divided into two sections by a movable wall. You enter a room lined with 40 or 50 mattresses for sleeping during retreats, and then continue on into the meditation room. All the adults had moved up to the Dharma room to do a silent 3 day retreat, in anticipation of our coming.

We opened with a workshop and a talk on our practicing style, followed by a full morning of sitting. Soen Sa Nim gave interviews to about 50 people, with Joan Insa translating. Soen Sa Nim said, "Everyone got 'primary point' during the first interview," so the afternoon Dharma talk by Dr. Choi and questions answered by Soen Sa Nim was quite lively. They taught everyone the "second course," correct function and correct relationship.

Dr. Choi explained Zen energy healing and demonstrated it. People would come up to her and bow one time, then sit down in front of her. She would tell them such things as "You have a back problem," or "Your energy gets stuck here," or "You get headaches all the time," or "You have a thyroid problem." Then she would give them energy, and often advice. People were struck by her ability to immediately perceive where their problem was, and seemed quite relieved by her help.

Mu Sang Sunim taught everyone the beginning Soen Yu exercises, then led the group in an hour of kido chanting (repetition of the Bodhisattva Kwan Seum Bosal's name). He gave a closing talk. People seemed sad to see Soen Sa Nim and his company leave.

We headed deeper into the mountains that night and arrived at Comunidad Ahabad (Arabic for love), a community of 20 people who practice together in an old stone farm house. They hold meditation retreats attended by people from all over northern Spain. The community has a large barn housing many animals, including a herd of goats. From the milk of the goats cheese is made and sold to support the community. Recently a large cinder block Dharma room was built below steeply terraced gardens. Many Ahabad members originally practiced at Arco Iris and had learned of Soen Sa Nim from Joan Insa, when he traveled around Spain a few years ago giving talks and leading workshops. Eight Ahabad

members had traveled to Palma Zen Center to practice with Soen Sa Nim on his previous visits.

Soen Sa Nim was impressed with the setting and said it was one of the strongest geographical locations he had seen outside of Korea. Of course, he told the Ahabad members to move their new building a little to the left! He also said the animals took too much energy. "Before, the animals all practiced together as human beings, but now they are living here together as animals. So correct practice, correct direction are necessary."

Ahabad had no electricity and only wood heat. The Dharma room had no heat at all. The 50 people who came for the three day retreat stayed together in the Dharma room. Everyone looked like monks or yogis, wrapped in blankets during meditation. Spanish people keep very still while sitting. Mu Sang Sunim had taught Soen Yu the first day, and both nights you could hear people practicing the exercises in the dark, before going to bed.

We all arose at 4:15 am so there would be time to trek up to the main house and the large communal bathroom. Later in the quiet starry morning and cold mountain air, people went up the paths and dirt steps of the garden, in groups of five with flashlights, to see Soen Sa Nim for interviews. Pedro and Pilar helped it run smoothly and Joan Insa, as always, translated.

A small gasoline generator far out in the fields gave us dim light for chanting. The Heart Sutra sounded beautiful in Spanish. Later, meals in huge pots were brought down from the main house in the back of a car.

Dr. Choi's Style of Teaching

During the retreat, Dr. Choi answered questions after a Dharma talk. One student said, "I live alone and have a 15 month old son. I am terrified to be with him. I keep wanting to hurt him. Why is this happening? What can I do?" The girl became quite emotional.



ZEN ENERGY HEALING is demonstrated by Dr. Danette Choi, her back turned to the camera

Dr. Choi told her to come up front and whispered to her, through the translator. She said, "I wasn't planning to do this, but this girl wants me to help her, so I will show you." She turned to the girl and said, "When you were 3 and a half years old, your family situation became very hard. You were very insecure and began to make many problems for your family. This lasted a long time." The girl nodded. "When you were 14, you had to make a big decision. But you made the wrong one and went the wrong way. You have been suffering more and more ever since."

The girl began to cry. "It has been getting worse the last three years," Dr. Choi continued. "Now you are scared to be with your child. You are almost completely lost, but a little part of you wants to find help. That's why you came to a retreat like this. It is very important that you make this part of you stronger. While you are here, try very hard to learn everything."

"Learn how to practice. This can help you fix your problems and care for your child. If you want, we can talk more later, privately. Also, I hate to tell you this, but in a past life you abused a lot of men. That's why you find it difficult to find love in this life. So practice hard, then you can eliminate this karma." The girl looked much calmer and smiled.

Dr. Choi is becoming very well known for her ability to perceive people's karma and her personal counseling and healing. She has been giving Dharma speeches, teaching Dharma speeches, teaching Zen meditation, and helping the Paris and Palma Zen Centers grow. But she says perceiving people's karma and healing people is not special. "If your consciousness is very clear, other people's karma is just reflected in your mind. Then how you use this is very important."

"Only perceiving karma is like fortune telling. You must use it to help people attain a great question—'What am I?' When I was a child, I could perceive people's karma. But I understood that that wasn't enough, so I went to look for a good teacher to study Buddhism and attain True Nature. When someone comes, I tell them what their problem or pain is, how they got it, when it appeared, why and what their karma is and how to fix it. I want to give them relief and fix their problem, but also I want them to understand what this life is and teach them to eliminate karma, to find True Nature and the correct function of this life. Then moment-to-moment, they can help themselves and save other people."

"If you are practicing, you can see your karma and fix your problems. But many students don't practice correctly, even older students. They get stuck, then they can't believe their practice. That's a mistake. Also, many non-practicing people do not want to find their true self. They just want to feel better or have a better life. So first you must just help them. Then you must wake up their practicing mind. Then you can teach them correct practice and correct life."

Many people in Paris and Palma practice mantra at home and then come to the Zen Center for together action and teaching. In particular, Dr. Choi has helped many people with their marriages. People say she is easy to identify with because she is a layperson. She lives a social life and understands their lives. Soen Sa Nim says her teaching style is very important and different from most people who perceive karma or do healing. He added, "Also much more meticulous and correct than psychiatry or psychology. She teaches not only how to fix lives, but also how to eliminate karma and get enlightenment. That means clearly perceive and help them find their direction. Pain and problems all come from karma. If we make karma clear, pain and problems disappear."

Thus Soen Sa Nim's current teaching in Europe proceeds. In the same manner as in Spain, two-day workshops followed in October and November in London and Paris. On Nov. 16 in a rented room, the first Precepts Ceremony in France was held, officiated by Soen Sa Nim, Dr. Choi and Mu Sang Sunim, who conducted the whole program in French.

People came from Spain, England, Germany, Poland and the south of France to participate in the workshop and take Precepts. Thirteen students including a father and daughter came from these countries and the United States and Cameroon, to take Five Precepts, the first five lay vows of Buddhism. Darek Gorzewski of Poland came from Germany (where he was working), to take Bodhisattva Monk Precepts.

With so many people from different countries staying in the small Paris center, helping through the busy weekend and connecting with one another, a strong feeling of European sangha has appeared. □

Photo by Do Mun Sunim

Photo by Do Mun Sunim

TWO KYOL CHE RETREATS UNDERWAY IN USA AND KOREA

Two 90 day intensive meditation retreats are underway, one in Cumberland, RI, and the other in Korea. This year the Diamond Hill Zen Monastery and Providence Zen Center combined their Kyol Che retreats into one. Master Dharma Teacher Lincoln Rhodes led the first three weeks and then left for an extended solo retreat in Western Massachusetts. His wife, Master Dharma Teacher Barbara Rhodes, has taken over as the retreat leader.

Ten people started sitting January 5 at the monastery, including two Korean monks. The monastery is located on a picturesque knoll overlooking a pond and is surrounded on three sides by woodland.

Brief excerpts from the Dharma talks at the opening ceremony follow.

Master Dharma Teacher Barbara Rhodes: "This is the time to tighten our practice. Just as our heart contracts to force the life-giving oxygenated blood through our bodies, so our practice must contract. A strong 'practice contractor' is extremely important; it gives us insight, focus and direction.

The rest between Kyol Che's is equally important. We call it 'Hae Jae.' Just as the heart muscle must expand and rest, so must we enter Hae Jae and allow the fruits of our practice to show us our way...Our oxygenated blood knows how to enter each cell. Our Dharma light knows how to enter all beings."

Master Dharma Teacher Lincoln Rhodes: "Everyone has ghosts. We're lucky enough to have a better situation so that we can come to practicing as a way of seeing our ghosts and coming to terms with them....Having a chance to sit is really a chance to see our mind making opportunities. There is no limit to the number of things that this mind could get involved with and have good feelings or bad feelings about, like or dislike, happy or unhappy.... In taking the opportunity to sit a retreat, you can't blame it on anybody. So you see all those things. If we can be honest and just sit there and see the mind do its thing, we'll have to take responsibility for it. That's actually a staggering thing to do—to own up to being the source of all those mind states...A retreat is a great opportunity to take away those painful states and to enjoy the space that's left when we're not all caught up in that stuff."

A total of 130 people sat parts of the historic first 90 day meditation retreat held last summer at Warsaw Zen Center under the direction of the Kwan Um Zen School of Poland. American teachers were able to lead parts of the retreat, including Master Dharma Teacher Barbara Rhodes and Polish-born Jacob Perl, who traveled to Poland twice from his home base in New York City to open and close the retreat. Many students from other Zen sanghas in Poland participated. Dharma Teacher Robert Genthner, a psychologist and director of the Lexington, KY, Zen Center, accompanied Bobby Rhodes in August and led a communications workshop.

An excerpt from a letter from Jacek Szezan, Head Dharma Teacher of the Krakow Zen Center, follows.

"I did not write to you for a long time because I had been sitting at our first Polish Kyol Che for 90 days. I am very happy I did it, in spite of big troubles with my leg during one month. Only two persons finished all 90 days—me and Ania Arseniuk, who was Kyol Che housemaster. Our Abbot Andrzej (Czarnecki) was sitting for 69 days, and 5 other people sat for 49 days. Conditions of this sitting, as you know, were very difficult, because it was impossible to avoid contacts with people living in Warsaw Zen Center and guests, especially in the kitchen and in the bathroom. But if we were able to keep practice in those conditions, we will be able to do it in our everyday life.

Basia (Bobby) and Jakub (Jacob) were teaching us wonderfully and were checking our minds hardily. How much trash we still have in our heads, how many difficulties in keeping practice in our everyday life! How much we "know" still! All this stimulated



Photo by Do Mun Sunim

TAKING PRECEPTS in Korea just prior to starting a 90 day intensive retreat in the mountains are (l to r) Arno Schuh of Germany; Do Won Sunim (formerly Nancy Brown of Cambridge, MA, Zen Center); Do Ryeon Sunim (formerly David Ledebor of Seoul International Zen Center); and a Korean monk.

Not Only Hui Neng's Mistake

What is this?

The Sixth Patriarch made the name "originally nothing;" so he made all sentient beings stupid.

The Seventh Patriarch said, "If you practice originally nothing you can get something, but don't get caught on it and become a sentient being;" so he made all sentient beings not know what to do with their bodies.

*Mang Gong Zen Master drew a circle O
He only made a hole.*

If I were there, I would hit those 3 sentient beings and feed them to the hungry fish.

Hey you stupid sentient being!

Don't make originally nothing!

Don't make not being as a human being!

Don't make O too!

Then, What is this?

When there is universe, become universe.

When there is ocean, become ocean.

When there is Buddha, become Buddha.

When there is Kwan Seum Bosal, become Kwan Seum Bosal.

Everytime you see, reflect.

Become one, same body

Just like a mirror

There is no name, no form.

What is this?

KATZ!

Sun setting, moon appears

Autumn night, cold wind

Makes you pull your coat up

Honey, it's cold, can I put another blanket on you?

October 22, 1985

Ji Kwang (Dr. Danette Choi)

First Polish Kyol Che Retreat A Big Success

us to hard practice. We did 1200 bows every day and we were trying, trying, trying...

Bob (Genthner) helped us a lot with his workshop and we have seen how it is possible to help ourselves and other people. During all the Kyol Che 130 people were sitting. They were not only from our school but from Vajrayana (Karma-Kagyü), from Roshi Kaplan's group ("Sangha") and Gempo Sensei's group (Kanzeon) too. In the first part 25 people were sitting; in the 2d, 19; in the 3d, (the extra-intensive week) 55; in the 4th, 13; in the 5th, 20.

It was great experience, unusual for our Polish sangha but it was nothing special too: how is Kyol Che different from everyday life? And it is hopeful for the future, that 70% of Kyol Che participants had not even Five Precepts...

In October, Soen Sa Nim came for eight days for a flurry of retreats, ceremonies and a wedding. Jacek continues, "Soen Sa Nim

came on Wednesday, October 16, and the YMJJ (retreat) for Dharma teachers started this day, too. On Thursday a 3-day retreat was started. Almost 160 people took part in this retreat. We had never seen such a crowd in "Do Am Sa" temple (The Warsaw Zen Center). In the Dharma room (50 sq. meters) about 100 people were sitting in six lines (!), and a lot of people were sitting in the little room before the Dharma room (place of robes and bowls) too. All others were sitting in other possible places. We all had one toilet and one bathroom. But it was ok, as usual...

Soen Sa Nim was very strong and had very good sense of humor. He gave some wonderful Dharma talks and answered a lot of questions. He was invited by Gempo Sensei's students. It was a very fine meeting with about 50 people in a very small room. He was invited by Roshi Kapleau students too...

The Korean Intensive

The retreat at Su Dok Sah temple in Korea started November 27 and included 12 people from six countries: Korea, Canada, U.S., Germany, England and Spain. Two American students took novice monk vows in a Precepts Ceremony November 23 officiated by Soen Sa Nim: former Cambridge Zen Center director Nancy Brown became Do Won Sunim, and Seoul International Zen Center director David Ledebor became Do Ryeon Sunim. At some point during the retreat, the 8 overseas people will have to go to Japan for one day in order to renew their 90 day Korean tourist visas.

The retreat, originally planned to be held at the tiny mountain temple Jeung Hae Sa, could not take place there because the heating system of the Son Bang (Zen room) needed repair. Therefore participants are sitting down at the bottom of the mountain at bustling Su Dok Sa, a major tourist attraction in the middle of a national park. Excerpts from a letter from Do Ryeon Sunim follow.

