

**SPECIAL ISSUE**  
**Kong-an Practice in America**

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# PRIMARY POINT

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Some of the attendees at "The Global Conference of Spiritual and Parliamentary Leaders on Human Survival" which was held April 11-15 in Oxford, England.

(European News)

## Poep Sa Nim Attends International Conference On Human Survival

by Do Mun Sunim & Do Haeng Sunim

Our European sangha has continued to grow this past winter and spring with regular retreats in nine countries. The majority of the activity has been guided by Dharma Master Ji Kwang Poep Sa Nim. Her emphasis is on finding practice in the situations and responsibilities of everyday life (monk and lay life). Her efforts in helping individuals to learn how to do this touches many people and has created a large and ever-growing practicing sangha. In addition to leading many retreats and seeing many people in personal consultation, she has recently been interviewed on French radio (an excerpt appears on page 9), appeared as a guest

on an important national television program in Spain and, most significantly, was an invited participant at an international conference held at Oxford University in England.

"The Global Conference of Spiritual and Parliamentary Leaders on Human Survival," held for five days during the week of April 11-15, 1988, brought together 100 spiritual leaders drawn from all the major religions and 100 lawmakers serving in governments in all the world's major regions. They were not there to represent their churches or their govern-

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*SPECIAL ISSUE*

## Kong-an Practice in America

(Editor's note: Kong-an is a Korean word. In Japanese, it is "koan", in Chinese, it is "kung-an".)

What is a kong-an? Are kong-ans necessary in our practice to attain clear mind? Are kong-ans merely another attachment for the mind to grasp?

In the accompanying interview, Toni Packer raises these issues provocatively, arguing that the traditional use of kong-ans has become the means to some end, a sort of magical formula that one simply does to reach Enlightenment or an entangling system that becomes just another place to be stuck.

The first part of this interview was published in the February 1987 issue of Primary Point. To accompany the publication of Part Two, the Editors of Primary

Point invited commentaries from several Zen teachers in America who currently use kong-an practice in their teaching.

We asked them to comment on their use of kong-ans. What are kong-ans? Why, how and when do they use them? What is their relevance to modern America?

Master Dharma Teacher Barbara Rhodes, Daido Looi Sensei, Jan Chozen Bays Sensei, and Zenson Gifford Sensei have responded with stimulating essays.

Zen Master Seung Sahn was also asked some of the same questions. His responses are recorded in the interview which begins on this page.

The kong-an articles begin on the next page. We trust you will find them quite thought-provoking. We invite our readers to comment.

## Kong-ans:

### Mind-to-Mind Connection

An Interview with Zen Master Seung Sahn

PRIMARY POINT asked Zen Master Seung Sahn (Soen Sa Nim) to explain his system of Kong-an practice and its applicability to contemporary American minds. Mu Soeng Sunim conducted the interview on behalf of PRIMARY POINT.

PRIMARY POINT: What are kong-ans? How did they become part of Zen practice?

SOEN SA NIM: Kong-an means public case, or public exchange, public situation, or public document. In old China, when they made copy of a government document, they put a "chop" or seal on the copy in such a way that half of the seal was on the original and half on the copy. So when they had to verify the authenticity of the copy all they had to do was to match the two halves. In Zen tradition, kong-an means student's understanding of a question is one-half and matches the teacher's understanding of the same question which is the other half. When student and teacher share the same understanding, it is called *mind-to-mind connection*.

If you want to practice correctly, you must ponder over old Zen masters' enlightenment stories. If you understand their mind at the moment of enlightenment that means your kong-an practice is correct. Nowadays, all Zen Masters use these old Zen masters' enlightenment

stories to teach their students. This is kong-an practice.

In the beginning there was no kong-an practice. Then the future seventh patriarch, Huai-jang came to visit Hui-neng, the Sixth patriarch. Hui-neng asked him, "Where do you come from?". Hui-jang replied he came from Sung Shan mountain. Hui-neng asked again, "What is this thing that has come here?". Huai-jang could not answer. That became the first kong-an in Zen tradition--"What is this?" It became a big question for Huai-jang and it took him eight years to understand.

Also, even before that there were situations in Buddhist history which became the basis of reflection by future Zen monks. Buddha sat down under the Bodhi tree with a big question: "What is life? What is death?" When Bodhidharma came to China, the future second patriarch came to visit him. Bodhidharma would not talk to him. To show that he was sincere in his quest, the second patriarch cut off his arm and presented it to Bodhidharma. Seeing this, Bodhidharma asked him, "What do you want?" The second patriarch said, "My mind is not rested. Please pacify it for me." Bodhidharma said, "Bring me your mind and I will pacify it." The second patriarch was

(continued on page 3)

## SPECIAL ISSUE

## Kong-an Practice in America

## Can Clear Seeing Be Attained Without Koan Practice?

An Interview With Toni Packer

Interviewed By Jacek Dobrowolski

After many years as a student of Philip Kapleau Roshi, Toni Packer gave up being co-leader of his Zen Center in Rochester, New York, and in 1981 founded a city center there and later a country center in Springwater, NY. The Springwater Center has a staff of 10 and around 200 members in this country and abroad. Toni, author of *Seeing Without Knowing*, was interviewed in July 1986 by Jacek Dobrowolski, a Zen student and scholar from Warsaw, Poland who was living at Cambridge Zen Center.

**Primary Point:** Many Zen Masters insist that clear seeing cannot be attained without koan practice. Now you say that all systems condition the mind. You work with people allowing them to bring and to work on their everyday problems, the koans of their own lives and you work by looking at that together, but don't you feel that a certain Springwater jargon or conditioning can emerge in this process?

**Toni Packer:** Of course it can. It does! As to the statement that only through koan practice can there be clear seeing- how does anybody know? Why does one make such a claim? On what basis?

If one is trained in koan practice one will advocate this method, and if one has had a different training one advocates that. We propagate what we think we know. It is

safe. But truth cannot be known.

It is as simple as that. Insight, truth, clarity, en-

lightenment- whatever word you may give to what is unnamable- is not the effect of any cause. It has no method, no training. It has nothing to do with the conditioned, trained mind. So why condition people's minds by saying, "Do this practice in order to attain enlightenment?" We all want clarity and safety, and wonderful experiences, because we feel so utterly empty, insecure and afraid. As long as we

are afraid and wanting, we are totally vulnerable to ever-new programs and exploitation.

Now what is a koan- what does it mean to work on a koan? If a koan is a single word like "MU," working on it means voicing it (audibly or inaudibly) on the exhalation, trying to get totally absorbed in it to the exclusion of everything else, even to the point of self-forgetfulness, using it to shut out distracting or disturbing movements of the mind- straining hard not to let go of it day or night. Working in this way, the mind is clearly not in a state of open, choiceless attention.

Other koans, in brief, are statements, descriptions of dialogues which are incomprehensible and perplexing to our conditioned, fragmented way of thinking. The thinking mind cannot gain insight into them. Many koans are the very expression of a mind in which the deceptions of self-centered thinking are clearly revealed and dispelled. The beauty of a koan is the beauty of mind without the limitation of self. Thinking about it cannot touch it. So the question is: can a koan be seen and understood directly, without any sense of duality, division? In this way it reveals its meaning.

Our way of living, since time immemorial, has been a series of contradic-

tory, perplexing, incomprehensible events created by the fragmented, self-enclosed, conditioned mind. Except for brief moments of pleasure and joy, we have existed in conflict, strife, violence and

unspeakable sorrow, at the same time yearning for peace, harmony and happiness for ourselves. We have not clearly understood the root cause of this dilemma. What is it? Can it be resolved? Does this question concern us profoundly? If it does, will there be the energy to find out? Can one begin to watch how one thinks, speaks, reacts, emotes and interrelates in actuality and in fantasy?



Toni Packer

**"We propagate what we think we know. It is safe. But the truth cannot be known."**

When the mind is in an acute state of questioning, attending, not knowing- what difference does it make whether it is koan that is questioned or this very instant of reality? What matters immensely is seeing, not any object of seeing.

What I have observed with koan work in myself and others is that it hooks so deeply into our already-conditioned

ing to be trapped in it? If we human beings do not understand ourselves freely, profoundly, from moment to moment, there cannot be any intelligent, loving and compassionate relationship among us. Division and sorrow will persist.

**Primary Point:** People put you down saying that this kind of practice does not aim at self-realization.

**"When the mind is in an acute state of questioning, attending, not knowing—what difference does it make whether it is koan that is questioned or this very instant of reality?"**

programs. One uses the koan as means to an end. It can also be used to have something to do while sitting- something to occupy the mind rather than face present difficulties. A Zen teacher once said to me: "If people didn't have subsequent koans to work on after passing their first one, they would leave the center." What is this mind, what is this instant when there is nothing to do, nothing to accomplish, nothing to hold on to?

While working on koans, does one seriously and continuously look at the feelings of accomplishment and pride which may be generated by passing a koan? Is one aware of this? Koan work has a built-in system of rewards. It ties in with our age-old feelings of success and failure. Does one continue to depend on the teacher who passes or rejects? Is one in awe of the teacher and senior students who have already passed all these koans?

Does one see the emerging feeling of elitism? Of having something others don't, or not having what others do? Is there ambition and competitiveness among koan students— comparisons about who passed which and how many koans? These comparisons take place among students and teachers alike. It happens when we get involved in any system. Can one become aware of this in all simplicity and be done with it? If not, self-centeredness, strife, violence and sorrow will persist, no matter how many koans are seen through. So whether the work is a koan or any other problem- is the mind clearly aware of these traps?

**Primary Point:** Do you believe that our personal problems can carry us beyond our personal ego to that point of silence and emptiness to which koans are supposed to lead us?

**Toni:** Our personal problem is our personal ego and it leads us around in circles. Emptiness and silence aren't a place to be reached by methods. Nothing can lead to it. Quiet and empty states of mind can be induced through different practices, but we are not talking about induced quietness and emptiness

Something entirely new comes into being when the brain, together with the rest of the organism, isn't mechanically engaged in wanting, striving, comparing, fearing, suppressing, attaining, defending, following, believing, and so forth. It is not a question of getting rid of these movements, but seeing without a shadow of deception what is actually happening inwardly and outwardly.

Can the vast, running river mind slow down, come to a halt? Not practicing to halt it, but seeing what is there and ceas-

**Toni:** What does one mean by self-realization? A powerful experience which will settle our daily problems? Awakening to a state of nirvana, bliss, ecstasy? Is that what it is thought to be? I am asked about this all the time. We all have read so many accounts of enlightenment experiences and one wants that experience for oneself. One will give anything for it, practice any method, follow any teacher.