"Soen Sa Nim says the "wind water" energy of the temple here is very good. A very busy place, with construction of a lecture hall in progress on one side of the Son Bang, and many tourists visiting the main Buddha hall on the other side. I asked SSN about practicing in a noisy place and he said, "If you attain quiet in quietness, that is not true quiet. If you attain quiet in noise, then that is true quiet." So we are all following our School name and only Perceiving World Sound.

We chant, bow and sit, all in the Son Bang. This is very different from the traditional Korean style Kyol Che. They only bow 3 times (instead of 108) to the Buddha in the morning and evening, and sit all day. So this new style with chanting and bowing is difficult for them to understand sometimes. But we are only going straight for 90 days.

The monks here at Su Dok Sa are very wonderful. The Abbot, U Chon Sunim and the resident Zen Master, Won Dam Sunim, are very kind and always try to help us. Sometimes one or two Korean monks sit with us, also some "Bo Sal Nims" (women devoted to the temple) come to sit with us. We get to take a hot bath once a week, "whether we need one or not."

The retreat will end in late February and participants will be able to travel around Korea sightseeing.

On Tuesday, Mu Sang Sunim (an American monk accompanying Soen Sa Nim) prepared a big ceremony for 49 days after his father's death. About 50 people took part in this ceremony. It was the first ceremony like this in Poland, and it was a really exciting experience for all of us. On Tuesday was the public meeting with Soen Sa Nim in the Institute of Psychology in Warsaw. About 400 people came to this meeting, especially psychologists, professors and students of psychology. After this meeting a lot of people came to SSN to give him thanks for his teaching." □

NANCY WILSON ROSS

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Born in Olympia, Washington, on Nov. 22, 1901, she graduated from the University of Oregon with interests in the arts and philosophy of Asia. She studied at the famous Bauhaus in Germany in its last two years before Hitler. In 1939 she made her first trip to China, Korea and Japan, a trip which greatly influenced her and which was the first of many. She wrote on Asian subjects for many years for numerous magazines, including *The Atlantic Monthly*, *Harper's Bazaar*, *Horizon*, *Mademoiselle*, *The New Yorker* and *Vogue*. In 1964 she lectured on Zen at the Jungian Institute in Zurich, Switzerland.

Since her husband, Stanley Young, died in 1975, she had been living most recently in Old Westbury, New York. Contributions in her memory can be made to the non-profit Callipeplon Society, 44 Montgomery Street, Thirtieth Floor, San Francisco, CA 94104 for the Parallax Press, a Buddhist publishing project.

OBSTACLES AS OUR TEACHERS

BY PEMA CHODRON



I'd like to talk about the notion that obstacles can be our teachers. First, I want to discuss the whole logic of precepts in terms of relating to obstacles. Precepts have to do with simplifying. It's like having a large white canvas. Because it is so simple, you notice when even the tiniest speck of dust lands on it. You take a ballpoint pen and make a tiny dot and everyone can see it, as opposed to the usual situation of a canvas with a lot going on. On a busy canvas, you couldn't find that dot if you searched with a magnifying glass for a long time. Simplifying has a lot of power to teach you about yourself.

The whole notion of obstacles is just from our point of feeling that we've been intruded upon. Nevertheless, it causes a great deal of pain. We can feel like we're wearing dark glasses, ear muffs, layers of mittens and boots and that we don't experience our existence at all. The obstacle creates in all of us here, and in many people in the world, a great longing to figure out how to be free of that sense of separateness. You want to hear the birds singing, to taste your coffee. You want to feel fully alive and you aren't, so you call that "obstacle."

From the point of view of anyone who's pretty well or completely woken up, there really aren't any obstacles. When you look out of your eyes at the world, it seems rugged and smooth, bitter and sweet, hard and soft, fiery and cool, but you don't consider that a problem, but as reality. Precepts is like ground logic and it pervades the mind of meditation. It's the logic of simplifying things down to a point where you can see clearly, and allowing a lot of space so that insight or self-awareness can occur. If there's silence, you hear the birds.

The interesting thing is that even if there's a silence, sometimes you still don't hear the birds, because there's so much noise in your head. From the very compassionate and wise viewpoint of the Dharma, the way to work with an obstacle is not the way we usually proceed: "I hate this situation! I wish it would go away. If it weren't for my mind, my meditation would be perfect. If I jog every morning, I will be better than I am now. If I meditate well, I will be better than I am now."

This is a subtly aggressive attitude toward ourselves and reality. From the compassionate and intelligent viewpoint of the Dharma, to work with an obstacle is to become intimate with it. You can't get rid of ego, you look at it. You become very intimate with yourself and your world, but it begins with your own mind. So the logic of precepts is to simplify things.

Traditionally, this is referred to as "refraining from causing harm" or "refraining from continuing the chain reaction." Precepts acknowledge that all kinds of things occur in the mind. For example, you would like to punch that person right in the nose. You would really like to gossip and slander them, or post their name on a list in the hallway. You would like to harm them through your actions and speech. Everyone has these feelings.

This basic logic, the ground of discovery or of being truly inquisitive, is to simplify things so that you can see what occurs in your mind. The trick is to see it as a pathway towards developing loving-kindness towards yourself and others, rather than as a pathway to self-denigration. Meditation is very helpful. But precepts have to do with either ceasing to cause harm through your actions or through speech. They are considered broken only by the act of breaking them. You don't break the precept of lying unless somebody believes you. You don't break the precept of killing unless you really wanted to kill and the being is dead. The same is true of the precepts about sexual misconduct, drinking, stealing and drug abuse.

Begin With Not Harming

The way I have been taught about precepts is to begin with simply not harming. This goes a long way toward reducing chaos in your life and in the lives of others. Things are a lot simpler if you don't punch the guy in the nose, because punching him starts off a whole chain reaction of emotional upheav-



Photo by Sonia Alexander

val on everyone's part, as we all know.

Maybe you're a person who has punched others quite often. It's a habitual pattern. You grew up in a family where everyone punched. To keep the precept, you feel as if you would have to tie your hands down, because punching is so habitual. The point is, you learn a lot from the arising of the impulse, from the longing to complete that act. What is it that comes up in you that makes you want to act? Insight or self-discovery is actually the whole idea.

There's another important point in precepts, about authority figures. No one tells you that you have to do this. In fact the whole logic of monasticism is that more than anything, you want to find out how it is that you keep yourself deaf and dumb, now you keep circling around the same old things year after year. In the process, you don't discover exactly how, but you become so familiar with yourself that the insight itself is what brings freedom and opening and softening.

The important thing is that no one tells you that you have to do this. Keeping precepts comes from a real desire to know. Meditation can also be looked at in this way, like a mirror. It's as if someone videotaped you all day long and at night you had to sit down and look at yourself. Meditation is your most compassionate and loving friend, rather than your critic. There's no way for human evolution to flourish and go forward into the unknown, without people becoming very familiar, in an unjudging way, with how things are in the moment.

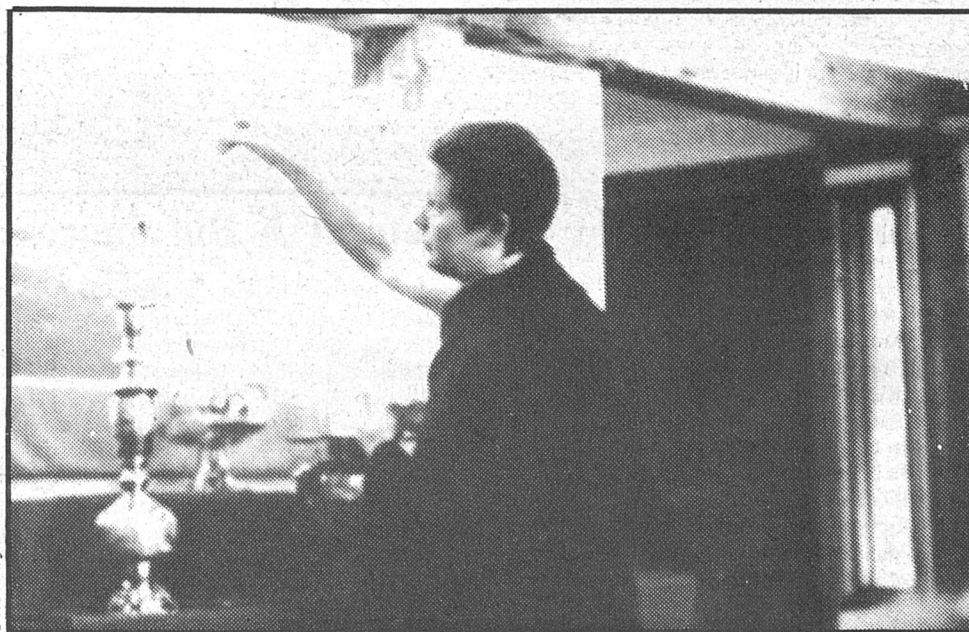


Photo by Sonia Alexander

Usually the kind of "do not's" of the precepts—do not steal, do not kill, do not lie, do not have sex, do not drink—sound like your parent putting candy on the table and saying "Don't eat it." You long to eat it. It seems right to eat it. And as soon as the parent goes away, you do eat it. It's like a big lid put on top of you that just makes you mischievous and resentful.

Poison On The Table

Precepts are actually like someone putting poison on the table and saying "Don't eat it." You wish to find out how to not eat it, because if you do eat it, you will suffer. You might actually eat it, hopefully only a little, in order to discover that it is poison. But the whole idea is, that it is poison which causes suffering to you and therefore you want to find out how not to perpetuate suffering for yourself and others.

That's the precept logic: wanting to know. The result is simplifying and some kind of tamed quality or personal harmony which is based on coming up against all one's sharp points. But if you limit your activity, you don't immediately plunge into tranquillity. In fact, you begin to come up against all those yearnings to act out. This can be very uncomfortable, but you begin to want to experience the discomfort just so that you will understand. Then as you come up against one sharp point after another, you don't consider it bad news. As Trungpa Rinpoche once said, "The bad news is good news." You're glad to see the news.

Obstacles as teacher: sometimes I also say, poison as medicine. I used the metaphor of a large white canvas, but sometimes I use the metaphor of being in a tight spot. It's the same. Things get very clear when you're cornered. When things are simplified, you always know whether you're on the dot or off the dot.

If someone says, "Be mindful of your breath as it goes out, and let that be the object of your meditation," you notice that

to be insight, real clear seeing. Another way of expressing this is to talk about the ripening of loving-kindness towards oneself. Loving-kindness has two very important elements. One is a sense of softness, gentleness, not judging. For instance, in meditation technique we're instructed to notice the tone of voice we use when we label the activity "thinking." Sometimes you say it as if it's the enemy. Bang! Like shooting clay pigeons, you want to rid yourself of thoughts. When this occurs, we're instructed to have a sense of humor about it and say "thinking" with warmth and goodheartedness, so that we aren't engaged in a struggle against ourselves. It's more a sense of developing a good relationship with oneself, based on that softness.

The second and equally important element of loving-kindness (like the second wing of a bird) is precision, accuracy. This friendship with oneself isn't based on wishful thinking, or wanting to be better than we are. It's like the relationship with people who are your closest friends. You've been through a lot with them. You know their qualities and you don't have a romantic notion about them. The ground is insight, and it's based on sympathy for oneself based on that insight. In that kind of space, your mind can relax and you don't need this defensiveness of the ego structure. You can relax and let things touch you just as they do, without the sense that they're for you or against you, and without feeling that you either have to run and hide or develop a new weapon, or find a way to make a nice thing last forever.

In the beginning, the middle and the end, "obstacle" so-called is a great teacher. It shows you about your own humanity. It shows you how you can perpetuate suffering, and also how you can reduce chaos, your personal chaos and that of the world, through insight. It's like the foundation of a building from which things can begin to develop.

When you start meditation, you begin to see things much more vividly, like that dot on the white canvas. Someone once told me that this was a process of making friends with yourself. Instead, I saw this dreadful stuff and it felt more like becoming my own enemy. That's the point where you can remember that you're not just learning about yourself. In learning about your own jealousy, you're learning about the jealousy of all the human beings who ever lived, are living now or will ever live. You don't have a trite notion of how some philosophical view or an enlightenment weekend will make it all go away. Gradually, you begin to appreciate why other people do what they do.

When my children were young, I first understood why people beat their children. Before that, I had read dreadful things in the newspapers and wondered how anyone could do those things. Suddenly, there I was with my two year old and I understood. Same thing with crimes of passion. I began to understand why people burn down buildings, rape people, why all the painful things happen in the world. It comes from those very same feelings in your heart when you want to do those same things, no matter what they are.

Bite Your Tongue

Your feeling might be quite civilized. Maybe you just want to say what a mean person somebody is. Or maybe they're getting ahead and you want to pass on a little dig that they said, with the intent of slandering them. You know it takes all you can do to bite your tongue. It's that very same kind of little yearning to harm which causes people to do all the things that create chaos in the world. It happens in the individual heart, spreads to families, communities, nations, the whole world and then to the universe.

Q: So it's the motivation behind the action that counts?

Pema Chodron: If you're willing to work with just not causing harm, you realize that it's certainly possible to break the precepts at the "outer" level, but you can never break them at the level of mind. Your motivation is the main thing. When you begin to understand your own motivation, it's like

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Going Back Into the World



Photo by Anthony Manousos

DR. JOANNA MACY (5th from left) sharing in a discussion group during the conference.

By Dr. Joanna Macy

This is our last session. Already our minds are turning to going home, thinking about the families that we are going to reconnect with, and what's up for us tomorrow morning. So it's fitting that in this last session we look directly at our being in the world.

Each of us carries within us an awareness of the suffering of our fellow beings and of what is happening to our planet. Whether we've just started on the Path or have been on it a long time, whether we consider ourselves (as a sister put it so delightfully this morning) a "spiritual mongrel" or have a clear label for our practice and belief system, there is, at some level within us, an awareness that we're not just doing it for ourselves. We sense that the great good fortune that is ours of having encountered the Buddha Dharma, in whatever form we have, has been granted to us for more than our own peace of mind, enlightenment, beautification, what have you. There is, perhaps more than at any time when people have come to the Dharma, an awareness that we are doing this practice for the sake of other beings and our world and our planet.