What is self-realization if not the immediate, moment-to-moment insight into the processes of the human mind? Can fear and wanting be instantly seen and directly understood- not just the present feeling of it, but seeing the root cause and the inevitable consequences that follow? Not thinking or speculating about it, but a penetrating awareness which dispels what is seen. This seeing, this undivided openness, has nothing to do with any experience. There is no experiencer in it- no realizer, no recipient of anything. It is something entirely new and unknowable.

## Bring The Teaching Closer To Home

Kwan Um Zen School is looking for people to transcribe tapes of Soen Sa Nim and the Master Dharma Teachers. New Articles and books are in process. This is a wonder way to experience the dharma first-hand, and provide a much needed service. Paid and volunteer jobs are available. write: School Director, KUZS, 528 Pound Rd., Cumberland, RI 02864 or Call (401)769-6476



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## Soen Sa Nim Interview

(Continued from front page)

nonplused, "I cannot find my mind when I look for it." "There," said Bodhidharma, "I have pacified it for you." So this question, "What is mind?" became inspiration for Zen monks. Many questions came out of these stories: What is this? What is life? What is death? What is mind? All these questions became kong-ans and people started to use these questions for their own practice.

PP: Why do you use kong-ans in your practice?

SSN: Kong-ans are not special. But we use them to teach correct way, truth and correct life. We use kong-ans to teach how it is possible to function correctly in everyday life. Sometimes old Zen masters' answers to a question are not correct. But they used the situation to teach correct function, correct life to others. For example, Joju's answer in Mu kong-an (When asked if a dog has Buddha-nature, Zen master Joju (Chinese=Chao-chou) answered, "Mu" or "No") is not correct but he used MU to teach correct life. Also, the sixth patriarch's answer to "flag moving" kong-an (Two monks were fighting over whether the wind was moving or the flag was moving. Hui-neng, the sixth patriarch, who was passing by, said, "it's your mind that's moving") is not correct, but he used "your mind is moving" to teach correct life. Also, Buddha picking up the flower and saying to Mahakashyapa, "My dharma I transmit to you" (one time Buddha held up a flower. None of the 1200 monks present understood. Only Mahakashyapa smiled. Buddha said, "I give my dharma transmission to you") is not correct. But Buddha used "my dharma I transmit to you" to teach correct direction, correct life.

So kong-ans are only a technique to

directly how to function correctly in everyday life.

PP: Can't Clear Mind be attained without kong-an practice?

SSN: Yes, it is possible. Kong-an is only one technique. It's like this: American people use forks and knives. Chinese people only use chopsticks. Korean people use chopsticks and spoons. Indian



Zen Master Seung Sahn

people only use their hands. But they all have a full stomach when they eat, no matter how they eat.

PP: Isn't kong-an practice *making something*?

SSN: If you make something, you have a problem. We use kong-ans to take away your opinion. When you take away your opinion, your mind is clear like space.

**"Kong-ans are not special. But we use them to teach correct way, truth and correct life."**

teach correct direction, correct life. Zen students should not be attached to correct answers or incorrect answers by the patriarchs. We use kong-ans to perceive

Clear like space means only reflect action. Zen means correct conditional reflection. It means you respond to each situation correctly, meticulously. It means to understand what's your correct job in

this moment. That means moment-to-moment keep correct situation, correct function, correct relationship. If you practice correctly, this moment-to-moment correct situation, correct function, correct relationship will appear by itself.

If someone holds a kong-an, is attached to kong-an- "I am doing kong-an practice", or wants something from kong-an practice,

Now we use kong-an practice differently in our school. Enlightenment, no enlightenment, doesn't matter. How we use kong-an practice to make our direction clear, how we use kong-ans to help in our daily life, that's most important. So don't attach to a kong-an. Use a kong-an to function correctly, make your moment-to-moment life clear.

**"If you only want to understand kong-an, then you have a big problem."**

then he or she will have a big problem. If you only keep one kong-an or "Don't Know", all the time without making anything, then correct direction and correct life will appear by itself.

PP: What, then, is the best way to keep a kong-an?

SSN: Old-style kong-ans give us a Great Question: What is life? What is death? What is mind? What is this moment? Correct kong-an practice means Great Question plus Great Faith and Great Courage. Great Question means no thinking, no intellectual-style thinking.

An eminent teacher said, "Ten thousand questions are all one question." So One Question means only Don't Know. No thinking at all. Just do it. That's correct kong-an practice.

But if you have attachment to a kong-an or this style of practicing, then you have a big problem. A kong-an is only a finger pointing to the moon. If you are attached to the finger, you cannot perceive the moon. The most important thing is your direction. This direction is only Don't Know.

PP: What is the relevance of kong-an practice from ancient China to contemporary American society?

SSN: In correct kong-an practice, there is no American mind, no old China mind. Because correct kong-an practice is keeping a *before thinking mind*. In ancient days, people used only kong-ans and practiced very hard to get enlightenment.

PP: What is the best way to answer a kong-an? How does one open oneself up so that a direct and "correct" response is possible?

SSN: So that means put down everything, put down your opinion, your condition, your situation. Moment-to-moment only Don't Know. Then a correct response will appear by itself. Hitting the floor or shouting KATZ is only a technique. Sometimes using this technique is necessary, sometimes not necessary.

PP: Are there dangers in kong-an practice?

SSN: If you only want to "understand" kong-an, then you have a big problem. It's a kind of sickness. Then a very strong "I-my-me" mind appears. Sometimes people are attached to a good answer. That is not correct kong-an practice.

PP: Do you think that trying to pass the 10 Gates leads to a sense of competition? Does it lead to a sense of pride? Isn't trying to "solve" kong-ans particularly dangerous in our goal-oriented society?

SSN: So, correct practice is necessary. When you don't practice correctly, then your "I" mind appears, then competition appears, then pride appears. If you correctly "attain" kong-an, then this kind of mind never appears. Kong-an practice means cut off all (analytical) thinking. That means throw away our attachments to our conditions, opinions, and situations. American mind is intellectual, very analytical. Intellectual mind cannot pass kong-ans. Correct kong-an practice means your mind becomes very simple. In simple mind, there is no *I-my-me mind*. Then practicing kong-ans is no problem.

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SPECIAL ISSUE

## Kong-an Practice in America

### Koan Study

by John Daido Looi, Sensei

*From the introduction to Mountain Record of Zen Talks by John Daido Looi, Shambala Publications, Boston, to be released in 1988. Looi Sensei's teaching style uses both the method of koan introspection and silent sitting, depending upon the disposition and inclinations of the student.*

Since its earliest beginnings, the practice of Zen has always been characterized as: "A special transmission outside the scriptures with no reliance on words and letters. A direct pointing to the human mind, and the realization of Buddhahood." With zazen (sitting meditation) as its basis, the introspection of the koan is one of Zen's most effective skillful means of "direct pointing." The colorful and apparently paradoxical encounters between Zen adepts which form the basis of the classical koans have intrigued Westerners for many years. I use the term "apparently paradoxical" because in reality there are no paradoxes; paradox exists in the language we use to describe reality. In the direct and intimate experience of reality itself, there are no paradoxes.

Koans and koan collections are becoming increasingly available in the West. New translations and studies in English and other Western languages have made koans much more accessible, so that the word "koan" itself has come into familiar usage, even among those not actively doing Zen training. Much has been written about koans in terms of their value as subjects of philosophical and intellectual study. There is no question that koans are of great scholarly value- they contain a gold mine of information on the philosophy and history, the morality and ethics, and language and poetry of Zen. But the primary value of a koan, and indeed its uniqueness, lies in its use as a vehicle for spiritual realization.

In koan study, traditional koans are

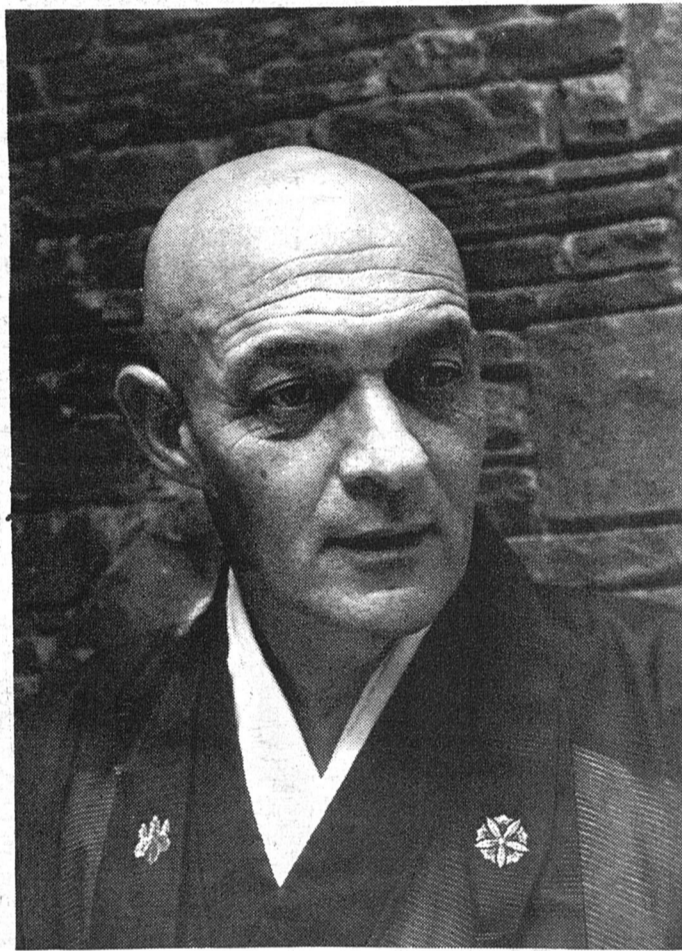
***"A koan is much more than words or ideas—it's a direct pointing, a revelation of spiritual realization ..."***

used as well as non-traditional koans taken from other core texts of Buddhism. Other koans used in training derive from the student's own experiences—"life koans," the barriers encountered through daily life experiences.

In a Dharma Discourse, the koan is taken up as a vehicle of Zen training and practice. Training and practice are by

definition concerned with doing: to practice is to do. To train the mind with a koan is to do, to put every bit of energy and attention you have in realizing it personally, rather than becoming involved in its philosophical or intellectual aspects. Practicing a koan is not a matter of understanding or believing, but rather of direct realization. To realize a koan is to be it with the whole body and mind; to be it with the whole body and mind is to forget the self.

In actual practice, the koan becomes the object of one's concentration, the object of one's being. To work with a koan is to go beyond the words and ideas, and experience the direct reality itself. Because of this, koans tend to frustrate the



John Daido Looi, Sensei

intellectual process, and that frustration is an important part of koan study. Until we've exhausted the possibility that we can "figure out" the koan, we keep the intel-

lect going. But koans cannot be realized through linear discursive thought; they involve the direct and intuitive

aspect of our consciousness. In the West our process of education is directed primarily toward developing and refining linear, discursive thought, said to be centered in the left hemisphere of the brain. And indeed, linear, discursive thought plays an important role in our understanding of the universe and our functioning in the world. We should real-

ize, however, that this represents only half of the potential of the human consciousness. There is another half- that which is direct and intuitive. It is this direct and intuitive aspect of consciousness that is at the heart of all of the great advances of the human race, not only our spiritual and artistic advances, but those of science and technology as well.