After all these millenia of the human journey on this particular planet, we find ourselves alive in a time when the world can end. This is not a matter of apocalyptic belief but of sober scientific projections and probabilities, given the current behaviors of our species and the forces they have unleashed. Whatever our politics are, we carry that knowledge with us. And what a teacher it is! The very perils of our time can help us to peel back stunning dimensions of the meaning of the Dharma.

Let's bring right up to the front of our minds those knowings in us about what is happening in our world and what is being prepared, in terms of violence and devastation. We live in a time when, according to the polls, over half the people in this country expect that nuclear war will occur, and that they will not survive it. The psychological implications of that alone are staggering.

We also live in a time when we are de-

stroying our life support system. That is not a potential danger, but a present fact, as is evident in our soil, and in the poisoning of our air, our seas, and in deforestation, desertification, and the extinction of plant and animal species at the rate of three a day. We get these signals not just from television and the press, but in the air we breathe, the water we drink, and what we see around us.

The currents of information that encircle our globe bring us dire warning signals. We are aware of the enormous suffering that is occurring right now with our fellow beings, humans and non-humans. There has probably not been a time in human history when so large a proportion of humanity was without the means for a decent and healthy life.

All this is relevant to our encounter with the Dharma, and we want to take this into account. We don't want our practice to be an escape, but still as we prepare to sit, we sometimes hear an inner voice saying, "Maybe this is a luxury, I should be out and doing." So let's look at what the practice means for our being alive, now.

One of the key teachings of the Buddha is that we have choice. That's what distinguishes humans from all other realms of life: the gods, the devas, the animals. Only humans can change their karma; that is why a human birth is so precious. One of us was talking last night about what it meant to her to think that she had chosen her parents. She felt both empowered and forgiving. Sometimes when we work together on a special project we have the sense of having been brought here by appointment, as if there is some cosmic collusion to our being here alive at this extraordinary time. It's important to get in touch with that sense of privilege and that capacity for choice; it helps us get over any feelings of being victims. It's boring to be a victim.

(At this point Dr. Macy led the participants in a fantasy of choosing their particular reincarnation, a fantasy created by Psychiatrist Carol Woolman for helping people deal with the psychological fact of living with nuclear weapons. Dr. Macy closed the meditation by saying, "You are the gift this world has given itself.")

Choosing To Be Born A Woman

Last night we were talking about some of the implications of having chosen to be born women this time around. I believe that whatever oppression or abuse may have been our lot as a result of that are so many credentials for us. They equip us to heal our world. It's really important in this planet-time to have some inside track on what it's like to be oppressed. It's good to look at oppression that way, because it's easy to get attached to being a victim. As I said before, that's essentially boring.

It's also important to remember that those who chose to be men in this time have their own dukha (suffering). In our group this morning one of the men said he had wondered why he came to this conference. But then he knew; it was so that he could heal his anger with women. There's a lot of work to do together. I thank him for having chosen to be born a man. I'm a wife of one and the mother of two, and I'm telling you, it's really hard to be a man in a dying patriarchy.

One of the things I really love about the Dharma is the way it faces straight on what Ruth was reminding us of yesterday, dukha. Imagine starting out as a religious teacher and the first thing you say to people is they are suffering! The Buddha did that! Both feet smack on the floor: life hurts! That's a good place to begin as we work in the world, whether we are working with the big issues like hunger and war or the countless little conflicts, injustices, frustrations in our immediate environment.

It's good to begin with the dukha because we can really believe it. We believe it because we feel it—and because who would have invented it? There's a lot of pain out there, even among the people who look very successful, competent, affluent, white, middleclass, college-educated. They too know pain.

The Saravodya Movement in Sri Lanka similarly begins with that First Noble Truth (that life hurts) when they go into a village to organize. They don't go in without having first been invited. And when they do, they don't come in with blueprints and solutions. Rather they come in and ask people where they hurt. They draw the villagers to-

gether into what they call a "family gathering" and invite them to specify their needs. In the process, the villagers experience their own expertise: they are experts on what is not working for them.

If there's one thing that's similar between our life in the post-industrial West and village life in Southeast Asia, it's a feeling of powerlessness. You begin overcoming that right away by noting your own expertise about what's wrong. Who's the expert on your needs? **You are!**

So we can begin at the same place in our culture. I have been doing that with the despair and empowerment work here and in other countries. This work helps people get in touch with their own painful responses to what is happening to our planet. Responses to being alive in a world that can include grief, the sorrow that arises when you look at the face of your child, or when you want to have a child. They include fear—dread of what's in store for us and what we're creating. They include anger, a stifled rage that we have let it come to this, and they include disbelief and guilt.

Those responses are natural, they are normal and even wholesome, but our culture as a whole is stuck in place of not wanting to experience them. That's what is called "psychic numbing." Our culture will do almost anything to not experience the grief, anger, fear and sorrow that is right there below the surface of business-as-usual. The buying sprees and hedonism, the rise in suicide rates and drug abuse, the blaming, cultism, fundamentalism, name-calling, and hate-filled diatribes against the victims of your choice (blacks, Jews, homosexuals, women, you name it—all of that stems from not wanting to look at the hurt that's inside, the dukha.

Intrinsic to that denial is a semiconscious fear that we might break or shatter if we allow ourselves to experience that pain. So it's very important for us to have an experience of the Buddha Dharma so that we don't break when we experience suffering. With Dharma practice we need not be afraid of experiencing sorrow and fear, we need not run from them, we're not fragile, skin-encapsulated egos.

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☯ The Balancing of American Buddhism ☯

The Saturday Night Panel Discussion

(Always a high point of the conference, the panel discussion gave participants the chance to engage all four teachers at once in a lively and thoughtful way. Because of limited space, we can present just some of the highlights. For a full transcript of the discussion, contact the Director of the Providence Zen Center.)

Q: I feel a little disappointed in the content of the conference so far. I've come to the last two and it's been important to me in exploring the new edges of Buddhism in America. My interpretation of this conference is that it's a continuation of the last two years of talking about the new edge in Buddhism and feminism. Why was feminism not mentioned today? Is it tomorrow's agenda?

"Buddhism as we live it is not a dead structure or a dogma."

Prabhasa Dharma

Ruth Denison: I didn't go into it because I referred to the bottom line, the teachings of the Buddha, how he gave pure ground rules and how we can follow them and perhaps manifest them more easily and with a little haste. If we attend to the teachings, feminism is not a separate issue any more. At the same time, going to the source is not overlooking or ruling out the details. As a teacher I represent the Women's Sangha in Berkeley and there too, we always go to the basic teachings and relate them to daily problems which may arise. If you have a special issue or question within feminism, I can go into that. In general, if we are well-equipped and see balance, insight and wisdom growing in ourselves, we will be getting a lot of answers from our own insides and our own security.

Q: Going into almost every training center in this country, there's a man teacher in charge. It's pretty easy to see a certain favoritism for a man, and an approach to power that is not equilateral. It's not a sharing or consensus approach, it's very hierarchal.

Prabhasa Dharma: We cannot generalize about that because there are cases where women have become the leaders of centers. In my own case, I had to just follow my own strongly arising intuition and wisdom. There is such a thing as cutting the umbilical cord. Go away from the teacher when you are ready, and be on your own. A lot of people are afraid of that. Maybe there isn't enough experience or trust in oneself to do that.

Based on reality, there have to be male and female teachers. They're evolving. They're here. If we look at the relative world, there are male and female bodies and different energies and different ways of expressing that. But basically, Zen doesn't deal with issues, but with the individual, to make you free whether you are a man or a woman so that you can be the master of yourself and give your own answers to your questions. Zen practice is to live by what you have learned. You have to have willpower and trust and the energy you get from meditation. Then you can do anything in this world.

Q: I'd like to give the analogy of the racial situation. There's no doubt that specific blacks were absolutely mistreated by Americans and other white countries a hundred years ago. But we blame them for being stupid, when in fact it was illegal a hundred years ago for a black person to get an education. The situation in most countries now is that women do have that power and they don't seem very anxious to continue that power.

Prabhasa Dharma: You must first deal with yourself, your own problem, and get clear about that. Then you'll be able to help others, but not before that. That is what I did. For something like 18 years I practiced very hard. I didn't go out much to teach or try to do something about the world. We are taught by the Buddha first to understand the nature of self and the world, and to realize they are not two different things. When that has occurred, then we are more useful to the world. You can help just by being present.

We have overly sophisticated the discriminating consciousness. We try to do everything with that consciousness, politically,

socially, whatever. It is quite correct that we have compassion for others, but it's not true compassion if it's based on discrimination, even the discrimination of "me" and "other." Compassion is important, but it's dangerous to act too soon.

Joanna Macy: I'd like to add a historical note. I see Buddhism as a tradition having suffered under several thousand years of patriarchy. As a movement of Buddhism, in Vipassana there is a return, a balancing within the Buddhadharmas to seeing more clearly the male-dominated, hierarchal patterns that had arisen in the last two millennia. You can trace this specifically in historical developments.

This is happening in other cultures too. I've been working with the Sarvodaya movement, a Buddhist-inspired community development program in South Asia, very big in about 5000 villages. Women are coming to the fore in this movement. There is also a conscious return, which scholars are participating in, to reclaim the role that women had in early pre-Theravadin Buddhism. It's a little harder than in Christianity, because there are misogynist passages written right into the sutras, but you can show by language and text analysis that these were later additions.



RUTH DENISON and PRABHASA DHARMA

I want to say that as American women opening to the Dharma, we're participating in something beyond our own little scenarios. I believe we are finding ourselves reclaiming the equality of the sexes in the Buddhadharmas. We're participating in a balancing of Buddhism that has great historic significance, and I think we can take a sense of amplitude in that. We're not just fighting our own little battles here, but we're righting or balancing history. It feels good! (Laughter)

Things are shifting so that the balance is going towards more feminine energy. My feeling is that it isn't a matter of letting feminine energy surge up and masculine energy go down, but that in every individual the balance of masculine and feminine energy needs to be found. Men feel as well as women that things are out of balance. For the last ten years people have been speaking out about it. It's a natural organic thing like the seasons. I have a favorite quote from Tai Situ Rinpoche who was asked, "Why are there no women rinpoches?" And he said, "Well, that's history. Now it's up to you." (Laughter)

Prabhasa Dharma: Actually, things are not out of balance. (Laughter) It depends on from what level we look at it. We think things are out of balance because things are shifting now. But in reality, they're not out of balance. Until now, we have had pretty much a male-created world, for instance, the whole world of technology. I don't know if women would have been thinking about the world in the same way, producing in the same way. This is not to say we're not capable of it, but that maybe we would have dealt with things a little differently.

You all know *Star Wars* and *E.T.* Both are films about outer space, fantasy about other creatures. *Star Wars* is warfare in outer space with weapons and sophisticated machinery and uniforms, about a toy world that men imagine. *E.T.* was written by a woman, *Star Wars* by a man. *E.T.* deals with an individual from another planet and the feelings and relationships between two

children and this creature. It's a totally different approach to the science fiction of outer space.

The Dharma has these two aspects. Male, active, manifesting, matter—these are the labels we have put on this forward creating movement. The same movement when it goes back, within, home, one could label as spiritual or dissolving matter. It is usually associated with the feminine and even called negative or death. So the universe is always in balance. When it has manifested

"Bad teacher, good teacher, that's a teacher."

Pema Chodron: If you look at the history of mankind, there's always been this natural evolution of balancing. Things get out of balance, people feel it, then things get balanced again. It keeps going back and forth, in longer or shorter periods of time. It's not just at the personal level that so many women feel things are out of balance. Things are out of balance! (Laughter) It's not just some personal little weight that you are carrying around because someone is out to get you. It's a historical time when actually it's very positive.

so much matter, it has to go back and provide the balance, that is a more feminine energy in the forefront. It shouldn't mean feminism. It should mean that we're all participating in it.

We have to let go of this over-producing, matter kind of hardware world. In the world of computers, you have to have hardware and software. (Laughter) So it's not out of balance, but our viewing of it that's out of balance. This is what the Buddha gave us the right and power to do. He said, "The Dharma is in you just as it is in me." So you begin to act and live in it.

Q: One of the issues that's most painful to talk about, for women who go through training, is having had male teachers. Although the Buddhist teachings are fair and equal, all teachers do not manifest this teaching in a fair way. All teachers do not challenge the biases within and the male ego they carry with them, because they are not challenged by their teachers to do so. I and maybe other women too have had to leave teachers because of direct and indirect abuse.

Pema Chodron: So what did you do?

Q: I left.

Pema Chodron: And then? You're still alive.

Q: And I'm continuing to practice. But there are people who are teaching, who taught me, who practiced for 20 years and still ripped me off.

Prabhasa Dharma: What you were saying about your personal story, I deeply feel with you because I went through that myself. I'm here as an example of what one can do with that. Maybe you can do something different with it. I don't think we can make rules about this to solve the problem. That is why we always go so deep and say that basically, we must become whole and healed. Then we find our role and will evolve as a teacher, no matter what we do, even if we become bakers or something, we will be a teacher. We will find a way to manifest what we most want to be. This is what I believe in.

Q: Ideally all things are in balance. But that person is still causing pain to other people. I can heal and go to practice, but what happens to the others?

Pema Chodron: I think it's a question of how you relate to injustice in the world, any injustice, even if it's someone hurting your cat. How do you relate to things not being right? It brings up self-doubt. Otherwise, why wouldn't you just blast out in a nonaggressive way? (Laughter) If you have confidence.

Q: This is your Buddha teacher. You've taken vows with this person. This person is experienced and has more sitting wisdom, intuition coming forth than you. And this person does something to you. Certainly you grow a lot, but I don't think you ever get to be sure.

Pema Chodron: When you stand in the hallway outside this room, you can see the calligraphy that says, Bodhidharma sat for nine years and in spite, he killed the Buddha. Then you say, that's what it means.