Through the process of working with the koan, we begin slowly to open up that other aspect of consciousness and learn to trust its functioning. Working with the koan begins to churn up many of the things we have been repressing for years- bringing them up into surface consciousness where they may be acknowledged and released. It's necessary to empty oneself out in order to "see" a koan, but you can't empty yourself out as long as you continue to hold on to the baggage of concepts, positions and ideas. A single thought separates us from the koan. And, of course, the emptying process in and of itself is very refreshing. It makes us free and able to probe the depths of the koan.

A single koan can be a multilayered experience, each layer to be thoroughly chewed, swallowed, digested and assimilated into every cell of our being, like a full course dinner from appetizer to dessert. Sometimes we only see the main point of the koan and miss the fullness of the other layers. It's like tasting only the appetizer. Dealing only with the philosophical and intellectual implications is kind of like reading the menu and completely missing the meal. Coupled with a pointer and a verse, the koan becomes a virtual feast of spiritual training. Many koan collections and koan training systems have evolved over the centuries. Each one was intended to fulfill the needs of the particular time and place in which it was developed, yet at the same time we can see in all of them a universality of the questions that they pose. Understanding the ultimate nature of reality transcends any time or place. A koan is much more than words and ideas- it's a direct pointing, a revelation of spiritual realization that is paralleled in every "bible" of human experience.

Most of the work with a koan takes place alone during sitting zazen, because in reality there's nothing anyone can give us. There's nothing we lack. Each one of us is perfect and complete, lacking nothing. That's why it is said there are no Zen teachers and nothing to teach. But this truth must be realized by each one of us, Great faith, great doubt, and great determination are the three essentials for that realization. It is a boundless faith in oneself and in the ability to realize oneself and make oneself free, and a deep and penetrating doubt which asks: Who am I? What is life? What is truth? What is God? What is reality? This great faith and great doubt are in dynamic tension with each other, and work to provide the real cutting edge of koan practice. When great faith and great doubt are also accompanied by great determination (the determination of "Seven times knocked down, eight times get up"), we have at our disposal the power necessary to break through our delusive way of thinking and realize the full potential of our lives.

The constant pointing that is the nature of Dharma Discourse is the awkward attempt of Zen teachers to assist students

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### 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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## SPECIAL ISSUE

## Kong-an Practice in America

## What Is A Koan?

by Zenson Gifford, Sensei

What is a koan? This question itself is a koan, for a koan can't be answered or understood by the intellect. Mumonkan's comment, "You describe it in vain, you picture it but to no avail" is applicable to the koan. People persist, however, to ask, "What is a koan?" Is it a direct expression of our true mind and therefore a means to awaken? Alternatively, is it, as some have said, a dualistic form of practice, or a Zen game? Let us look at some of the essential aspects of the koan and respond to some of the criticisms made of this practice.

A koan is literally a precedent setting public record, or as one Zen master said, "it is the place where truth is." Generally speaking, koans are taken from live exchanges between Zen masters and advanced students, or between advanced practitioners, or from sutras or ancient sayings. Most often koans are of a paradoxical nature and cannot be grasped by the intellect. Therefore a koan can only be understood through direct experience of the true mind out of which it originated.

The sayings and exchanges that became koans were compiled into various texts such as the Mumonkan and the Blue Cliff Record. These were, and still are, used as manuals for Zen training. Koans can basically be divided into two categories: the primary, or "breakthrough" koan, and the "subsequent" koans. Examples of breakthrough koans would be: "Mu", "Who am I?", "What is mind?", and "What is the sound of one hand?" The role of the breakthrough koan is to smack or break through the dualistic, conceptual thought consciousness based on a false sense of

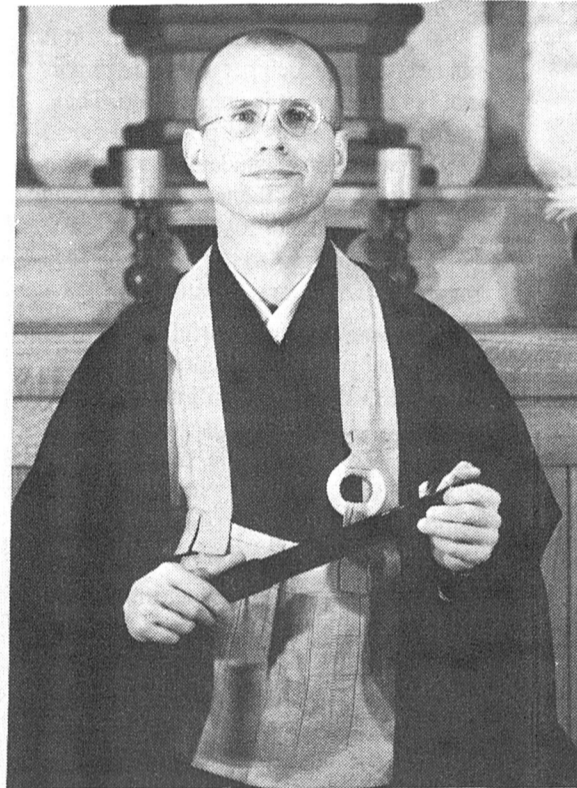
From an early age we all question. As children grow, their questions are often answered, explained, and rationalized until their natural curiosity begins to be submerged. Yet sensitive persons, at one time or another, find themselves again asking those same questions: "Where did I come from? What is the meaning of life? What happens when I die? Why is there so much hatred and violence? Who am I?"

This questioning mind is seen in the life of all spiritually sensitive people and certainly in the lives of great masters in all traditions. However, as we painfully see in our own life and in the lives of loved ones, people often ignore, suppress or run away from these questions. They cover them over with all sorts of games and pleasures, and respond to them out of fear and ignorance. For some, however, these questions and the deep need to know keep coming back. For these persons there is no escape and no rest. The great matter must be resolved. This urgency and questioning is often triggered by a personal life crisis. Sometimes this leads one to a "natural koan" such as "who am I?", or "what is the meaning of existence?" For the Zen practitioner, it may lead to adoption of one of the formal koans. Regardless of how one comes to a koan, once arrived at, it becomes an effective way to focus natural questioning on a spiritual level. All of one's deep questioning and longing for liberation is focused in the koan.

Critics have suggested that using a formal koan involves substituting someone else's question/problem for

tioning and corresponding doubt. It becomes a means to see through the false mind of duality that creates and perpetuates a life of pain, suffering and anxiety. Without the focus of the koan one can often feel torn, scattered, and alone.

There is no need to arouse an artificial sense of doubt, or "doubt mass" when working on a koan. Just look! It's right there. As Dogen Zenji observed, "impermanence and suffering are right before your eyes." And if you look and don't question, doesn't that make you question? Who doesn't feel that wrenching pain in the guts at the sight of the cold and homeless, the abused children, the lives wasted by drugs, and the people killing themselves in senseless wars? Isn't this what



*Zenson Gifford, Sensei, an ordained Zen Buddhist priest, began zazen practice under Phillip Kapleau Roshi in 1970 at the age of 21. After completing his formal training in 1979, he continued full-time at the Rochester Zen Center until leaving for an extended pilgrimage in 1981. During his pilgrimage, he lived in Japan for a year and a half, training under Harada Tangen Roshi. In 1981 he was named Dharma Heir to Roshi Kapleau. Zenson Gifford Sensei is currently Abbot of the Northern Zen Sangha, with centers in Toronto, Canada and Warsaw, Poland.*

brings people to Zen practice- not as an escape or a means to cope- but in order to be able to bring insight and strength to truly help?

Some scholars contend that in early times many people chose koan practice as a way to grapple with the suffering they experienced. The koan gives one the chance to strongly practice, not only while sitting in zazen but in the midst of life's turmoil. It provides the concrete means to break through the bonds of suffering in times of strife and uncertainty.

With intense effort the breakthrough koan takes one's natural questioning beyond thought and perception, beyond the relative and the absolute, to awaken to that which has always been there but has been obscured by clouds of delusion. This breaking through is like recalling something always known yet somehow forgotten. It's comparable to turning a light on in a dark room. The room has always been the same. It's only that people have been groping in darkness, unable to really live in that room.

If you try to study Buddhism it's not true Buddhism. Likewise, koan practice is not a form of study in the conventional sense of the word. Koan practice is firmly grounded in zazen, for it is only through entering into the One Mind from which the koans arise from that one can truly

fathom them. The koan cannot be understood by the intellect through study and speculation. This is why it is said, "The Buddha has no theories." One must directly experience the truth out of which these koans arise- not just dwell in theories and ideas.

People ask how to use a koan. There is no one way to work on a koan. As an old verse goes, "One way to awakening, a thousand masters can't point it out." Yet because koan work is an intense form of practice, it is best to work with a teacher. It is helpful to have the assistance of one who has worked through the koans himself/herself. A good teacher continually tests a student, always putting the work back on him/her to resolve the great matter. Without a teacher it is very easy to become confused, go astray, or to work oneself into negative mind states or fool oneself that one has attained something. Although a teacher is important, he or she cannot resolve the koan or do the work for the student.

Another criticism of koan practice has been that it is goal oriented and thus revolves on the karmic level of gain and loss. However, one can also become goal oriented in any practice- even making a goal out of sitting with a clear mind and having no goals. In koan practice there is really nothing to get or achieve. The best way to just work on the koan is to let it work on you, because ultimately that is all there is to do.

In getting through a first koan, and with subsequent koan work, there can be the false sense of attaining something. This can lead to spiritual pride and become a real hindrance to practice. Teachers must be constantly showing the students' grasping mind to them. This can be effectively done with the koans themselves, many of which show us that even

though we think we are getting something there is really nothing to get. Teachers must also make subsequent koans relevant to modern times, eventually bringing students to the ongoing life/practice beyond the formal koans.

One important aspect of koan training is that a student must constantly go before his or her teacher in dokusan (interview, a process which in itself is good training). In the breakthrough koan practice students must demonstrate the truth of the koan and can't merely present theories or ideas. They see their false notions in the mirror the teacher holds before them or have the legs of deluded notions cut out from under them. In subsequent koan practice there is a constant refining for there is always more to "not-do", yet not to leave undone.

If anything, the koan practice involves a losing of false notions rather than a gaining experience. The need to continue is always revealed. Harada Diun Roshi described it as, "Walking a road to infinity."