Q: The problem of isolation is one I've felt most acutely. I've come to a conference like this specifically to hear things brought up because I spend a lot of my time alone. I'm a single mother with two small children. It's actually a battle to make that time to sit every day. Last year Jan Chozen spoke with such beautiful humor about being in the bathroom and having a kid pounding on the door. It's enough to run into a situation of daily life, never mind injustice, when you have no community around you to say, "Yes, we felt this too and what you've gone through is very troubling." I wonder why we're afraid to say the name of a person who's causing trouble. Somehow we need to have a network.

Prabhasa Dharma: There are already a lot of women teachers in this country. If you have problems with men teachers, just go to the women teachers.

Q: And let them continue using people? Just ignore them and go away?

Prabhasa Dharma: One thing I've learned in this country is that businesses go out of business when you don't buy their product. (Laughter and applause) But we have to be very, very careful. The Buddha said, hatred is not appeased by hatred. If we find something wrong and take the same measures and attitudes and weapons to strike back, then we're no better. We're in the same club.

Q: Which guru or rinpoche or whatever is doing this? We'll put up a list here. I think that would be great. If people have had these experiences, I think it should be out immediately. We all love truth, don't we? That's why we're here. Seriously, let's look the Buddha right in the face. I'm not saying you shouldn't have compassion, but does that mean you have compassion for the cat who eats the mouse, and for the mouse who dies, so you stand by and watch? "Ah, nature! Dukha!" When does one take political action, and when does one sit and meditate?

Ruth Denison: On such issues, one can use one's intelligence and the quality of observing closely, which has kind of an objective attitude. First you get a bit of distance. Then you will be able to see in that space what possibility there is for you to directly touch that problem. That is my way of dealing with problems. I have a lot of criticism about injustice, but I don't allow myself to be contaminated by any reaction to it.

Some kind of objectivity is necessary because I allow myself to be too much involved with criticism, I am too much in the process and have no energy left to see my opportunity for helping. As Prabhava already said, because of that momentary impact, it's impossible for you to help or do anything without accumulating some other karma or contaminating your heart with anger. We need an immediate relaxing and pacifying. I fall back to the First Noble Truth. Why do you think the Buddha spoke as a result of his enlightenment? To give a truth, the truth of suffering and imperfection and what we have to go through.

If you can, just keep the energies alive and awake and train a bit more for what is necessary, until you are more capable. Most of why we are not able to get into this, but stand back and talk about injustice, is we're not capable or we doubt ourselves. As Pema said, strike! Provided you have immaculately investigated your possible effectiveness so that you can now not just grossly enter that event, but sensitively. It doesn't need to be big compassion, but just a little. Be modest, take the crumbs and don't wait for the whole loaf, or until it is your enlightenment. We will never make it. Meanwhile, we will be destroyed. Use the moment to moment opportunity with the possibilities you have.

I can give you many little examples where I took the crumbs and brought about changes in attitude about wrong-doing in my neighbors and students. I am very involved in environmental help. Two nights a week, at least, I have this suitcase full of requests for help from environmental societies. I cannot give to every one. And if I cannot, I will sit down and write, "I appreciate your efforts in diminishing the suffering of our friends the animals, or for the protection of the wilderness," and so on. At least I can give encouragement. That is a little crumb that I can do.

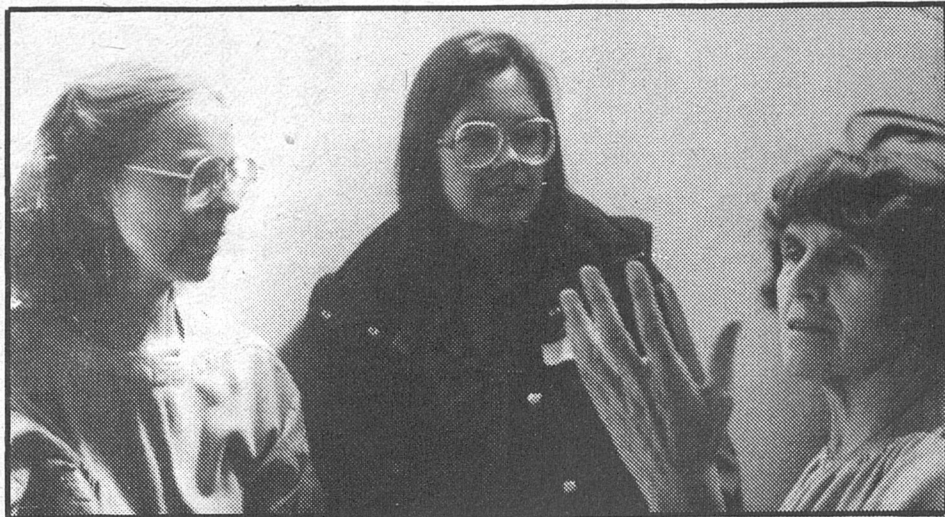
We have to work with what's here, and to incessantly, untiringly work and sleep only 3-4 hours. Work hard. Only this way will we get over the evil here. Train your mind with recollection. See where you can be practical. Never function on generalities and the hypothetical. That doesn't mean you can't look at issues and deal with them on an intellectual level—don't let this aspect slip. Too much involvement will take away energies from looking at things the way they really are. Then you might have had a chance but you didn't see it. The world is always full of opportunity for us to help.

Think of that First Noble Truth. It is deep. The world is full of suffering and was 2500 years ago. It is more staggering now. Dukha is fat! See the place where you can help, carrying this dukha with your little love and touching. Help the mother or goddess of the earth with your crumb, your little love. I think you can produce a lot.

Q: I wanted to say something without taking anything away from what people have said about being abused by a teacher. It's been an opportunity for growth for me, to examine bad experiences with Dharma teachers and other people to whom I've given authority. What was it in me that chose someone and gave power to someone

who would abuse me in some way? What was it in my and that other person's conditioning that put us together in a place where we would use each other in that way?

It's true that if someone is a teacher, you have a right to expect them to be more responsible than you, to know more than you. Nevertheless, I have observed in myself a willingness to absolve myself of responsibilities, a naive willingness to believe that this person is something bigger than human. I've had to re-examine what is a master and what do I want from a master. Although one has a right to expect (to put it mildly) good behavior from a master, in places where there was someone to whom I have given power, I have given up responsibility for what happens in that relationship.



RUTH DENISON and interested students.

It is give and take with a teacher and no matter how badly I've been hurt, every time I've had a bad experience, I've learned. That's part of what happens with growing up and with any relationship. You get hurt and then you learn and come to terms with the ways in which you were responsible for a part of what happened. It doesn't just happen with Dharma teachers or just with women. It happens to men too. I know a lot of men who have been deeply hurt in relationships with Dharma teachers.

This kind of abuse happens when there is someone to whom a lot of power is given and someone who doesn't take responsibility. Male-female relationships, relationships with Dharma teachers, are ripe for that because of our long-term conditioning in which men have more power and are taught to use it, and women are taught to give in to it. Nonetheless, that person is a victim of the same conditioning and on some level is being hurt by what they're doing. Bad teacher, good teacher, that's a teacher. You have learned and there's some level on which you can be grateful for what has happened, when the pain goes away.

There is teaching in everything. Even when there's no abuse involved within the Dharma, the teaching process is frequently painful on some emotional level.

Joanna Macy: You have raised a point which is critically important, the connection between being victimized and understanding what power is. In this time in which we're living, particularly those of us who have such good karma as to have been exposed to the Dharma are challenged to help people within and without the Buddhasangha redefine what power is. The teachers who are abusing are often people who have been isolated and put into a position of power. It takes two to tango.

I mentioned the Sarvodaya movement. I did assertiveness training there, put in Buddhist terms. We didn't call it assertiveness training (this was just for Sri Lankan and Singaporean Buddhist women), we called it the Middle Path. (Laughter and applause) That's the middle path between belligerence and submission. We had such a good time. (Laughter) And it came right down to seeing how central is our understanding of power. The Sarvodaya movement talks about the goal of building people's power. But goodness, we don't have to buy into hierarchal understandings of what power is, because we've got the central teaching of the Lord Buddha himself, of dependent co-arising, that power is essentially relational and reciprocal.

So this is a plea for all of us now to re-think and re-image power so that we don't fall into the hierarchal games. The Dharma has clearer directions and foundations than

any other system of thought that I know about. That's why women have such a strong role to play now for all Buddhists, male or female. It's because (to use Carol Gilligan's term) we are socialized to be very sensitive to relationship.

Q: Teachers are human. We see teachers behaving in certain ways out of their human need, and they're a little mad at us because they think we have too high expectations. I'm glad to hear you say that new students and new teachers can alter that structure. How do you view the role of teachers? Sometimes I think they do want it all ways, like yuppies, they want to be wonderful mothers and have great sex relationships and be successful in their jobs. (Laughter) How deeply do you feel you owe your students exemplary behavior?

egolessness and not having anything to hold on to. It also teaches you about the flimsiness of "us" and "them." I can see a lot of the behavior that's causing such pain as coming out of not being educated enough about that role and how to play it.

Q: Is it necessary to be "us" and "them?"

Pema Chodren: Maybe it's not necessary, but since it exists in the world, not universally, it's interesting to learn about. If there's going to be enlightened society, you have to understand these things. Then what we pass on would be enlightened rather than neurotic.

Q: What I keep hearing from all of you is, we want to study Buddhism and walk the path and teachers may oppress us, but just be more assertive and work within the system. I keep wanting to see women teachers come out and get rid of the hierarchal focus and misuse of power.

Pema Chodren: The way things change is, you work with now. Revolutions usually are replaced by something of the same nature from the other side. So the way things change, for health's sake, is to work with right now.

Q: I lived at Zen Center in San Francisco for six years. I feel there's a tremendous confusion about where a hierarchy is appropriate in a monastic life or in a student-teacher relationship. In visiting other centers, I found confusion on questions of daily life and the formal tradition in the zendo. It's very precious for people to dedicate their lives to keep it going, and for people to spend part of their lives to practice more intensely. But there's a lack of clarity and definition, and there's resistance to people leaving communities, of knowing when it's time for them to expand their practice and enter (the outside) community in a responsible clear way. Is hierarchy necessary in a monastic training situation?

Prabhava Dharma: In Japan, I ended up in a monastery with only men, because the women's monastery had too few nuns and they couldn't do full-time practice. The structure was clear and it worked well. From the outside, if you were a foreigner and not experienced in Zen, you would think that being the Roshi was a powerful role and all the monks would shake (in fear) about it. But when I was interviewed, the Roshi gave me permission to practice with the monks. It was the first time they had let a woman in, but it was not his decision alone.

He called in the head monks, five of them, to drink tea with me. I was not told that it was a test, but it was. They watched me, how I drank tea, how I related to them, then they had to give their approval. The Roshi alone could not decide that. This was totally new to me. I thought he was the all-powerful Abbot, but he had to obey the monks as much as they had to obey him. All the monks must go through different positions of responsibility in governing the monastery. It's clearly laid out.

Pema Chodren: I had had the good fortune to have a teacher who is famous for his bad behavior. (Laughter) Also he likes hierarchy a lot. We have an extremely hierarchal organization. It's interesting what that does to your mind when you're brought up in that tradition. The first thing it teaches you is that you have to be yourself. Maybe a lot of people have the misfortune to think they should copy him, but I was fortunate. I never had the opportunity to even think about imitating him because I was a nun. From the beginning I always knew it didn't have anything to do with imitating anybody.

There's nothing that you can hold on to. That's the job of the teacher to teach you that, so if they do, power to them. Then you use the world as it is.

Prabhava Dharma: Because Buddhism and the Zen tradition is a living tradition, it adapts itself everywhere, in every country. We may have to add to or change the rules. The Buddha did not start out saying there had to be 250 rules. He took situation by situation. For example, there was a monk who was the only son and he left home. In India people are married or promised early in marriage. His mother was worried that because he had become a monk, they would not have an heir to continue the family. She persuaded her son, she cried and begged

"As American women opening to the Dharma, we're participating in something beyond our own little scenarios. I believe we're reclaiming the equality of the sexes in the Buddhadharma..."

Joanna Macy

him. "Please, let me bring your wife here. you can go into the bushes somewhere, but we need this child." So he broke the understanding that the monks had to live as celibates. Soon everyone knew what had happened. A meeting was called and a rule was made about that.

Buddhism as we live it is not a dead structure or a dogma. New situations arise and we have to find a way, a structure of how to deal with things.

Pema Chodren: In the very hierarchal sangha we have with my teacher, you learn what it means to be put into that position of hierarchy. Lots of people are put into it. It's part of your education in the sangha to play that role and find out what it feels like. Most people are extremely reluctant to take that seat, mostly because they've been criticizing "them" so long...Also there is enormous loneliness, which teaches you about

In America, it's a unique situation because we have mixed our communities, monks and laypeople practicing together. It is painful for those in training to be monks to have to do it "in public," so to speak. You have to go through a lot of steps, and you are pushed much harder because you are becoming a teacher. You should be able to do that in privacy, behind the walls of a monastery. I didn't have the luxury of that protection here. But we have a situation which is perhaps wonderful in this respect, that Zen and Vipassana and the other centers are open. Practice is available to everyone (not just monks and nuns).

This is our American situation. We'll have to call meetings where we sit down together, monks and laypeople, and decide how we're going to do this. It can't be solved by following teachers who don't have the experience of men and women together.

Dear friends, I am really happy to be here and continue where we left off last year, at the conference of Women in American Buddhism, looking at the situation of Buddhism in the U.S. and the emergence of a new tradition. "The Balancing of American Buddhism" is a challenging title since it implies some kind of need to balance. Whether the need to change arises from frustration in personal teacher-disciple relationships, or issues forth from a more fundamental dissatisfaction with the current ethnological division of American Buddhists, remains to be investigated.

Clearly there is a need to clarify our direction. When we began to practice Zen and study Dharma some twenty years ago, we first needed to immerse ourselves completely in the forms that Asian Buddhist traditions brought to us. Now, some twenty years later, we are emerging, realizing the need to integrate the Buddhist Way of Life into our own social structure and culture. This presents a great opportunity for a new and fresh interpretation of Buddhism in a modern world.

But how do we balance, and, more importantly, what needs to be balanced? Wanting to balance presupposes one knows the norm, knows what is "real." To know what is real means to be aware of the great fluidity of the changing patterns of events, like clouds in the sky constantly changing their shapes. Clearly we cannot change the patterns of the clouds. But what can be changed is our perception mechanism. Change means to leave the fixated position of personal perspective and acquire the wisdom of cosmic consciousness. In the realm of cosmic consciousness there is no division between self and other. In direct identification we can only say "not two." All is lucid and self-illuminating.

Very often the general non-Buddhist public looks at Buddhists who meditate as being "non-active," not properly engaged in the world. This view is based on the notion that to benefit the human world one must do something in an active and material way. True compassion, however, is ultimately much more profoundly expressed in **how** we are rather than in actions coming from dualistic awareness. Inactivity and activity are inseparable from each other.

As we sit in meditation, we learn that what we usually call the activity of the world is nothing other than our own consciousness set in motion. When consciousness is at rest, there is peace. When individual self is not interfering, we see true Dharma activity, and for the first time we see things as they are. This seeing, such as it is, is the balance we have searched for. It is the end of desire, and peace of mind ensues. When self is identified with the alternating cosmic cycles of activity/inactivity, we have perfect balance. After working we need to rest. After resting we can work again.

No living being can ever be separate from this perfect activity; every living thing is merely a manifestation of this cosmic activity. In the opening passage of the Diamond Sutra we find a description of the activities of the Lord Buddha:

Near dawn, the Lord clothed himself, took up his bowl and entered the great city of Sravasti to collect

HOW TO BALANCE A WHITE CLOUD

by Gesshin Prabhasa Dharma, Roshi

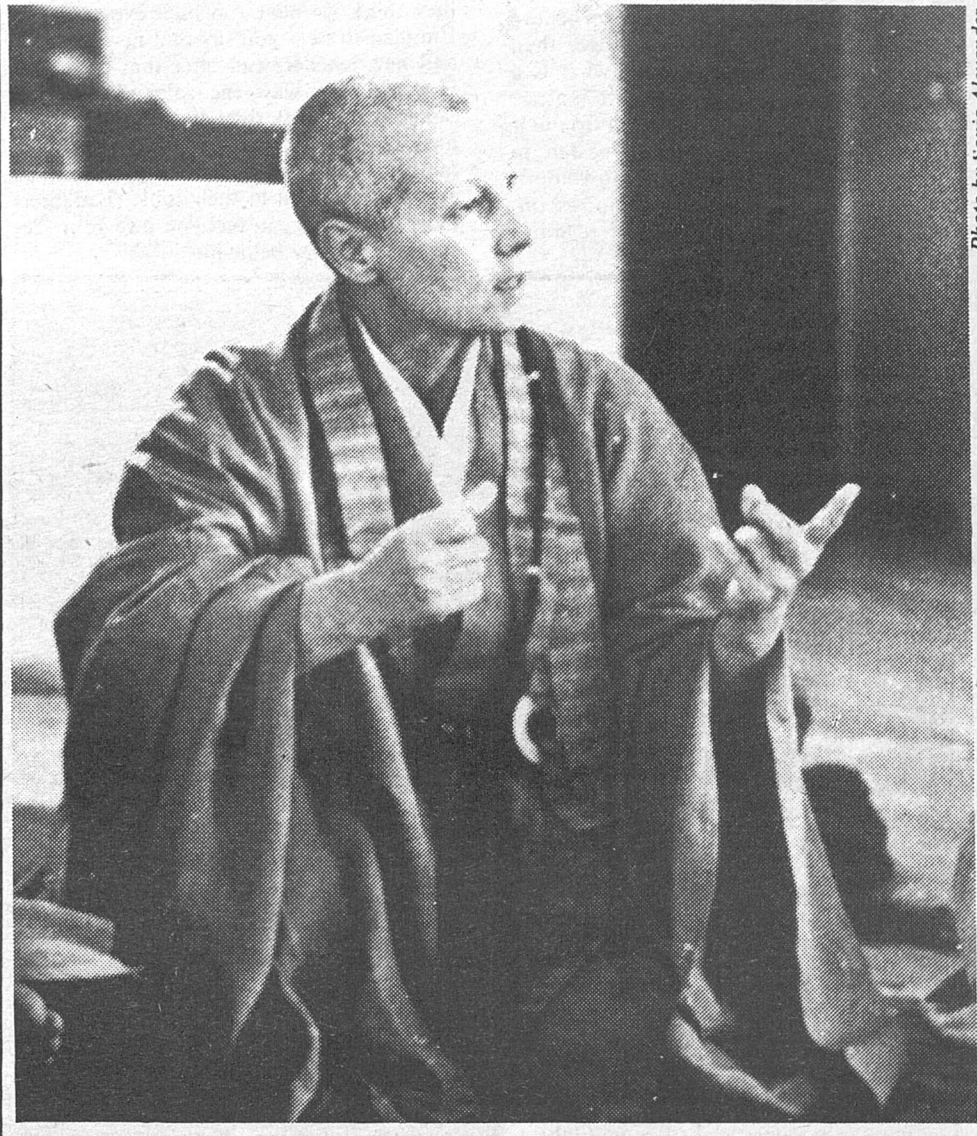


Photo by Sonia Alexander

food offered as alms. Having returned and eaten, the Lord put away his bowl and cloak, bathed his feet and sat with legs crossed and body upright upon the seat arranged for him, mindfully fixing attention in front of himself... At that moment the Venerable Subhuti arose from his seat and showing great respect for the Buddha, said, It is wonderful, most wonderful, O Lord, how much the Tathagata, the Fully Enlightened One, has helped the Bodhisattvas protecting and instructing them.

We usually read over this passage quickly to get to the meaning of the Sutra. Yet here in this opening paragraph we have the complete instruction of a Fully Enlightened One living in the world of human beings, in every activity fulfilling the cosmic Law. The fullness of the cosmic Law, the purity of its miraculous function, lies at the root of every activity. To live in Pure Knowledge of the unbounded potential and its great function, is to be properly engaged in the world.

This cosmic Law is beyond all the ethnic differentiation of the various tradition and yet it finds its mode of expres-

sion just exactly in those various traditions. Becoming enlightened, realizing the cosmic Law as the ultimate reality, leads us to freedom from material illusions and thus to a new understanding of the appropriateness of material as such. It belongs to the foolishness of the ignorant mind to dismiss what cannot be perceived as matter as "unreal."

But we are answerable for all our actions in spite of ignorance and erroneous beliefs. And if we do not realize this cosmic Law to be our own mind essence, we will continue to be dissatisfied and suffer endless rebirths until we learn and accept the true nature of things. From the point of view of this absolute truth, the cosmic Law and its great function are never out of order. A Zen Master was asked, "What eyes will you use to teach the people of this world?" and he responded, "The sun and the moon have never been out of order."

You Are The White Cloud Itself

The enlightened person is the Total Person, one who flows effortlessly with the Dharma. The word "person" is derived from the Latin "per"—through—and "sonare"—to sound. The Total Person, then, is one through whom ultimate reality, such as it is, is "sounding." If you are lying in the grass looking at a white

cloud drifting through the sky, you are the white cloud itself. At that moment if there is no thought of cloud or self, you are in perfect balance. It is only thought that sets us apart from the enlightened state of mind. The notion of imperfection arises from imbalance in individual consciousness, from being out of sync with the greater activity of the cosmos. In studying the activity of the universe, we find that all superficially differentiated events are unified on the level of the underlying principle of coherence and mutual penetration.

Through a maze of infinite possibilities and multiplicities, the activity of the Dharma always takes the course of the least action. It organizes spontaneously by using the least amount of activity. Thus it is seen as absolutely serene, showing no signs of becoming and yet always going along with the arising and dissolution of the momentary phenomenal events, without being disturbed by them. "Calm, yet freely moving, unknowing in itself, unified and non-discriminating, it is at the same time functioning in every possible way, and is able to discern everything."

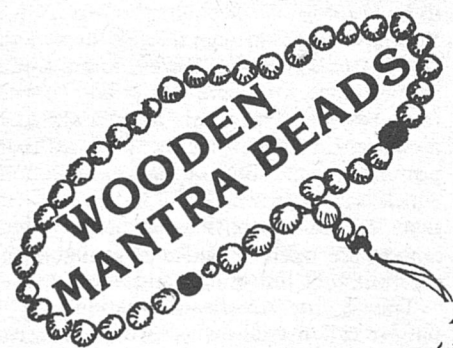
If there is only the will to change and to do good, and fundamental insight into the true nature of things is lacking, we will merely repeat the same mistakes, continuing activity which is based upon erroneous thinking. The sense of balance occurs when the right view of the cosmic Law and its function is gained by the individual. Reaching deeper into oneself means reaching increased order, hence the Zen Master's proclamation: "The sun and the moon have never been out of order." The universe itself in its twofold mode of appearance and disappearance, as form and non-form, is the example of perfect coherence and harmony of all fields of activity effortlessly moving from one level of systems to another, spontaneously transforming, always taking the course of least effort, of the least energy expense.

In Buddhism, balancing means that the individual comes into the knowledge of the full potential of the Dharma in his/her own consciousness and enters into the process of self-regulation of the individual.

The new field, then, where a new tradition can grow is the field of our own consciousness. And new form will emerge naturally from being firmly grounded in this spiritual realization of the unified field of cosmic consciousness. What American Buddhists wear and eat, how they are going to carry out compassionate social activities will naturally evolve from this integration of individual, personal views into the fundamental field of cosmic order. Neither Japanese nor Tibetan nor any other form of Buddhism will be the Buddhism of Americans. Buddhism in America will necessarily reflect our advancements in science, technology, and social structure. This is not only an opportunity for a new beginning, but also the only possibility. Last but not least, it is our responsibility toward the world of all living beings to develop new systems based on "real activity."

The New Age Being

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Ven. receive 1985 Man C years and J Zen In she te book d Lighte Giac's IZIA.

what was hitherto seen as "self" and "other" and "the world." The Total Person is the new-age being, totally awake and aware, at peace with him/herself and interacting in a loving and caring way with all forms of life as well as with all non-forms. The Total Person expresses respect for all things, but relies only on Dharma, realizing that by far the greater power and stability are not to be found in the world of objects and ideas, but in their underlying principle of emptiness. Emptiness or non-form is the ultimate mode of form—and ultimate form is liberation.

Ordinary human existence is frustrating and unsatisfactory until we gain insight into the nature of Real Life. The full discovery of this Potential of human consciousness has within it the seeds for growth and a power for development never yet realized on this earth. It has the power to blaze the trail for the equality of beings of all races, cultures, and nations; and for the opportunity to live in harmony and peace with each other on this planet earth, our temporary home. In the words of Dr. Albert Einstein:

The religion of the future will be a cosmic religion. It should transcend a personal God and avoid dogmas and theology. Covering both the natural and the spiritual, it should be based on a religious sense of arising from the experience of all things natural and spiritual as a meaningful unity. Buddhism answers this description....If there is any religion that would cope with modern scientific needs it would be Buddhism.

I cannot think of a better place for this to come to fruition than in the socio-political structure of North America.

May all beings attain enlightenment and grow as happy as they can be. □

Ven. Gesshin Prabhasa Dharma, Roshi, GOING HOME (Los Angeles, IZIA), pg. 5.



Photo by Sonia Alexander

(Ven. Gesshin Prabhasa Dharma, Roshi, received confirmation as a Zen Master in 1985 from Vietnamese Zen Master Thich Man Giac. She trained as a Zen nun for 15 years under Rinzai Zen Masters in the U.S. and Japan. Founder of the International Zen Institute of America in Los Angeles, she teaches in the U.S. and Europe. A book of poetry entitled "A Sudden Flash of Lightening" with her and Ven. Thich Man Giac's work was published in 1983 by IZIA.

A TEA CEREMONY

Another aspect of realizing is to have moments of silence in our lives. This afternoon we will practice this in the tea ceremony. The Japanese have created a way in which leaders and servants, masters and assistants and even children from a certain age on up sit together and everyone is regarded as equal.

This sense of equality becomes apparent even in the structure of the tea rooms. A tea room in Japan does not have a standard-sized doorway. It has a tiny two foot opening in the wall, through which you practically have to crawl into the tea room. Whether you are the president or the president's assistant, you have to crawl through this door. Even though at the end of the tea we wear different clothes and show other signs of difference, in the tea ceremony we are all regarded as the same.

It is the same with the tea master, who takes responsibility to guide us through the event. Tea is for tea, it's not just a culturally beautiful thing to do. I'm presenting it because I would like to suggest that all political meetings, all summit conferences, should start this way with people coming into the room through a small door, sitting in a circle around a conference table, and having a cup of tea together followed by a few moments of silence and mindful awareness.

What distinguishes us from animals is that while animals are one with the Dharma, they don't know it. They cannot enjoy it. They live in fear and anxiety. We human beings, who have the capacity for deep meditation and for coming back from that disappearing act into a consciousness in which we can reflect on that, can come into the full enjoyment of living the Dharma here and now as it is. This is how we must begin to make peace in the world, not thinking that we have to do something "out there" to change it. What we are saying when we do that is that it is the others who have no peace and that they need to be taught.

What is nice about the tea ceremony and the way we're going to do it is that you are both "host" and "guest." At the moment you receive the tea from one side, you are the guest. When you put your cup down and pass the tray to your neighbor, you are the host. In the world you should realize constantly that you are the "all." When Jesus realized the truth, he said, "I am the all." Buddha said, "The Dharma and I are one. When you want to see the real me, look at the Dharma. When you want to see the Dharma, look at me."

When we do this tea ceremony, we should first collect ourselves, like the Buddha did. Take your seat mindfully, arrange your clothes around you. When you are



Photo by Sonia Alexander

seated, sit a few moments in silence. Then we will drink tea together with the whole universe.

I want you to contribute something to the ceremony in the form of a word, a poem, or music. I would like you not to be tense about having something already created, but trust your intuition. Enjoy the tea, and then let come up just exactly what comes.

Thank you all for your patience. □

We sit here in a circle
a skylight in each teacup.

A silent circle. Rhythmic sounds of chopping; steaming tea graciously poured, passed and sipped. intermittent bows.

Two hands
One teacup
Never empty
Never full

In my always planning ahead
I almost missed the steam
coming from my cup of tea

Praise to the thoughtless thought!