Some say that pure zazen is just sitting with nothing in the mind and that koan practice involves artificially putting something in the mind. What is this thing that people say is put in the mind with

(continued on next page)

***"A koan is a means to directly focus our natural, questioning mind to penetrate through the barriers of delusion and to awaken to our true nature."***

an ego-I self. Thus, one's mind is opened to the beginningless, endless fundamental truth of the universe--in essence, there is an awakening to one's sovereign nature. Subsequent koans are used to perfect one's spiritual understanding, to free one from the lingering bonds of delusion, and to integrate awakening into one's daily life.

What is the special power of this unique form of spiritual practice that has attracted so many people over the centuries? Actually, it's nothing special, secret or magical. Nor does it involve a technique to develop strength of concentration or psychic powers. A koan is a means to directly focus our natural, questioning mind to penetrate through the barriers of delusion and to awaken to our true nature.

one's own question/problem. However, don't all beings share the same fundamental questions of existence? Despite the obvious differences in times and cultures, aren't we all concerned with the same basic problems our ancestors were concerned with? If you don't just look at the branches, aren't people's hopes, fears, joys and sorrows arising from the same root, the same karmic wheel of cause and effect so eloquently described by Shakyamuni at Deer Park? Similarly, doesn't Carl Jung's proclamation, that he didn't have a patient over forty whose real concern wasn't death, have meaning for us all? Don't we, and haven't we always, shared in the same search?

If the great matter of birth and death is the fundamental human question then what do we do? In Zen training the koan can become a means to focus one's ques-

SPECIAL ISSUE

## Kong-an Practice in America

Zenson Gifford- "What is a Koan?"

(Continued from page 5.)

koan practice? It is only when one is involved in analyzing that one steps back and sees things. If you look at the koan Mu as a thing then it is outside of you. Mu is not a thing or concept because it defies definition. What happens when you become the koan with no separation- in essence when you die to the koan? At that moment there is Mu, mind, all things/no things. At the moment one truly enters the koan, what is put where? At that timeless moment, what is there?

I have tried to address some of the criticisms leveled against Zen koan practice. In considering such criticisms, an analogy comes to mind. I once met a student who was having a great deal of conflict with her university professor, an authority on Chinese culture. The student had grown up in Taiwan and knew a great deal about the Chinese people. On the other hand, the professor, the so-called authority, had never been to China.

No matter how many books one reads, if you've never been to a place you can't really know it. It's only by being there that one gets a real taste through all the sights, sounds, smells, etc. But if one only visits for a short time the experience tends to be colored by comparisons with one's own native land and culture. It is only after a person has lived in a place for some years that one begins to know it.

It is the same with koan practice. It cannot be understood conceptually because it's whole function is to take you beyond the conceptual mind. Likewise, if it's only practiced a short time or in a superficial manner then one will have all sorts of comparisons and criticisms. One is not yet able, as Mumonkan says, "to

emancipate oneself from one's previous learning." But when one really enters into the koans for years of training then it is obviously a different matter.

Zen is considered a very direct and practical way. Because something works, it is used. This is why so many have taken up koan practice over the years. Ever since Joshu first uttered "Mu", this and similar koans have brought countless people in various times and cultures to awakening.

What is essential to realize is that it is not only the practice per se that is important but also how it is entered into. That is, the person makes the practice. Basically it depends on the student's aspiration, and to some extent the teacher's pointing. The koan must be brought alive- it must be allowed to come to life, to be the focus for one's own natural questioning.

The world is a wonderfully vast fabric of spiritual paths and religious traditions. Just as Zen Buddhism isn't the way for everyone, koan practice isn't the only way for Zen practitioners. Indeed, as one student joked, this is probably a good thing or there would be some awfully long dokusan waiting lines.

It has been my somewhat limited experience in seventeen years of working on and with koans that while they can have short-comings if not used properly, their potential is vast. People spend much of their lives living in shadows, sometimes looking at the shape, size and intensity while not looking at the root cause- not seeing what really blocks the light. Working on a koan can open one's eyes to the moon of truth. Although the light is sometimes obscured by clouds of delusion the moon is always shining.

What is a koan? Only you can answer this for yourself.

## Old Koans, New Koans, One Koan

by Jan Chozen Bays, Sensei

Yes, I use koans in working with students of Zen. I use koans constantly in my own Zen work. Koans are not old stories in dusty books about monks who lived a thousand years ago, irrelevant to life today. "Old" koans are fresh and relevant, and there are "new" koans everywhere. The key to working with a koan is to plunge into it, become wholly immersed in it. A koan can't be figured out logically. The answer has to be experienced with the whole of body & mind. Breathe the words of the koan as you sit, bring the words of the koan up during the day, at work, in the car. If you are working on an "old koan", and you seem to be standing on the outside, change the words a little if you need to, to make it as urgent as it was to the people involved originally.

Mumonkan Case 16: Ummon said, "The world is vast and wide. Why do you put on your seven-piece robe at the sound of the bell?" Perhaps this koan seems foreign because the Mumon was talking to male monks in Chiga about putting on their kesa (kasa) and you are an American housewife. So change it to make it yours. Carry it with you all day long to make it constantly fresh. "The world is vast and wide. Why do you put on your bathrobe at the sound of the stupid alarm clock?" Or, "The world is vast and wide. Why do you pull the cookies out of the oven when the timer goes off?" Or, "The world is vast and wide. Why then do you feed the same mouths and wash the same dirty dishes over and over and over?"

This koan talks directly to us all, no matter what age, sex or condition, because it is talking about the fundamental matter of who we are, how vast and wide we truly are, and how vast and wide is clearly revealed by the smallest, even unconscious, action.

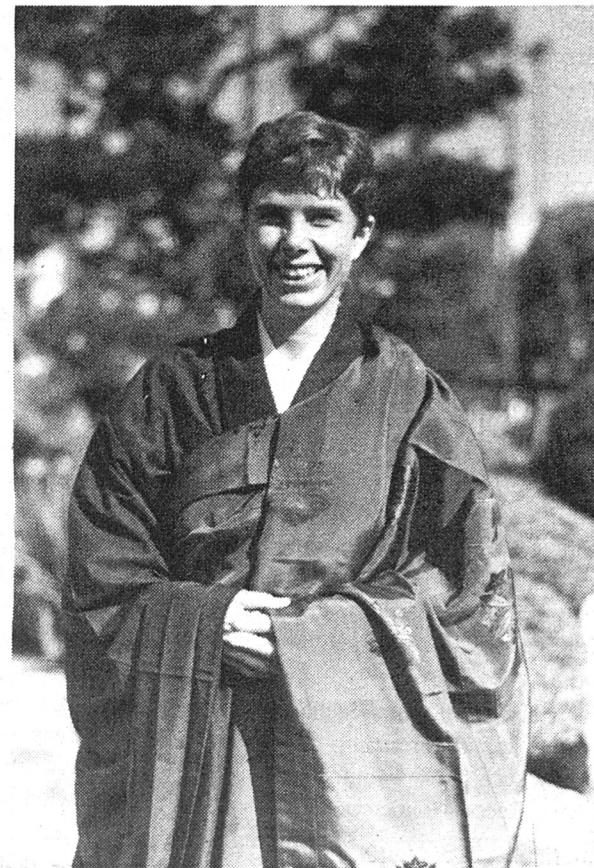
"New" koans are everywhere. The best ones are those which leap out and grab you. One of my students was talking about addiction and addictive behavior the other day. The worst addiction we have is the addiction to the notion of who we think we are and how we think things should be. We are pitiful in our addiction. How do we know when we touch that addiction? When we become angry....or afraid, which is the emotional level just under and usually disguised by, anger.

Anytime we become upset or angry, right there we have been caught by a "new" koan. Someone has just challenged our idea of who we think we are. We have been given a clue as to where we are stuck. Explore that anger/fear and see what notion it leads to.

For example, I used to work with someone I did not like. To be in a meeting with him drove me crazy. As soon as he spoke I began to squirm and eventually to seethe. No matter that a lot of people

agreed with me that this guy was a "jerk", I knew that my reaction was out of proportion, and I had to work on it to see what it said about ME. I sat with it for several days, trying to narrow my distress down to a single characteristic that bothered me. I eventually realized that what really got my goat was that (I felt that) he was lazy. And even worse, he got away with it. No one challenged him or made him do his fair share.

Once I had gotten to the crux of what characteristic irritated me, I had to turn it back on myself. How was I in the laziness



Jan Chozen Bays, Sensei began Zen practice in 1973, doing zazen in a corner of the bedroom while her 2 year old took naps. She started study with Maezumi Roshi in 1974, received jukai in 1975, tokudo in 1979, and became a sanctioned teacher and Dharma heir of Maezumi Roshi in 1983. She moved to Portland, Oregon in 1984 and is teacher in residence at the Zen Community of Oregon. She is a pediatrician and medical director of the child abuse programs at Emanuel Hospital in Portland. Her husband is a therapist for sex offenders at the Oregon State Penitentiary. They have three children, two cats and a big garden.

department? The opposite. Miss Compulsive Worker. Stay up all night to finish a project. Do it myself rather than delegate to someone else. Haven't allowed myself to take a non-working vacation in 15 years. Suddenly I realized that I was actually jealous of this man. He was "lazy" and I never let myself even relax. I'd stumbled onto an idea of who I was and how I had to be...busy, productive, compulsive. As soon as I realized this, my excess emotion at him dissolved, and I was able to leave "him" and go back to work on "me".

Anger is a very good koan, enabling us to step back a little from our self-notion and see where we are attached. Do we have to do anything about what we discover? I don't know. Depends. Often just stepping back to see something is enough. Often just becoming aware of something, like a little piece of our notion of self, means the beginning of the end of that something. Many koans show evidence that Zen teachers used anger skillfully to poke at their students' addictions, unbalance them and help them step "off the top of a hundred foot pole".

### Contributors Wanted For Next Issue

Our October Issue will contain a feature entitled "Right Livelihood: Buddhist practice and the American Workplace." We need contributors to write on how their everyday occupation reconciles with their practice and vice-versa. How does the one contribute to and support the other? What kind of conflicts arise? If you're interested, Write or call Bruce Sturgeon (Editor), 5 Devonshire Place, Asheville, NC 28803, (704)254-8140.

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Jan Chozen Bays- "...One Koan"

(Continued from page 6.)

Another example. A student came to me in sesshin, unsure if she should work on Zen koans because she was a Catholic. I asked her if she had any questions within Catholicism which were bothering her. She said that she had been worried over the question "Is there anything outside the will of God?" Perfect koan! She worked intently on it all sesshin. In Zen terms we could re-phrase it, "Is there anything outside of Buddha nature?" Is jealousy outside the will of God? Is child abuse outside the will of God? Is a toilet brush outside of Buddha nature?