Hot tea, blue rug
There is nothing so difficult
about this practice

(These spontaneous poems were some of those offered during the tea ceremony.)

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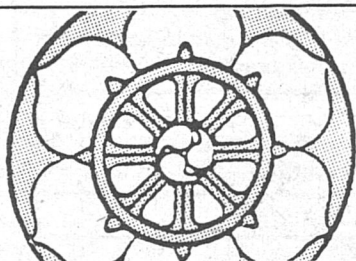
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BUDDHIST FAITH AND SUDDEN ENLIGHTENMENT

by Sung Bae Park.

(State University at New York Press, 1983, Albany, NY, 211 pages)

Reviewed by Mu Soeng Sunim

A watershed event in the development of Ch'an Buddhism took place in 732 A.D. in China. In that year, an unknown monk, Shen-hui (670-762), launched the first of a series of vitriolic attacks on the "northern school" of Shen-hsiu (606-706). Students of Zen history will recall that Shen-hsiu had been the head monk at the monastery of the Fifth Patriarch Hung-jen (601-674) and had lost out in a **gatha** competition to an unknown kitchen-boy, Hui-neng (638-713), the future Sixth Patriarch.

The legend of Hui-neng tells us that the Fifth Patriarch transmitted the robe and bowls of the lineage to Hui-neng in secrecy in the middle of the night and urged him to flee down south. Hui-neng duly went south. In future years, his small southern temple attracted a large number of disciples, but he was not an acknowledged Patriarch yet.

Here Shen-hui enters into the picture. He is said to be one of the eleven main disciples of Hui-neng. While Hui-neng had been quietly sharing his insights with his audience in the south, Shen-hsiu had taken over the monastery of the Fifth Patriarch after his teacher's death. Under him, the school of Ch'an continued to wield considerable spiritual and political influence at the T'ang court. The school continued to prosper under his two outstanding disciples, P'u-chi (651-739) and I-fu (658-736).

Shen-hui's first serious attack on what was, for him, the "northern school" of Ch'an occurred in a large assembly convened for this purpose at the monastery of Ta-yun-ssu at Hau-t'ai. The purpose of the proceedings was to "determine the true and the false with regard to the succession of (the sect of) Bodhidharma." Apart from accusing the northern school of usurping the patriarchate, Shen-hui claimed that it held an erroneous view of enlightenment. The correct view of enlightenment advocated by the Patriarchs, he claimed, was "sudden;" the "gradual" approach of the Northern School was a blatant perversion of the true teachings.

For the next thirty years, with the true zeal and fiery determination of a prophet, this old scrapper continued to flail away at the Northern School. In the process, he suffered insults, threats to his life, exile, praise and finally a position of

power at the imperial court. In the end, he destroyed the Northern School and established Hui-neng as the "legitimate" Sixth Patriarch of the school of Ch'an.

But the controversy between the "sudden" and "gradual" approaches was only beginning. When Korean monks brought back Ch'an (son) to their homeland in the early ninth century after being trained in China, it was the sudden approach they advocated. But what they advocated came into immediate conflict with the beliefs of the existing Buddhist establishment which venerated sutras, especially the Avatamsaka Sutra. Although technically not aware of the gradual approach of Ch'an Buddhism, the sutra or the doctrinal school in Korea came to be identified with the gradual approach. In Korea, the lines between the gradual and the sudden approaches or (in terms of struggle for spiritual and political influence) between the Son (Zen) and the Kyo (Doctrine) school came to be more sharply drawn than they ever were in China.

What divides the gradual and the sudden approaches? Very simply put, the gradual approach is based on **faith** that through prescribed religious practices, one can get enlightened and **become** Buddha. The sudden approach, on the other hand, is based on a **faith** that one is already a Buddha and all one has to do is to hold firm to this faith. Thus a certain kind of faith underlines both approaches.

Sung Bae Park, who is an assistant Professor of East Asian Religions at the State University of New York at Stony Brook, has written this highly erudite book exploring the underpinnings of this faith of the sudden approach which begins with the proposition, "I am Buddha." Professor Park is a former monk of the Chogye Order of Korea and we thus have the benefit of his training in the Korean Zen temples.

The value of Professor Park's book lies in his effort to explore the phenomenon of faith in the entire Mahayana Buddhist tradition. The dynamics of faith, as outlined in the Avatamsaka Sutra tell us about the representative "gradual" approach. Chinul, the real founder of Korean Zen, as quoted by Professor Park, makes a clear distinction between the Doctrinal and the Patriarchal faith. When asked about the difference between the two teachings, Chinul said:

"...The doctrinal teachings encourage people to have faith in the principle of cause and effect.... Patriarchal faith is not the same as above, because patriarchs do not depend upon any principle of cause and effect in the conditional world. It only stresses that there be faith that everyone is originally Buddha; that all people intrinsically possess the perfect Buddha nature; and that the marvellous essence of **nirvana** is perfectly complete in everyone. Hence, there is no need to search anywhere else, because since the beginning, those have been complete in oneself."

One of the most interesting, and original, thesis advanced in Professor Park's book is the "nonbacksliding" nature of patriarchal faith. In his chapter on faith in Pure Land Buddhism, he makes a comparison between the seemingly "other-power" (Japanese: tariki) faith of Pure Land and the "self-power" (jiriki) faith of patriarchal Zen. However, on close examination, he finds the "other-power" faith of Pure Land to be just as nonbacksliding as the patriarchal faith. Here is Professor Park's key argument:

"The point here is that, in Buddhism, right practice and right enlightenment require right faith, i.e., patriarchal faith. However, patriarchal faith can be developed from the viewpoint of either self-power or other-power. The criterion of patriarchal faith is not self-power or other-power, but 'pu-t'ui, "nonretrogressional" or "nonbacksliding." Since the most important consequence of patriarchal faith is sudden enlightenment, it is the sudden and unretrogressive quality of our faith, not its self-power or other-power orientation, that determines whether it is patriarchal or doctrinal."

Professor Park's book is a valuable addition to the growing literature on Korean Zen and Korean Buddhism in English language. Closely argued and academically impeccable, it is not light reading by any means but rewarding enough for those who care to plow through it. □

(Mu Soeng Sunim, a monk in the Kwan Um Zen School, is director of the Diamond Hill Zen Monastery in Cumberland, RI.)

PRIMARY POINT

PRIMARY POINT is published by the Kwan Um Zen School, a non-profit religious corporation under the direction of Zen Master Seung Sahn. The School supports and arranges the world-wide teaching schedule of Zen Master Seung Sahn and his senior teachers, issues publications on contemporary Buddhist practice, and supports dialogue among religions.

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CORRECTION: In the November 1985 issue of *Primary Point*, we made several errors in the article about Ms. Myung Sook Chun going to Manchuria. She was born in Yenji, Manchuria and left there 38 years ago. Our sincere apologies to Ms. Chun.

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SPECIAL PLEA: Pattie Goodwin, who lived and worked quietly as the kitchenmaster at Providence Zen Center for two years with her 11 year old nephew Daniel, suddenly found herself embroiled in a bitter custody battle with the boy's natural mother and maternal grandparents. The boy she had raised from the age of two with the family's blessing was seized by police and child welfare officials last April and hidden in a foster home. Even though the natural mother has signed papers asking Patti to adopt her son, the battle in state

court over temporary placement is still unresolved. Daniel, now 13, has repeatedly told the court he wants to go back home with Patti. The state Supreme Court will soon make a ruling on permanent custody. Meanwhile Patti has incurred over \$30,000 in legal fees trying to have Daniel returned to her, and Daniel still languishes in a foster home. Some of the state court's resistance to Daniel's returning home is because police told the court that he was living in a "Buddhist commune," and the family opposed Patti's decision to become a nun and train in Korea, where Daniel would live temporarily in a monastery.

If you would like more information, please write. Meanwhile, can you help bring Daniel home and help Patti pay her legal bills? If you can help in any way please send your contribution to the "Pattie Goodwin Defense Fund," c/o Mu Soeng Sunim, Director, Diamond Hill Zen Monastery, 528 Pound Road, Cumberland, Rhode Island 02864.

KAHAWAII: If you borrowed Ruth Klein's collection, please return them. Thanks!

OBSTACLES AS OUR TEACHERS

continued from page 4

discovering the whole world. You begin to see why people do what they do, and your compassion isn't just some do-gooder thing like "I'm going to be nice," which inevitably leads to resentment. Your compassion is based on gut level understanding.

When you also understand it isn't necessary to perpetuate that kind of suffering, then your sympathy grows even greater. Your own motivation for practice is to help other people. You may feel that your own understanding is slight, but you realize that you can act and speak out of that understanding. Your motivation is not just based on wanting personal security or getting things comfortable for yourself, or wanting to make life certain and sure. Your motivation becomes wanting to find out the truth and to open up to the whole universe as it is, not as you want it, on your terms.

You could say that the ground is insight, and the path is a sense of beginning to take a genuinely compassionate attitude, some genuine understanding of other people. You realize if you didn't have your obstacles, you would never understand anything. This immediately changes your whole attitude about a sense of "problem" with yourself. It's not at all the same as saying, "Therefore I'm not going to just indulge in my problem," or "I'm going to continue being jealous for the rest of my life."

There's a sense of the richness of the whole process. There's a background of space in which things are always arising and you can really taste it all. Your appetite for life begins to grow. Because of insight and compassion, your discrimination becomes non-discriminating. You'll eat anything, at least once. The metaphor for this is that peacocks eat poison and then have beautiful tails. It's one of the images for a Bodhisattva. You could never eat poison if you didn't first understand it.

That loud sense of "I" or "me" or "I want it" is like a little stronghold. I feel it physically in my body, as if I were a statue carved in stone, when I get so solid about my point of view. When you become sensitive to that solidity, you can understand what renunciation is. For the sake of everyone, you want to let go of holding onto yourself.

As consciousness evolves, obstacles become fuel. They are the very things that blast you into realization. They poke you, prick you, trap you, burn you, freeze you. That's when it's said that you don't need a teacher. Everything in the world becomes your tutor, teaching you all the time about how you close off and how you can open up, how you pretend you're a separate entity and how you realize you aren't.

It is common for everyone committed to the spiritual journey to have an appetite for wanting to live fully. You begin to respect the fact that things don't get simpler, but get more vivid and pointed. The separation between you and the world ceases to be very wide, maybe ceases to exist at all. When something's hot, it is really hot and burns you up. Fire burns you up, wind blows you

into a million pieces, water drowns you, and earth buries you. You're just not there anymore. At the same time, fire warms you as it has never warmed you before. The wind in the trees is like hearing the sound of eternity. The earth is your witness, and water is always moving and fluid and endless. You are inseparable from all these things.

As a practitioner on the path and not a realized person, obstacles always still seem like obstacles, but you begin to have a different appetite for them. You're very glad to see that you still have a very small, mean mind, because you don't want it and you're never going to be free of it if you don't see it. It is said that the mark of an enlightened person is a great sense of humor, that without a sense of humor you can never become enlightened. This is encouragement to not just consider all the injustice in the world as a simple matter, and if you got rid of it, it wouldn't be there anymore. There's always going to be more. That's part of the balance. From a historical perspective, some of the worst things and some of the best things have had very unpredictable results.

Everyone has to ask questions forever, but don't be resentful if no one answers your question. No one will ever really answer your question. That's the First Noble Truth. No one can answer it, because you have to discover it for yourself. That's what the Buddha taught. All contemplative people know that. You get inspiration from everything.

I recently made the friendship of an old Native American man whom I respected enormously. In a rather naive way I asked him, "What has been your greatest teacher

in life?" He reflected for a while and then said, "Ants. You can learn a lot from ants." □



Photo by Sonia Alexander

(Ane Pema Chodron is the director of Gampo Abbey, a traditional Tibetan Buddhist monastery recently opened on Cape Breton, Nova Scotia. One of the first women in North America to become a Buddhist nun, she was ordained as a novice nun by His Holiness Gyalwa Karmapa in 1973 and became a fully ordained nun in 1981. She has been a student of Vajracarya, Ven Chogyam Trungpa Rinpoche, for 12 years.)

Last summer at Yosemite I lent a boy my 4 x 5 camera. He said, "What do I do with this now?" and I said, "Unscrew it and find out for yourself." Why shouldn't he learn how to collapse a camera? Why should I teach him that? You mustn't treat a child as if he's a nitwit; tell him some-

thing and let him go at it. I don't believe we do enough self-education.

Interview, Imogen Cunningham
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Volume 35, Number 6 December 1984

Attain utmost emptiness;
Hold firm to stillness.
The ten thousand things stir about;
I only watch for their going back.
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But each returns to its root.
Returning to the root is peace.
And peace is a going back to reality.

Lao Tse

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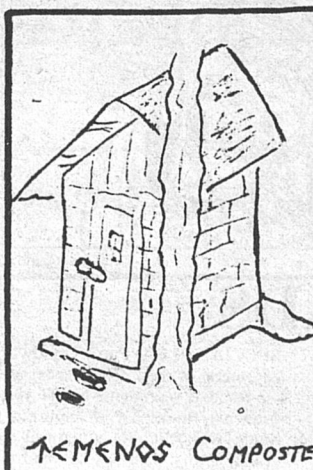
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TEMENOS COMPOSTER

Going Back Into the World

continued from page 5

The Great Compassion

Thich Nhat Hahn says that what we most need to do right now is hear within ourselves the sounds of the earth crying. That pain is product and proof of our interrelatedness with all beings. *Dukha* can open us right into the heart of reality where all beings coexist, inter-exist like jewels in the net of Indra.

What you discover when you open to the suffering of our time is that you are encountering your own compassion. Only it isn't your own, it's the great compassion, the Mahakaruna. This is important to remember: you wouldn't be feeling it if we were not intricately connected, and if you were not, thanks to these connections, compassionate. It's like signs of life from that body which is your larger body.

The pain you feel for those in the hunger camps, the refugee camps, the prison camps, the war rooms, the missile silos, the barracks, the nursing homes, the school rooms, or even the face in the mirror, it is like the sensation in a phantom limb. It is said that when you have a leg amputated, you still feel twinges and that is called a "phantom limb." What I'm talking about is phantom limb in reverse. We have been raised thinking that our body ended here, with this bag of skin, or with our possessions or our education or house. Now we begin to realize that our body is the world. Our pain tells us that.