This is precisely Joshu's Mu, the first case in Mumonkan. "Does a dog have Buddha nature?" The exact wording doesn't matter so much when someone has a koan which has grabbed them by the throat and gives them little rest.

There are koans everywhere. Take AIDS. It stands for Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome. Take it one word at a time. What does *acquired* mean? The dictionary is one of my favorite Zen texts. I use it when I'm stuck and can't get "inside" a word in a koan. Acquire means to come into possession of. It comes from ad + quaerere, to seek, obtain. Do we acquire a thing out of the blue? Do we have to seek it or be accessible to it in some way? Is there a mutual relationship between the thing acquired and the acquirer?

(No, I'm not talking about that tired New Age notion that people bring on their illnesses and can get rid of them if they only try hard enough. And by referring to a dictionary I'm not speaking about an intellectual dissection of each word in a koan. I'm talking about using any tool to help immerse ourselves in the koan the way a swimmer is immersed in water...only more intimate...breathe, eat, sleep, walk and sweat the koan.)

There is the koan "The Buddha Holds Out a Flower". Seeing the flower, Mahakashyapa was enlightened. Ananda, the Buddha's cousin and devoted follower, asked Mahakashyapa after the Buddha's death, "What did the Buddha transmit to you besides the gold kesa?" He was hoping to "acquire" the same thing that the Buddha "gave" to Mahakashyapa. What is it we acquire or "un-acquire" with Zen practice?

How about *deficiency*? Is there any deficiency anywhere? Isn't everything whole and complete just as it is? What do we lack that we seek in practicing Zen? This is the koan of Enyadetta, who thought she lost her head and had to work hard to find it again.

Do I use koans with every student? No, only the ones who wish to use them, or those who have already been seized by the throat by a koan they can't shake. Do I follow the entire formal system of koan study? I haven't started a student on it yet, but it may become appropriate in the future. I am too young as a teacher to have settled upon a way of working, and students are too diverse to have one course of study for all.

I feel that my own formal koan study was immensely valuable, testing and deepening in a way that would be difficult to reproduce out of the blue. When it becomes appropriate, I would be honored to offer that experience to another student. I loved, hated, delighted in and dreaded koan study. I looked forward to each new koan like a new food to be tried...kind of like working your way through a huge cookbook, recipe by recipe. I wanted to chew them up and digest them. I'd finish one and be full, and sometimes exhausted, and then I'd be starved for more. Nourishing and delicious.

It was also horrible...when big chunks fell away. Like having your house hit by a wrecking ball. I dreaded going in to dokusan (private interview) to present my answer, to face those hard eyes that brooked no hesitancy and saw any unclarity instantly. I often emerged with sweat running in little streams under my arms. I would go back to the zafu after my "answer" had been rejected, sit, mad, for an hour or a day, sure that I had explored all that a particular koan had to offer, then sigh and plunge back in. Sure enough, another level would open up.

Anyone who practices is working on koans, whether acknowledged or not, whether we adopt or reject the formal koan system. We are working on the koan that underlies all koans, we are this fundamental koan, "Who am I?"

Soen Sa Nim Interview

(Continued from page 3.)

Our style of kong-an practice means not holding kong-an. The old style was to go into the mountains, cut off outside world and just work on one kong-an. Our style of practice means to learn how to function correctly in everyday life through kong-an practice. So, when you are doing something, just do it. In that doing, there is no thinking, no subject, no object. Inside and outside become one.

In our style of practice, correct kong-an practice, correct life and correct direction are all the same. If we make our everyday life clear, then kong-an practice is no problem. Then kong-an practice is not special.

If our everyday life is clear, then kong-an practice is not necessary. Then kong-

an practice is not for me. It is only to teach other people. So we use kong-ans, old kong-ans and new kong-ans, only to teach other people. Sometimes a person's own life may be very clear, but they don't understand how to teach other people how to function correctly in everyday life. Also, they don't understand how to teach truth and correct way. When clear life, truth, and correct way come together in a meticulous way, moment-to-moment, that's kong-an practice. Only "my life is clear" is not enough. For example, if you eat only one kind of food all the time, your body will have a problem. So, your body needs different kinds for a good balance, for a correct body.

PP: Can you explain your system of kong-an teaching? What are the different kinds of *like this* kong-ans you use?

SSN: We use four kinds of *like this* kong-ans:

**WITHOUT LIKE THIS** = True Emptiness = Primary Point  
= Silence  
= Complete Stillness

Example kong-ans: "What is true emptiness?" "What is complete stillness?"

**BECOME ONE LIKE THIS** = KATZ! = Correct demonstration of Primary Point  
= Hit

Example kong-ans: Buddha picked up a flower, Mahakasyapa smiled. What does it mean?

**ONLY LIKE THIS** = Meaning is Truth = True function of Primary Point

Example kong-ans: Spring comes, grass grows by itself. 3x3=9. "What is Buddha?" "Three pounds of flax."

**JUST LIKE THIS** = Just doing is correct life = One-point Correct Function

Example kong-ans: Go drink tea. Go wash your bowls.

We can understand these four kinds of kong-ans in this way. You go into the interview room; the teacher places a cup and pen before you and asks you if the cup and the pen are the same or different. The four kinds of *like this* answers will be:

**WITHOUT LIKE THIS** = Maintain complete silence, a don't know mind.

**BECOME ONE LIKE THIS** = Hit the floor or shout KATZ!

**ONLY LIKE THIS** = Saying "cup is cup, pen is pen"

**JUST LIKE THIS** = Drink from the cup, write with the pen.

SSN: So, "Just like this" is Just Doing It, Correct Function, Correct Everyday Life.

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# Empowering Ourselves as Dharma Teachers

by Dennis Duermeier

A tradition of the Kwan Um Zen School was revived recently when a Dharma Teacher Yong Maeng Jong Jin was held the weekend of March 18-20, 1988 at the Kansas Zen Center in Lawrence Kansas. In the past, Dharma Teacher Yong Maeng Jong Jins were held at least twice annually and were an opportunity for people becoming Dharma Teachers to receive some training and grounding in the Zen lineage as transmitted by Soen Sa Nim. Unless senior members of local Zen Centers took the initiative to offer more teaching, often the only formal introduction new Dharma Teachers received in Kwan Um Zen School style of Buddhism was a necessarily compressed run through of Compass of Zen and the Dharma Mirror, Soen Sa Nim's manuals for Dharma Teachers.

In recent years, the Dharma Teacher Yong Maeng Jong Jin was eliminated and training sessions were scheduled some-



time during the weekend of the Kwan Um Zen School Congress. The training had, in fact, died out in the crush of the weekend's events. Thus, formal training for Dharma Teachers within Kwan Um Zen School, already minimal, has been decreasing over the past few years. At last year's Dharma Teacher Association meeting (held during the School Congress), many people expressed a strong desire for more formal training and for the return and expansion of the Dharma Teacher Yong Maeng Jong Jin. Stanley Lombardo, Abbot of the Kansas Zen Center, strongly agreed and offered the Kansas Zen Center facility for the retreat. This was the genesis of what became "Empowering ourselves as Dharma Teachers and as an organization."

As the title suggests, over the months of planning, the weekend had evolved into less of a training session and more of an opportunity to take an in-depth look at what it means to be a Dharma Teacher. What are we learning and teaching, and what teaching and practice forms are we inheriting and developing? Too often in the past, Dharma Teacher Association business had been relegated to the odd moments after school congress or council business had been conducted. The March weekend was an almost unprecedented opportunity for a relaxed, unhurried look at just what a Dharma Teacher's job is.

The participants were almost all older committed students of Soen Sa Nim's. The categories of students represented were Dharma Teacher, Senior Dharma

Teacher, Master Dharma Teacher, Bodhisattva Monk, and Full Monk. This expressed both the seniority of the participants as well as the perhaps confusing variety of forms existing within Kwan Um Zen School. Some basic questions were being asked: What are the expectations of a Dharma Teacher or a Senior Dharma Teacher? What is the difference between Dharma Teacher and Bodhisattva Monk? How do we teach? What do we teach?

The retreat began Friday with regular morning practice, breakfast and some free time before the formal events. Several people elected to take a walk around the Kansas University campus. (Snow had fallen the night before, but the morning was brilliant, clear, and bracing. Throughout the weekend, in typical Kansas fashion, the weather ran the gamut from winter to summer, but it was beautiful. It was an incidental but important aspect of the suc-

cess of the weekend.) The retreat began with a circle talk on the theme, "What I would like to get or give this weekend."

Soen Sa Nim spoke last about the Dharma Teacher's job. Very simply, the Dharma Teacher's job is to translate what has traditionally been a monastic practice into a lay practice- to change from the old to an emerging new style. The Kwan Um Zen School has always stressed *together action*, acting, practicing with other people. Recently, Soen Sa Nim has been very explicit about this aspect of our practice being the departure point for the "new" Zen. The "old style" emphasized enlightenment first, then gradually, with cultivation, karma disappears and one acts freely and correctly in all situations. In a sense, together action approaches the process from the opposite direction. People acting together, right from the beginning, with all their karmic sharp edges intact, is an excellent method to perceive karma and over time, make it disappear. As Soen Sa Nim says, "If karma disappears, then whether you get enlightenment or not is not important."

The problem with the old style is that it tended to become isolated and rarefied, losing its connection with ordinary, daily life. Many historical Zen schools died out for this reason. So the Kwan Um Zen School's style of lay people living together and practicing together is a new development in the history of Zen. It is the job of Dharma Teacher to translate the essence of Soen Sa Nim's Dharma to a form which is intimately involved in

daily life and to ensure that the connection is not lost.

After a short break, the conference divided into smaller groups of five or six to facilitate discussion and share concerns in a more intimate atmosphere. Ideas and issues generated were reported to the group at large Saturday morning and led to some of the most productive work of the entire weekend. (see below)

Following a round of sitting and lunch, Mu Deung and Soen Sa Nim gave a talk on the Ten Precepts. Soen Sa Nim explained that the precepts he gives people are identical to traditional monk's

prospective Dharma Teachers. It was suggested that Soen Sa Nim be asked to give a series of talks working his way through the Compass of Zen. The transcribed talks would be the core of a revised Compass of Zen.

3) Another issue many people are dealing with is finding some balance as a lay Dharma Teacher. The role of traditional monks and nuns is very clear- their lives are given to practice. However, many Dharma Teachers find balancing a serious commitment to practice or a Zen Center and the demands of a family, job, education, social life, etc., very difficult.

## "When and how do we teach new students?"

precepts and while the first five are applicable to everyone, the second five are not particularly relevant to lay people. There have been some attempts at developing or modifying precepts to make them more current and Soen Sa Nim is formulating new ones for Dharma Teachers.

Saturday morning began with practice and the opportunity to hear Soen Sa Nim give a short talk on chanting, and do the morning bell chant solo and Korean-style. The Saturday morning session heard reports from each of the small groups and discussed the ideas that emerged. Some of the main themes were:

1) Why become a Dharma Teacher? And the corollary: Why is there such a high attrition rate, (almost 50% over fifteen years)? Discussion focused on taking precepts for social or "status" reasons or perhaps being subtly or not so subtly pressured into becoming a Dharma Teacher. There was a suggestion to make the waiting period between five and ten precepts four years and emphasizing viewing it as a privilege rather than duty. The consensus was that the current two year period is long enough. This issue was related to another, specifically...

2) Should the cognitive aspect of our teaching be more emphasized now that most Dharma Teachers understand the primary importance of daily practice? What and how do we teach new students? Is there a need for some sort of "standardization" or at least formal training com-

There are no clear cut forms or guidelines, inevitably so, since in some ways, we are making it up as we go along. While it's true that most people can do far more than they think they can, for many people, the result of being spread too thin for too long has been burnout.

4) Several people voiced concern over how to help people with serious psychological problems who come to the Zen Center. Most people seemed to agree that it's important to balance compassion- the desire to help, with wisdom - the ability to acknowledge your limits. Some people need professional help, and compassion in that case may mean helping them get it.

After the small group issues had been reported and discussed, Soen Sa Nim joined the discussion and answered questions on many topics. He gave his views on many of the above issues, but he also answered questions that many people had had for years and only now had a chance to ask.

For example, he explained the significance of the objects on the Zen Center altars: They represent the four elements of earth (rice), air (incense), fire (candles), and water (water offering). He explained the meaning of the morning bell chant: "Everything must wake up!" He again explained why the chants should not be translated, or if they are, that translations should be placed in the back of the chanting book rather than beside the phonetic syllables: "Meaning is not im-

## "Many Dharma Teachers find balancing a serious commitment to practice or a Zen Center and the demands of a family, a job, education, and a social life very difficult."

mon to Kwan Um Zen School? Should the chants be translated? Perhaps here is the place to note that some people felt that one of the benefits of becoming a Dharma Teacher is that it almost forces one to become more conversant with the teachings. It's necessary to learn something about what you're teaching. These questions led to some very fruitful ideas on expanding and clarifying the Compass of Zen and making it a "primer" for

portant. All chanting is Dharani. Kwan Um Zen School style is the same everywhere; if side by side English translations are used, chanting books could not be used in other countries.

Soen Sa Nim said the Dharma Teacher Association must become a strong cohesive organization and suggested instituting a Dharma Teacher training course. Prospective Dharma Teachers would master Compass of Zen, then be



tested about it before being allowed to take precepts. There might be a yearly training course for all Dharma Teachers, followed by an exam. Saturday afternoon the small groups each had time to meet with Soen Sa Nim to discuss issues more privately. The Saturday afternoon large group session was productive, with several concrete plans and changes adopted:

1) Soen Sa Nim agreed to give a series of talks on *Compass of Zen*. The transcribed talks will be edited into a training manual for Dharma Teachers.

(Editor's note: Soen Sa Nim has already given these talks, and the transcribing is underway.)

2) *Dharma Mirror* will be revised and updated. It will have some additional teaching, be generally livelier, and an index will be added.

3) The currently available translations of the chants will be checked for accuracy and revised as necessary. The English translations will be added to the back of the new chanting books.

4) There will be an annual Dharma Teacher Yong Maeng Jong Jin. Next year, it is scheduled for March and again at Kansas Zen Center.

5) The Dharma Teacher Association governing board will be drawn from Dharma Teachers attending the annual Dharma Teacher Yong Maeng Jong Jin and will be composed of three Master Dharma Teachers and four Zen Center Head Dharma Teachers. The membership will rotate regularly. The current body is composed of:

**Bobby Rhodes-Providence Zen Center, Richard Shrobe-Chogy International Zen Center, Judy Roitman-Kansas Zen Center, Nina Davis-Chogy International Zen Center, Robin Rowedder-Seattle Dharma Center, and Jonathan Bowra-Empty Gate Zen Center**

Saturday night, everyone (thirty-two people) went out to dinner at a local Chinese restaurant, which was great fun, and then returned to the Zen Center to sprawl on the floor and watch a video (Star Trek IV).

Sunday was a crazy high energy day. The final morning session offered a dharma talk by Richard Shrobe on the "Dropping Ashes" kong-an and on connecting

kong-ans with our daily lives. Soen Sa Nim again stressed the role of Dharma Teachers in keeping Zen practice vital by ensuring its involvement in everyday life. There was a closing circle talk and lunch and many people had to leave to catch planes. For those who stayed, the activity was non-stop for the rest of the day. There was a precepts ceremony in the early afternoon. Ron Sutherland and Hwei-chi Yang were married by Soen Sa Nim in a well-attended, Buddhist ceremony at a local country club and then gave a talk at the Kansas University campus in the evening.

A terrific amount of work was accomplished during the retreat. That it was so productive owes a lot to some of the intangible aspects of the weekend. A warm, family-style atmosphere prevailed: a strong unbroken sense of sangha. There was plenty of free time for relaxing, taking walks or talking with old friends. One of the small groups walked downtown Saturday afternoon, shopping for gifts, visiting a bookstore and eating ice cream. The retreat was simply a lot of fun and very energizing.

Many people worked hard to pull off the weekend so successfully. It was wonderful that Soen Sa Nim came with his usual humor, clarity and energy. With so many events scheduled, particularly on Sunday, it was taxing, and everyone was grateful for Soen Sa Nim's effort and teaching. Richie Streitfeld, Bobby Rhodes, Nina Davis, Karen Ryder and Stanley Lombardo all worked very hard organizing the retreat, setting an agenda, and generally making an idea real. Many thanks also to the Kansas Zen Center members who gave their time, work and rooms as needed. Particular thanks go to Carole Hojun Welker and Marla Wambsgans who spent the weekend cooking up terrific meals. Finally, thanks to everyone who attended and made the retreat happen. The Kwan Um Zen School is a far-flung entity and it's often easy for individuals or whole Zen Centers to feel isolated. There is inestimable value for all of us in getting together face to face for whatever reason and realizing that Sangha is more than just a word.

*Dennis Duermeier is a Bodhisattva Monk and Director of the Kansas Zen Center.*

## Human Survival Conference

(Continued from page 1.)

ments, but as individuals representing the human family. The goal of the conference was to create an interaction and on-going dialogue in order to enlarge all of our capacities to deal with global, life-and-death issues.

The selection of participants was guided by the desire to bring together leaders known for their dedication, enthusiasm, integrity and courage. Participants included the heads of the Church of England, the Greek Orthodox Church, and the Russian Orthodox Church; emissaries from various churches of the United States; a representative of the Pope (who was the organizer of the World Interfaith meeting at Assisi last year); Mother Teresa; prominent leaders of Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism (including the Dalai Lama); and leaders of the Hopi Indians of North America and native religious groups of Africa. Political leaders included the representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, American congressmen and former ambassadors, and former presidents and parliamentary leaders of governments from all over the world. There were also international media leaders and scientists from England (James Lovelock), Africa (Wangari Maathai--Kenya), the U.S.A. (Carl Sagan) and the U.S.S.R. (Evgueni Velikhov--Vice President of the Soviet Academy of Sciences). Poep Sa Nim was the only female Buddhist master at the conference.

The entire assembly convened each morning in the beautiful Oxford Town Hall for speeches and discussions on various current topics. In the afternoon participants broke up into small working groups in order to enhance personal contact. In these working sessions each participant was invited to speak. One person

said that in this age we should all follow women. Poep Sa Nim responded by saying, "in the absolute world there is no woman and no man. In one life we may appear as a woman, in the next life maybe as a man. Because of that we should not attach to our form. Not only man and woman, but also with countries, religions, etc., we should not attach to our form or situation. If you attain the absolute world, from which we all came, your actions and speech will automatically help others. This is the basis of human survival.

"We all have 10,000 intelligent ideas and have been talking a great deal. If we cannot harmonize together, how can we help and lead others? Why don't we all stand up, hold hands and practice together so that we can share energy, let down our barriers and attain this absolute world." The whole group then did as she asked while chanting "Om Nam" together, raising and lowering their arms, chanting fast and slow.

Afterwards, there was a lot of animated discussion and a relaxed atmosphere among the participants. During a tea break and at dinner that night, many people expressed their appreciation for this practicing. People were able to taste the one mind and energy which appears when barriers are let down.

On the way home Poep Sa Nim was asked for her observations on the participants of the conference. She said, "generally speaking, the political people are more open than many of the religious people. They are looking for solutions to serious everyday problems and are more open to experience, energy and new ways of looking at things. Religious people tend to protect their ideas and positions more. Often they are following someone else's idea or their own beliefs and are less open and less able to go before-thought. That's not good and cannot help this world."

## Dharma on French Radio

by Poep Sa Nim

*In February of this year Poep Sa Nim was invited to talk on a radio show in Paris. The following talk is a partial transcription from that event. The questions were telephoned in by people listening to the show.*

**Question:** I don't know much about the Asian religions. What is Buddhism?

**Poep Sa Nim (PSN):** Buddhism is not a religion. We practice Zen which means finding your true self. Because of that, I cannot say that Buddhism is a religion. Everyone would like to find themselves, who they really are. Buddhism appeared to show people the way to find truth, which, in fact, exists prior to and independent of any religious form. This means not following someone else's idea.

We have many lives, not only this one. For most people, when they exist, their human body is their world. We forget our true self and we attach to this present body, present form. This form is made up of the six senses—eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body and mind. People think only of and do action only through these six senses. We follow the senses and then, when we get old, we don't know why we have lived this life. Who am I? Where did I come from? Where am I going? Many people have these questions. So, Buddhism is to show you where

you came from, where you are going and how to live this present life correctly, without having any objective or subjective conditions.