As you experience grief with the grief of others, so can you know joy with the joy of others. The Buddhist name for this is "mudita." As we open to our interexistence as fellow beings, we open not only to their suffering, but also to their resources, their gifts, and to the power going through them. This is really important for Westerners to get.

In the Western religious traditions we honor compassion, but we're not very good at the flip side, *mudita*. That's one of the first things that delighted me in Buddhism. *Mudita*, by the way, is a great antidote to envy. It allows you to look at your fellow beings and open to their power and beauty and resources—gifts and resources you can draw from like money in the bank.

The courage of a Mohandas K. Gandhi or a Martin Luther King or a Dorothy Day didn't die with them. We live in a holographic universe, or as imaged by Buddhists, the jeweled net of Indra. No acts are lost. We can train ourselves to draw on the resources that are already there. We didn't come into this universe alone, we have all these brothers and sisters and we can take their gumption, ingenuity, faithfulness, endurance, and let it flow into and through us. Whew, what a relief! We don't need to dredge up from ourselves all the courage

and love that is needed. The very deprivation and exhaustion that we may feel can be the opportunity to open to our interexistence with others.

It's like grace. In the Christian tradition, grace comes largely from God. The Buddhists show us that each of us is the occasion of grace, a resource.

Turning the Wheel

I want to talk a moment about turning. In the Buddhist tradition, we talk about the turning of the wheel of Dharma. When the old Buddhist teachings came in new form in Mahayana Buddhism, it was called the second turning of the wheel. This balancing of Buddhism in the late twentieth century (not just in America but for Buddhists around the world) is another turning of the wheel.

For a wheel to turn, it must be empty in the middle.

The Dharma, in that regards, offers a fresh source of imagery of the feminine. One image in particular has been very powerful for me: *Prajnaparamita*, the Perfection of Wisdom, the mother of all the Buddhas. She first emerged over two thousand years ago in the earliest of Mahayana texts. These texts set forth the *Bodhisattva* path, that is, the path of one who, at the gates of Nirvana, turns and comes back again, vowing to keep returning to this side of reality until all beings are enlightened—for the *Bodhisattva* knows he or she is not separate from all beings. I like *Prajnaparamita* because she doesn't fit into the kind of masculine-feminine imagery you get in most other cultures, which posits a sky=father and earth=mother, setting up opposition between feeling and intellect, between mind and matter.

We have been raised in a culture where female is to male as nature is to cultures, as earth is to sky, etc. I'm really bored with it! One of the gifts that Buddhist women can bring to the women's movement is to tell them to get off it about equating the feminine with emotionality and the masculine with reason. The Perfection of Wisdom is wisdom, and she's the mother of the Buddhas. She's not sky or earth, she's symbolized by space. A term that is used for her is "deep space." She is a deep space in which, as the old texts say, the *Bodhisattva* flies like a bird, where there is nothing to hang onto, no crutches or easy answers, no quick or guaranteed solutions.

It is the space you discover when you let yourself stop hanging onto your self-images and neuroses, when you stop taking yourself so seriously, when you stop clutching at the self whether it's to improve or punish it, to mortify it or sacrifice it. I was fascinated to discover a treatise on mathematics ex-

plaining the origin of "zero." Zero was a revolutionary development, a quantum leap in human understanding. Before that, no concept or sign existed to mark and hold the empty decimal place, sorely limiting the capacity to compute. It originated in India, I learned, brought to Europe by Moslem traders who put it into the Arabic numeral system. In ancient India, zero was known by names before a symbol for it developed. There were several names: *sunya* (empty), *purva* (full), *nada* (navel), *akasa* (space), and *ka*. At this point in my reading I almost shouted in astonishment and glee because these very terms were, I recognized, how the early Mahayana texts characterized *Prajnaparamita*; they were her attributes! The mother of the Buddha was also the mother of zero, revolutionizing mathematics.

Furthermore, *ka*, the last term mentioned, means the hole in the hub of the wheel through which the axle passes. It must be empty and round like an O, like a vagina, if the wheel is to turn. Only by letting go into the apparent emptiness beyond ego can the wheel of the Dharma turn again in one time. It is an emptiness that is a fullness (*purva*) too, because in it we awaken to our interrelatedness with all beings, or as Thich Nhat Hahn calls it, our "interbeing." That is what the Buddha woke up to under the bodhi tree, the dependent co-arising of all phenomena; and that vividly intricate interplay is what later Mahayanists imaged in the jeweled net of Indra.

I suggest to you who have chosen to be women in this incarnation and have been fortunate enough to encounter the Dharma, that we have a particularly rewarding mission. We can bring to our time—to our practice and our world—this heightened sense of interrelatedness. By our conditioning as well as our biology, we tune to relationships, can intuitively grasp the relational nature of the universe, the net of Indra.

As we go out into the world, we can let every encounter, every relationship, become an occasion for flying within the deep space of the Perfection of Wisdom. Each event can become the occasion for experiencing the power of interdependence and the practicality of peace.

You may remember that in the early scriptures the Buddha was asked, "Do we need to perform sacrifices to get to the realm of the Brahma?" (This was the chief Vedic god.) The Buddha said, "You can be there already by practicing *metta* (loving kindness), *karuna* (compassion), *mudita* (joy in the joy of others), and *upekka* (equanimity)." In the *Sarvodaya* movement, these qualities are conveyed in ways that help people take charge of their lives and then move right out to work together in organizing for community development. That's what I mean when I speak of this being an historic time for Buddhism.

Some of you may be familiar with liberation theology in the Christian tradition,

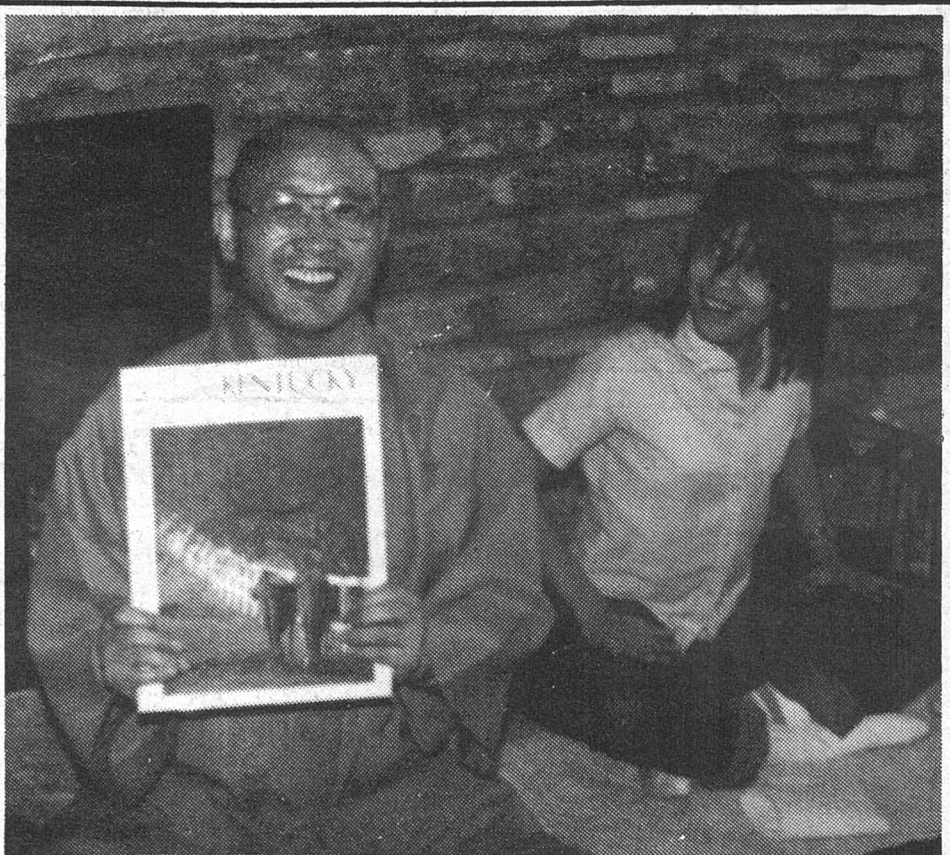
widespread in South and Central America. It emphasizes the revolutionary teachings of Jesus and uses them to empower people to work for liberation and social change. This is an epic development, and I can see the same thing happening in Buddhism. The social teachings of the Buddha, which can be seen as economically and politically revolutionary, were institutionalized into static hierarchies. Now the potency of his teachings for social change is being brought to the fore. I should put in a plug here for the Buddhist Peace Fellowship, a force for "engaged Buddhism," and I hope you will get to know the work of Thich Nhat Hahn.

(Dr. Macy closed by leading participants in an exercise in which they paired off and used each other as objects of a meditation about learning to see each other. Here closing words follow.)

Your lives are woven inextricably in the jeweled net of Indra, as interwoven as neurons in the mind of a great being. You cannot fall out of that web. No stupidity, cowardice or failure can ever separate you from that living net, because that is what you are. Rest in that knowing, come home to it. In that is the Great Peace. Out of that you can risk everything, knowing that each encounter can be a coming home again to that Great Peace. Indeed, it is so. □



(Dr. Joanna Macy, Ph.D., is a Buddhist scholar and meditation teacher active in movements for social change in developing countries and the industrialized West. She is the author of *Despair and Personal Power in the Nuclear Age* (New Society Pub. 1983) and *Dharma and Development* (Kumarian Press, 1983). Dr. Macy and her husband were visiting teachers this winter at Pendle Hill, the Quaker study center in Pennsylvania.)

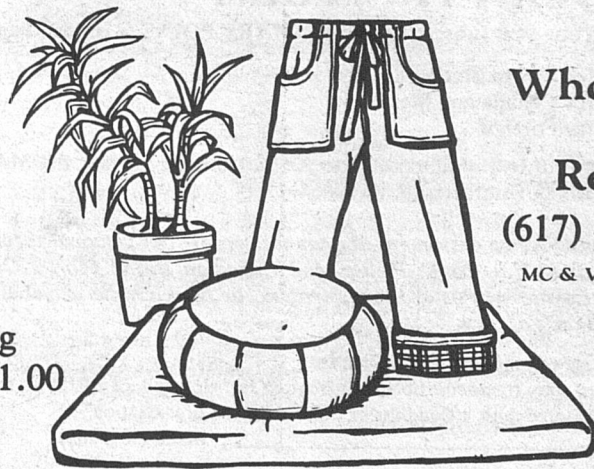


SOEN SA NIM and Gretchen Genthner, daughter of the Lexington, KY, Zen Center Directors Bob and Mara Genthner, during a 1985 visit.



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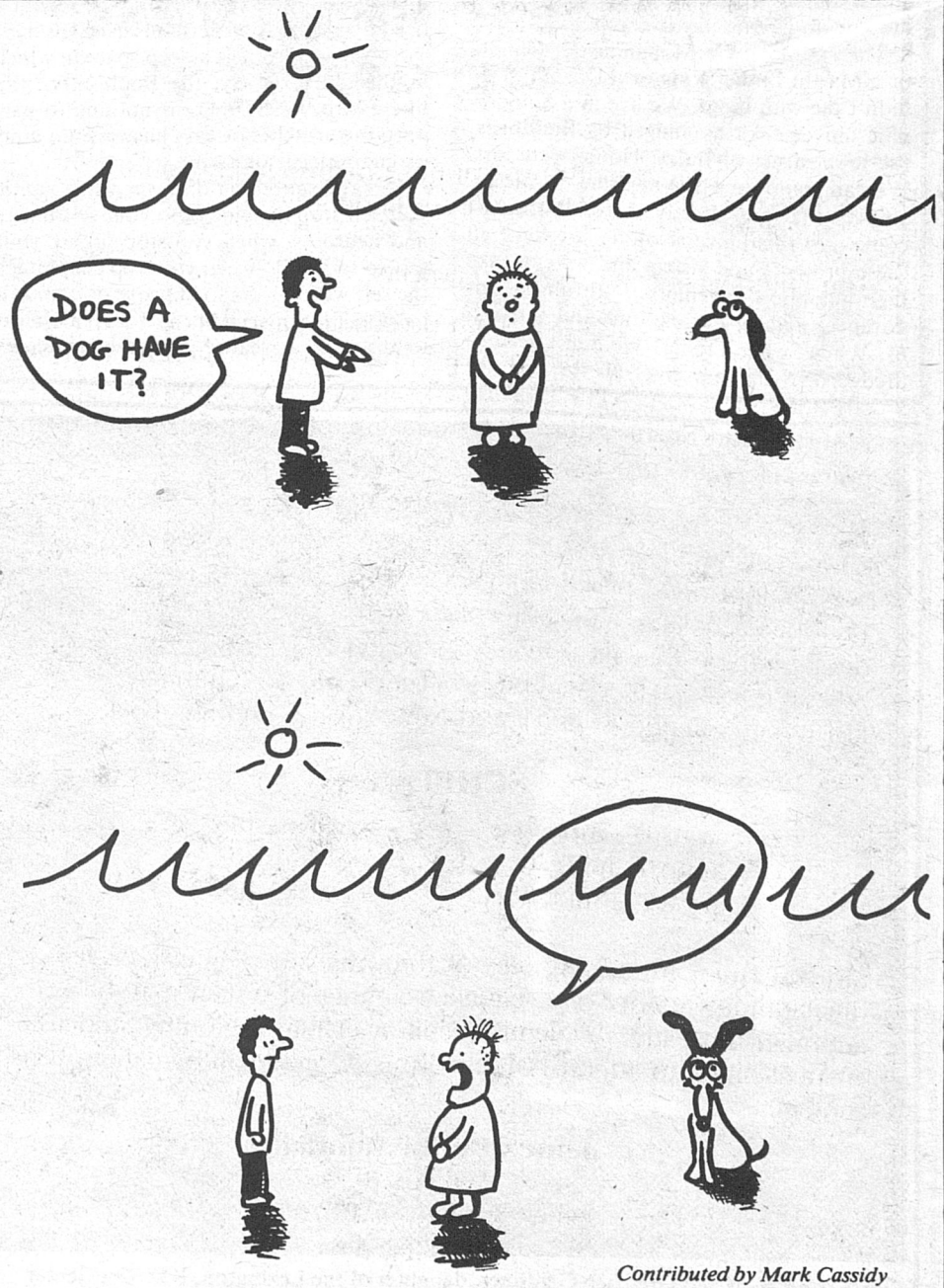
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INFORMATION ABOUT THE KWAN UM ZEN SCHOOL

The Teachers: Zen Master Seung Sahn is the first Korean Zen Master to live and teach in the West. He is the 78th Patriarch in the Korean Chogyo Order, and became a Zen Master in his native Korea at the age of 22. After teaching in Korea and Japan for many years, he came to the United States in 1972 and founded the Providence Zen Center, now located in Cumberland, Rhode Island. He is addressed as "Soen Sa Nim" (Honored Zen Teacher) by his students.