We receive this human form and it is built by the four elements. We form this body and then forget what nature wants us to do. We only attach to our body. When you attach to this body it has objective and subjective conditions, which means like and dislike, right and wrong, good and bad. If you keep following like/dislike, right/wrong, and good/bad you only follow objective things. That's what human society is fighting about. Right and wrong, good and bad. But Buddhism means, conquer this objective/subjective action to find what is before this condition. This means that before-thinking is our true self. This before-thinking does not have any condition; there is no attachment. Your mind is clear like a mirror. When your mind is clear like a mirror you see things as they are. For example, when someone appears before you, because your mind is clear like a mirror, it reflects that person and you see their mind—their before-karma, present-karma and future-karma. But, only perceiving is not enough. This before-thinking is absolute energy or what I call complete energy. As you know, right now you are listening to the

(continued on the next page)



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## SPECIAL ISSUE

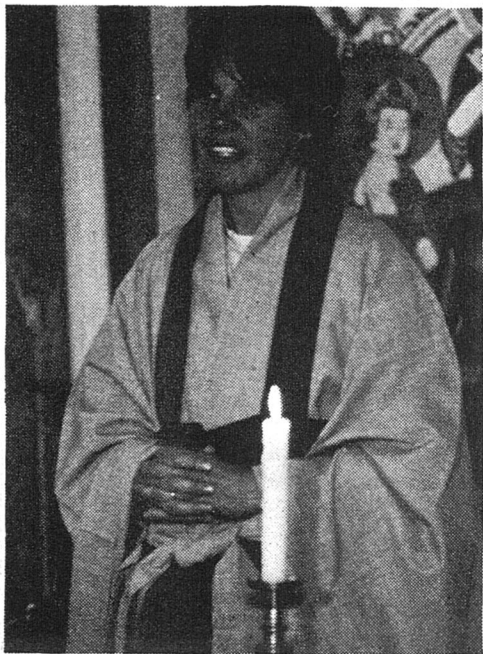
## Kong-an Practice in America

## A Kong-an Is Nothing Other Than The Present Moment

By Barbara Rhodes

The function of a kong-an is to spark a question, to give rise to that which in the Zen tradition has been called the *Great Question*. When the mind "questions", it awakens and opens. This moment of questioning, however fleet it is, is a manifestation of a pure and unconditioned mind. In this moment all filters of pre-conception and pre-judgement are taken away and only pure questioning remains.

This "questioning" is vastly different from "checking". A "checking" mind is always resisting, trying to find an argument based on its preconceived ideas and opinions. A "questioning" mind on the other hand, is one which is stuck, which truly doesn't know. This mind only asks, "What is this?" The mind that truly asks, "What is this?" does so in



Master Dharma Teacher  
Barbara Rhodes

response to something in the present moment,

whether it be a concrete life situation, a feeling, an emotion, an incomprehensible thought or whatever. In asking, "What is this?", the mind stops assuming, even if only for a fleeting second, stops operating on pre-conceptions and, instead, feels and looks attentively at the moment at hand.

There are two stories that have helped me tremendously to understand how kong-an practice applies to daily life. As it happens, both stories are about mothers. The first story was told by Zen Master Seung Sahn when someone asked him how to "keep" a kong-an:

*A mother of four has just watched her oldest child board a plane headed for Vietnam. In the months that follow she attends to her family, her part-time job, her friends and community. She plays bridge, goes to her daughter's class play, shops for food, etc. Through all of this she never forgets that her son is in Vietnam. She never doesn't feel some fear and concern. There is never a time when she doesn't wonder where her son is, or what he is doing. She always asks herself: "When is my son coming home?" Because of her tremendous love for her son, she always has him in the recesses of her mind. At the same time she is totally present in her daily life.*

Kong-an practice can be like this mother's mind. The "Great Question" of a kong-an, like the "Great Question" in the mother's mind about her son, remains with you, always in the recesses of your mind. The kong-an reminds you always to

ask, look into "What is this?", rather than to *know*.

The second story is about a mother lion. This mother lion takes her five cubs out for their very first walk. They instinctively form a single line behind her. Up until this point, she has been their only source of love, warmth, protection and nourishment; their world so far has been safe and most generous. So as they walk, the cubs take in the sights, sounds, and

smells around them and innocently delight in nature's gifts. Suddenly, the mother lion turns to one of the cubs and bats him five feet into the brush. The cub is shocked and hurt. Why would the thus-far warm and benevolent mother do such a thing? The cub scrambles back to the line and continues with the others. The mother has just taught the cub to be careful, be aware. She did it in the simplest, most direct way she knew.

A kong-an is able to wake up the mind in the same way. An

alert mind can see through the kong-an and bring it to a wholesome conclusion, like a wise lion walking through the forest and being perfectly in tune with all that is there. As the mother lion swings her great paw towards her child, she has no thought as to being superior or better. She only wants the child to learn. A genuine Zen master shares this mind.

The questions that a kong-an can raise can bring a deeper attentiveness to both sitting meditation and to daily activities. Just as a weight attached to a fishing line can help the hook to sink deeply in the ocean rather than bobbing on the water's surface, a kong-an can guide the mind to places of deeper insight, to places that are often difficult to enter without a persistent, steady direction. Using the mind's natural tendency to question gives it more focus and perception.

Thus, bringing the mind to the present moment by asking, "What is this?" is to enter the space of *not-knowing*. Trusting this process of not-knowing is to go beyond the edge of what is familiar. Going beyond the edge of what is familiar is to let go of the self-imposed constructs of reality that we have created for ourselves and to which we cling so desperately. It is to look at each moment with a pure awareness, rather than through colored filters. So, maybe when you ask someone, "How are you?", you are *really* asking, really open to see, feel and listen to the response. Then true intimacy is possible and compassion naturally arises.

Poep Sa Nim- "Dharma on the Radio"  
(Continued from page 9.)

radio. You are listening to me and I'm talking to you. Without energy we cannot do this. So, this energy is very important.

When you attain this absolute world you are not only perceiving karma; you can also give energy to others. Your body is like a generator of electricity. But it is not only giving; it is actually balancing people's energy. For example, when your mind is sick it is not because you don't have enough energy. It means your energy is not balancing out. When your body is sick, it is not that you don't have energy. You are balancing your energy. So, by perceiving a person's karma, a master can balance their energy, if necessary. But it is not enough if I only help the person by perceiving their karma and balancing out their energy. Because then they will only attach to me and my method. This is not correct Buddhism. Therefore, we teach them how to practice, how to attain their true self. Then they are able to save themselves and find their own, true master. When we do that, we know what human beings are about and what life is about. It is very important to find our correct human beings' job.

**Question:** You said that the energy goes through you like through a generator to help others. Is that because you practice mind-to-mind transmission?

**PSN:** It is not only mind-to-mind transmission. Actually, mind comes from thinking. As I said just now, before-thinking is absolute energy. So, when your mind is clear you can receive and utilize this universal energy to help others.

**Question:** Is this what we call "cosmic energy"?

**PSN:** Actually, the energy does not have a name. "Cosmic" or whatever, it's people who make the names. For example, the blue sky never says, "I am blue sky". This means that this world does not have words and speech. That's what you call, if you want to, mind-to-mind. But I don't think that that is the correct word. If you want to explain it, this is complete stillness and extinction. That's what you call absolute energy. So, if you want to call it cosmic, I don't think that is clear.

**Question:** What is the energy center for the human being?

**PSN:** Energy is everywhere. It is right in front of you. But we can't see it because when we receive our human form it is as though we are blocked by the six senses. So, when you take off the six senses, which means when you attain truth, you can use the six senses very clearly and then you can see right in front of you. This is absolute attainment. Someone who is a master is not special, which means he or she attains through their practicing. Everyone has this, but it can only appear when you cease to be controlled by your karma. Absolute attainment is not a knowledge, it is not intellectual. You have to attain for yourself. For example, when you eat salt, you can say that it is

salty. But you cannot express or capture in words for another how salty it is. Same with sugar and honey. They have a different sweetness. But until you put them in your mouth, you don't know for yourself what the different tastes are.

**Question:** Poep Sa Nim, you attained Enlightenment. What is the correct function of Enlightenment?

**PSN:** Enlightenment is not special. Everybody already is enlightened but we cannot see it because we are covered by our form. You and everyone are already enlightened but you have not re-discovered that. When you discover, that is what you call Enlightenment. The reason you attain Enlightenment is not that you want to be clairvoyant or a hermit or something for yourself. In other words, you attain Enlightenment to live life correctly, without any condition, any suffering. It is not special.

When I was eighteen I attained, but to me that wasn't special. That was the right thing to do in life, in order to live correctly with others. Enlightenment is not kept for yourself. Everything that you do, you have to do with others, for others. Exist with and help others. That's what you call Enlightenment.

## Daido Looi- "Koan Study"

(Continued from page 4.)

in realizing themselves. There is no correct "answer" to a koan. Seeing it is a state of consciousness in which our usual reference system has been abandoned and the thing itself is seen directly and intimately. This intimacy transforms our way of seeing ourselves and the universe. Once realized it is no longer possible to live our lives in the old way.

These words represent one experience of koans, and as words they remain dead until you the reader make them your own, bring them to life in the moment-to-moment reality of your own existence. At that time these words, having fulfilled their meager function, should be thrown away, so that the spiritual journey may continue as it is and always has been from the beginningless beginning- boundless and unhindered.

*John Daido Looi, Sensei is the spiritual leader and resident Zen teacher of Zen Mountain Monastery in Mt. Tremper, New York, and the spiritual leader of the "Mountain and River Order," an organization of affiliate Zen centers and sitting groups in the U.S. and abroad. Rev. Looi's interest in Zen began in the sixties as Zen practice first emerged in America. His training is in both the rigorous school of koan Zen and in the subtle teachings of Dogen's Zen. Looi is a Dharma successor of Hakuyu Taizan Maezumi Roshi.*

*Looi's background as scientist, artist, and Zen priest affords his students the rich opportunity to experience Zen Buddhism in its unique and emerging American form. Looi's other published works include: The Way of Everyday Life (Maezumi & Looi, Center Publications) as well as articles in various periodicals.*

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## READING MATTERS

**SEEKING THE HEART OF WISDOM, "The Path of Insight Meditation", Joseph Goldstein & Jack Kornfield, 1987, Shambhala, 195 Pages, Paperback, \$10.95.**

*Reviewed by Dhananjay Joshi*

"In the Seeing, there is only the seen. In the Hearing, there is only the heard. In the Sensing, there is only the sensed. In the Thinking, there is only the thought." That's Buddhism in a nutshell. It is both the beginning and end of practice.

I still remember very clearly. Several years ago a very close friend of mine walked in after attending a retreat at the Insight Meditation Society in Barre, Massachusetts and she was so excited! She said she had just met two most wonderful teachers and she kept referring to them as Jack and Joseph (and Joseph and Jack!). Later on I had the opportunity to meet them both and I understood what she meant. Over the past years, Jack and Joseph have become known as two of the most accomplished and skillful teachers of Insight Meditation.

It is a rather unique blend of teaching styles that they present, but the clarity of teaching is unmistakable. The evening Dharma talks by Jack or Joseph are always a source of profound learning and yet a lively experience with an unending repertoire of humorous anecdotes from various teachers.