Soen Sa Nim has established over 30 Zen centers and affiliated groups in the United States, Canada, Brazil, Europe and Korea. These centers comprise the Kwan Um Zen School. The Providence Zen Center is Head Temple in the United States. In 1984 a Kwan Um Zen School of Poland was formed which includes five Zen Centers and two affiliated groups, of which the Head Temple is Warsaw Zen Center.

Soen Sa Nim travels worldwide leading retreats and teaching Buddhism. In recent years he has been doing more intensive international peace work, bringing people of many countries and religious traditions together to demonstrate world peace. In 1985 he was presented with the World Peace Award by the International Cultural Federation, under the auspices of the Korean government. Working to strengthen the connection between American Zen and Korean Buddhism, he has established the Seoul International Zen Center in Korea and the Diamond Hill Zen Monastery in the United States. At Diamond Hill, Zen students who wish to may become monks and live the traditional monastic life in the original practice style of Bodhidharma.

Soen Sa Nim has published **Dropping Ashes on the Buddha and Only Don't Know**, collections of his teaching letters and Zen stories, and a book of poetry, **Bone of Space**.

He has given "inga"—authority to lead retreats and teach kong-an practice—to six senior students. Called Master Dharma

teachers, they regularly travel to Zen centers and affiliates in America and abroad, leading retreats and giving public talks. The Master Dharma Teachers are: **George Bowman**, Cambridge Zen Center; **Barbara Rhodes and Lincoln Rhodes**, Providence Zen Center; **Mu Deung Su Nim**, Tahl Mah Sah Zen Center; **Richard Shrobe and Jacob Perl**, Chogyo International Zen Center of New York.

Training Programs: Each Zen center holds meditation practice every morning and evening, and a weekly Introduction to Zen talk. These events are free and open to the public. Some centers also offer personal interviews each month with the teachers in our school when available.

Introduction to Zen Workshops: Beginners and newcomers can experience Zen practice for a day, with instruction on meditation, question periods, informal discussions and lunch.

Short Intensive Retreats (Yong Maeng Jong Jin, or "Leap like a tiger while sitting"): Each month many of the Zen centers hold silent meditation retreats for 3 or 7 days under the direction of Zen Master Seung Sahn or one of the Master Dharma Teachers. The daily schedule includes 12 hours of sitting, bowing, chanting, working and eating in traditional temple style. Personal interviews and Dharma talks are given by the Zen teacher. Advance reservation is necessary and requires a \$10 non-refundable deposit.

90-Day Intensive Retreat (Kyoil Che or "Tight Dharma"): Conducted in total silence, long intensive meditation retreats are powerful tools for examining and clarifying our lives. The daily schedule includes 12 hours of sitting, bowing, chanting and formal silent meals. Personal interviews and Dharma talks are given frequently. Registration is for 90 days, 21-day periods or a one-week intensive. The School offers three long Kyoil Che's (one each in Poland, Korea and the United States) and a

short three-week summer Kyoil Che at Providence Zen Center. See schedule on this page for details.

Chanting Retreats (Kido): Several times a year chanting retreats are held. A Kido is powerful training in keeping a one-pointed mind and using group energy to deepen awareness.

Membership: If you would like to become a member of the Kwan Um Zen School, you may either contact the Zen center or affi-

liate nearest you, or become a member-at-large by writing directly to the School. You do not have to be a member to participate in any of the training programs. However, rates for members are reduced and include a free subscription to the monthly NEWS-LETTER and the quarterly, PRIMARY POINT. The most up-to-date calendar information is in the NEWSLETTER. Non-members can subscribe for \$6.00 per year, and \$10.00 per year for PRIMARY POINT.

Retreat Calendar

February	7-9	Lexington (BR)	25-27	Gainesville (SS)
	8	Cambridge (1 day, GB)	28-May 4	Cambridge (SS)
	15	New Haven (1 day workshop, no teacher)	May	2-4 Providence (*)
	21-23	Cambridge (GB)		9-11 New Haven (*)
	28-Mar. 2	Providence (BR)	June	30-June 1 New York (SS)
March	7-9	Ojai (SS)		2-8 Providence (SS)
	8	Chogyo (1 day workshop, JP,RS)		
	10-16	Kansas (SS)		
	14-16	New Haven (RS)		
	21-23	Chicago (SS)		
	28-30	Cambridge (*)-Empty Gate (*)		
	29-30	Ontario (SS)		
		Tahl Ma Sah (*)		
April	11-13	Providence (Kido, *)		
	18-20	Lexington (SS)		
	12	Seattle (BR)		
		New Haven (1 day sitting,		

*teacher to be announced

Please call the appropriate Zen Center to confirm these dates and teachers, and make your retreat reservations at least two weeks in advance. Retreat leaders are indicated by their initials: SS, Zen Master Seung Sahn; GB, George Bowman; BR, Barbara Rhodes; LR, Lincoln Rhodes; MD, Mu Deung Sunim; JP, Jacob Perl; RS, Richard Shrobe.

Winter Kyoil Che (BR)
Providence Zen Center

February 16-23 Intensive week
23 3rd period begins
March 16 4th period begins
April 4 4th period ends



Every day we breathe in, breathe out. Nobody pays money for that.

Zen Master Seung Sahn

SUMMER SEMINAR ON THE SUTRAS

A one month program of practice, study and examination of Buddhism.

The Summer Seminar has two aspects:

I FORMAL PRACTICE: Both preceding and following the classes will be Dai-sesshin, a week-long period devoted to intensive practice in zazen (formal sitting meditation). Reverend Kyozan Joshu Sasaki Roshi, a Rinzai Zen Master for nearly 40 years will guide us in this practice.

II STUDY AND EXAMINATION: Two weeks of lectures on a variety of Buddhist topics. The lectures will be presented from the standpoint of zen practitioner's as well as from the view of Buddhist scholars. The centerpiece of the program is Joshu Roshi's discussion of Dharma activity as expressed in the Rinzai Roku. Special guest speaker will be Reverend Eido Tai Shimano, Abbot of Dai Bosatsu Zendo Kongo-ji and New York Zendo Sho-Bo-ji.

SCHEDULE

May 31 - June 6		Dai-sesshin
June 9 - June 20		Classes
June 22 - June 28		Dai-sesshin

Students may attend any part of the program. The classes are divided into two five-day sequences, either of which may be attended separately. Academic credit available. Beginning students are welcomed to attend Dai-sesshin. For further information please contact:

Jemez Bodhi Mandala
P.O. Box 8
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(505) 829-3854

ZEN BUDDHISM IN NORTH AMERICA

Conference and workshops July 14-19

A number of first generation American Zen teachers and Buddhist scholars will convene in Ann Arbor, Michigan, in July for a 6-day conference sponsored by Zen Master Samu Sunim, founder of the Zen Lotus Society. Four days of public talks and discussions will precede an all-day "Colloquium on Zen Buddhism in North America," and seminars on transmission and monastic versus lay practice.

Topics to be addressed by the scholars are:

- Meditation practice in early Indian Buddhism by Richard Hayes
- Zen Buddhism in India, Tibet and China by Luis Gomez
- Zen Buddhism in Korea by Robert Buswell
- Zen Buddhism in Japan by Kenneth Kraft
- Zen Monastic rules and rituals by Griffith Foulk

Zen teachers who will be discussing meditation practice, zen training and community life and their issues and problems are: Ananda Claude Dalenberg, Zenson Gifford, Bernard Glassman, Albert Low, David Mott, Sukha Linda Murray, Yoshin David Radin, Lincoln Rhodes, Robert Schrei, Sujata Linda Uptegrove, and Samu Sunim.

For further information on registration and accommodations, contact: Zen Buddhist Temple - Ann Arbor, 1214 Packard Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48104 or telephone (313) 761-6520. A free brochure on the ongoing Zen summer training program being held at the Temple is also available.



Photo by Diana Clark

AN OPENING CEREMONY for the new Zen group in Providence was held December 18, officiated by Soen Sa Nim. Among honored guests who gave congratulatory talks were Master Dharma Teachers Linc Rhodes and Bobby Rhodes; Mu Soeng Sunim, Director of the Diamond Hill Zen Monastery; Tony Sager, Director of Providence Zen Center; and Dennis Duermeier, Director of the Kansas Zen Center. Soen Sa Nim named the group "Dharma Hope Zen Group" because it is near Hope Street. About 35 people attended the ceremonies and a party afterwards, including a visiting Korean monk and nun. Soen Sa Nim gave the group a new Buddha, moktak for chanting, and candlesticks.

Renovation of the third floor is well underway and will add a much larger Dharma room, bathroom and a bedroom. The first new resident is scheduled to move in by the end of February.

SANGHA NEWS

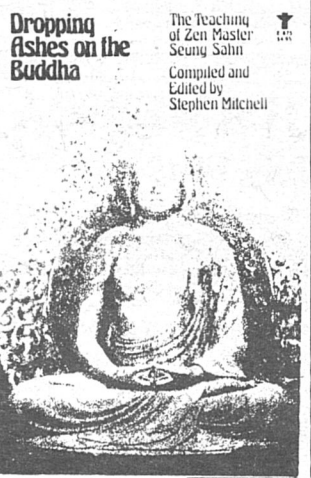
Master Dharma Teacher George Bowman is teaching an introduction to Zen practice this winter at the Interface Center in Watertown, MA. Interface is well-known for its workshops in health, psychology, personal growth and the performing arts. George is the resident teacher at Cambridge Zen Center.

Joan Halifax, Ph.D., a medical anthropologist and Dharma teacher in the Kwan Um Zen School and Director of the Ojai Foundation in California, has an article in the fall 1985 *American Theosophist*. The article, entitled "Shamanism, Mind, and No-Self" is part of a special issue devoted to "The Ancient Wisdom in Shamanic Cultures."

3 BOOKS BY ZEN MASTER SEUNG SAHN

Only Don't Know, The Teaching Letters of Zen Master Seung Sahn

Contemporary letters of Zen Master Seung Sahn, the first Korean Master to live and teach in the West, in which he responds to Western students' questions about daily life. Zen Master Seung Sahn carries on an extensive correspondence with his students worldwide, personally answering every letter written to him. *Only Don't Know* contains a rich choice of letters representing the broad range of the modern Zen student's concerns and the responses of a master. (Four Seasons Foundation, 1982) \$6.95.



Dropping Ashes on the Buddha, The Teaching of Zen Master Seung Sahn

A delightful, irreverent and often hilarious record of the encounters of Zen Master Seung Sahn with his American students. Consisting of stories, formal Zen interviews, Dharma speeches, and the Zen Master's spontaneous interactions with his students. (Grove Press, 1976) \$4.95.

Bone of Space, Zen Poems by Master Seung Sahn

Since the T'ang Dynasty, poetry has been used to express the experience of Zen. These poems by Zen Master Seung Sahn continue that tradition of using words to point to original nature. (Four Seasons Foundation, 1982) \$4.95.

These books can be found at your local bookstore or at your nearest Zen Center.



A raffle of 3 small Polish tapestries was held on Buddha's Enlightenment weekend at Providence Zen Center to raise money for the Dharma Publishing Group in Krakow, Poland. Purchased by Ellen Sidor on a May 1985 trip to Poland, the tapestries were won by Becky White and Rusty Hicks of New Haven Zen Center and Nina Davis of Chogy International Zen Center. Proceeds will benefit the group's publication of Polish translations of Soen Sa Nim's teaching, and other Zen classics.

Changes in the School office: Diana Clark resigned as School Director in December and has returned temporarily to her former home at Empty Gate Zen Center before doing some international traveling for the School, including Korea and possibly Poland. We thank Diana for her hard work over the past year...The new Director is Richard Streitfeld, who has been School office manager the past year. Richard, a Providence Zen Center resident who became a Dharma teacher last July, has extensive office background in computer use and accounting, and has been coordinating the

teaching and travel schedules of Soen Sa Nim and the six Master Dharma Teachers... Brendan Robb has replaced Nancy Herington as School financial manager. Nancy has moved to Arizona...Carole Boggs, Primary Point production editor, resigned in November to return to her farm in New York State...Bill Evans, office assistant and tapemaster for the School, left in October to take a job in an architectural firm in New Haven...We thank everyone for their hard work for the School and wish them the best in their new situations. The office will be operating on a trimmed-down staff in order to save money.

MASTER DHARMA TEACHER Lincoln Rhodes began an extended solo retreat in early February in Western Massachusetts. His wife, Master Dharma Teacher Barbara Rhodes, will be interim Abbot of Providence Zen Center during his absence. Having recently returned herself from a 100 day intensive solo retreat, Bobby, who is a registered nurse, is working part time in Providence for the Jewish Home for the Aged and the Hospice Foundation in addition to her duties at PZC.



Photo by Diana Clark

NEW ONTARIO AFFILIATE: Poep Kwang Do Jang in Toronto. (l to r) Silva and Miguel Palavecino; former Ontario resident and friend Zen Monk Mu Soeng Sunim, director of Diamond Hill Zen Monastery; Lucie Couture and Jeanne Yee.

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The GVZC was created in 1982 when Toni Packer left the Buddhist tradition in which she had been teaching in order to work in an atmosphere free of religious symbols, rituals and authority.

Tapes of Toni Packer's talks as well as copies of her book *Seeing Without Knowing* are available for purchase. Contact the

Genesee Valley Zen Center
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