We waited a long time for this book. It is a wonderful collection of meditation instructions given during retreats. It is also quite comprehensive in scope. The chapter on levels of practice begins with arriving and observing and opening and leads us to a level of practice where "we begin to see clearly the laws that govern this process of body and mind". It is not easy, but with "gentle effort" we begin to gain insight into things as they are. "We see the undirected emptiness of things, how thoughts come and go, moods come and go... we are not the owners of this process... So, we finally stop. We let go." We learn about difficulties and hindrances in practice. We trick them and become friends with them. There are also chapters on factors of enlightenment, understanding karma, spiritual faculties, three basic characteristics of suffering, impermanence, non-self, and the path of service leading to an integration of practice in our lives with a spirit of acceptance and compassion.

Additionally, meditators will find the practical exercises at the end of each chapter very helpful.

The charm of this book lies in the way Jack and Joseph convey some of the most profound truths of life. They use many stories from the great teachers they have come across. In Sri Lanka, Jack paid a visit to a much-venerated master, Hina Tyana Dhammaloka. After a while...Jack relates, the master asked, "So, you teach meditation, yes?" "I try," I said. "Tell me, what is the heart of Buddhist meditation?" "There is no self," I answered, "...it is truly an empty process". He looked at me and then broke into a great laugh. "No self, no problem" he said, and he laughed and laughed..."

Then there is the story of Zen Master Seung Sahn. One of his students found him eating and reading at the same time and confronted him. He had heard of Zen teachings saying that when you eat, just eat...when you read, just read. What is this? Soen Sa Nim looked up and smiled and said, "When you eat and read, just eat and read."

The entire book is very inspiring. In giving clear instructions on Insight Meditation, what Jack and Joseph have done is shown a way to integrate our practice. Joseph says at one point, "As long as we separate out and

identify with any one part of the totality, we imprison ourselves in the limits we create in that very process. The path of Dharma, of Freedom is to understand and integrate each level of dualism and limitation. The key to doing this is mindfulness and wisdom."

I remember Zen Master Seung Sahn talking about three important aspects of practice: understanding your practice, believing in your practice, and practicing. After reading this book, it is very clear what we all need to do.

**TAKING REFUGE IN L.A., "Life in a Vietnamese Buddhist Temple", Photographs by Don Farber, Text by Rick Fields, Introduction by Thich Nhat Hanh (Aperture Foundation, New York, 1987, 108pp., 11x9 in., 40 B/W photographs, paperback, \$14.95)**

*Reviewed by Bruce Sturgeon*

*Taking Refuge in L.A.* began as a photography project. Don Farber was visiting Chua Viet Nam, the Vietnamese Buddhist Temple in Los Angeles. It was January, 1977, a little more than a year after the end of the Vietnam War. He saw children running around playing games, a barber giving haircuts, Buddhist monks and nuns, and a diverse group of people sitting on the carpeted floor chanting together. This slice of "normal" Vietnamese life deeply moved him. From that first roll of film shot that day, a ten-year labor of love ensued.

The most striking feature of this collection of photos are the faces of the people. Don Farber has captured the essential humanness of all peoples in the faces of these Vietnamese refugees. Children, women, men, elderly, monks, and nuns—all evoking emotion borne of displacement, bitterness, and suffering, yet revealing innocence and a serene joy of life.

What are we to make of this, now more than 12 years after the Vietnam conflict? As Vietnamese Zen Master Thich Nhat Hanh points out in his cautionary and provocative introduction, the conflict that was Vietnam has not ended. He also says that Vietnam is the suffering of the world.

The faces of these Vietnamese refugees show us the fruit of conflict. They have been forced to adapt to an alien society. The resignation and pain are evident as are the hope and courage of the human spirit. But as Thich Nhat Hanh warns, "The conflict is leading to the destruction of our own planet. When the destruction comes, where shall WE be able to seek refuge, even if with our technology, we become "space people" instead of "boat people"?"

"Ga mot nha boi mat da nhau"— "In order to fight each other, the chicks born of the same mother put colors on their faces." Putting colors on one's own face is to make oneself a stranger among one's own brothers and sisters. And as any soldier will attest it is easier to kill the foreigner, the enemy, than someone who has the face of a brother. Thich Nhat Hanh admonishes that each of us must remove the colors from our faces and be able to say: "I am your brother, I am your sister. Recognize me. We are all of the human kind and our life is one. We shall live or die together."

In the text portion of the book, author Rick Fields illuminates the history of Vietnamese Buddhists before, during, and after the Vietnamese War. Buddhism had its introduction into Vietnam in the first century A.D. when Indian merchants and missionaries arrived by sea en route to China. From then Buddhism enjoyed the ebb and flow of royal patronage and evolution within the monasteries and the hearts of the people. Buddhism's modern troubles began with the incursion of the French colonists and their Catholicism, the Buddhists aligning themselves with the Royal Resistance.

To me, the history during the Vietnam War was one of the most fascinating portions

of the book. Everyone remembers (or has seen footage of) the grim scene which was broadcast on the nightly news of a monk immolating himself. It was July 11, 1963. That act was the first in a long series of events that brought Vietnam (and Buddhism for that matter) into my consciousness and that of all Americans. And, until I read this book, I was under the impression that the monk was protesting the war. Wrong—he was protesting religious repression.

The monk was the Venerable Thich Quang Duc, abbot of Quan-Am (Kwan Seum Bosal) Temple in Gia Dinh. He left a simple note: "I pray to Buddha to give light to President Ngo Dinh Diem, so that he will accept the five minimum requests of the Vietnamese Buddhists. Before closing my eyes to go to Buddha, I have the honor to present my words to President Diem, asking him to be kind and tolerant towards his people and enforce a policy of religious equality."

Increased repression followed and six more monks died in the flames of self-sacrifice before the 20,000 monks, nuns, and leaders of Vietnamese Buddhism that had been jailed under Diem were released. (One of those who died was the father of Dr. Thien-An, the founder of Chua Viet Nam in L.A.)

The five requests? 1) Cancel the ban on flying the Buddhist flag. 2) Grant Buddhists the same rights as Catholics. 3) Stop arresting and terrorizing Buddhists. 4) Allow Buddhists the right to practice their religion. 5) Pay com-

pensation to the victims' families and punish those responsible for eight deaths (seven children) when paramilitary police opened fire on a crowd waiting to listen to a radio broadcast on Buddha's Birthday.

Diem was overthrown later that year, but the Buddhists were too politically naive to take advantage of the situation. Twelve more years of war and repression followed. Eleven nuns and monks immolated themselves in 1966, this time appealing to President Lyndon Johnson, all to no avail. Today the war has ended but a new religious repression visits the land.

Rick Fields also provide us with a cogent look inside the Chua Viet Nam temple in L.A. He attended a retreat there and his description brings to life the atmosphere which the temple creates and the importance of the temple to the refugees.

In closing, let me quote Thich Nhat Hanh once again, "I do not know how much happiness the people of Vietnam have gotten from the importation of Western Civilization to their country, but I know that the amount of suffering they have endured in the past few decades has been beyond measure. Both capitalism and communism are alien to their way of life, yet they have taken the conflict to be their own and learned to look at each other as enemies. Has humankind learned anything from their suffering? I do not know."

READING MATTERS continues on page 13

**Richard Shrobe, C.S.W., A.C.S.W.**

Psychotherapist

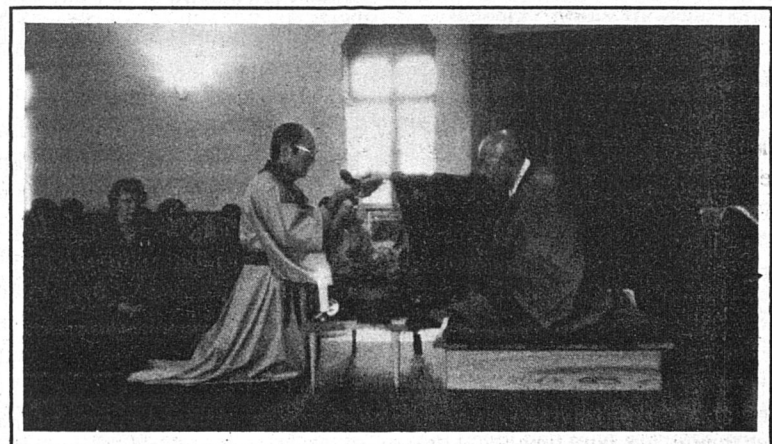
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## How Empty Gate Zen Center Began

by Diana Lynch

Editor's note: This is the first in a new series of articles on the history of our member Centers. The first article is on Empty Gate in Berkeley, California. Empty Gate is celebrating its ten year anniversary in its present building and attempting to move to a new stage of independence by buying a building for the center's permanent home. In the story below, Diana Lynch (formerly Diana Clark) recalls how Empty Gate began.)

In early 1976, my former husband Ezra Clark and I first met Zen Master Seung Sahn. We met at a month long seminar on holistic medicine, held at the Esalen Institute. (The Institute is situated in a beautiful area on the California coast with wonderful natural hot springs.) We had a natural interest in holistic medicine, as Ezra worked as an emergency room doctor, and I had a private practice as a Gestalt therapist. Soen Sa Nim led a 7-day retreat prior to the beginning of the actual seminar. The doctors and other health professionals were so impressed by his energetic and simple teaching that many of them took precepts.

In the next few months, we attended two more retreats, and once Soen Sa Nim came to visit us at our large home in the hills of Berkeley, where Ezra and I lived with my three teen-age children. As our fledgling practices began to grow, I started to wish that there was some way to introduce meditation to some of my clients.

Soon I began to meet other meditators from the Berkeley area (including Joan Silver, now a Dharma teacher with our school), and together we decided to form a Berkeley sitting-group using our large family living room. The form was kept very simple with no ritual or chanting. We started Wednesday night sittings in August of 1976.

In the Fall, Soen Sa Nim came to our house and gave a Dharma talk. We invited everyone we could think of who might be interested, including personal friends, my clients, tennis buddies and, of course, all those who had been coming to Wednesday evenings. It was a very exciting evening—the living room was packed. Even the kids brought friends to meet a real Zen Master. Our dog Blondie loved every minute of it, offering cheerful yelps whenever Soen Sa Nim said something funny and everyone laughed.

This event spurred much interest and soon Soen Sa Nim came again to lead the first Yong Maeng Jon Jin in Berkeley. Knowing that Soen Sa Nim had loved the hot springs at Esalen, Ezra and I decided to put in a hot tub before the retreat began and the Berkeley "R & R" reputation got its start!

Linc Rhodes, (now a Master Dharma Teacher) who was then living at Tahl Ma Sah in Los Angeles, drove up from Los Angeles with Soen Sa Nim in Mu Deung's old red van. Linc and I cleared all of the furniture out of the living room and stacked it on the porch. An altar was constructed and Soen Sa Nim produced some Buddhist pictures to hang near it and a Dharma room came into being. About 30 people arrived with their sleeping bags and the retreat began. And after sitting in the evening, we all went out to inaugurate the new hot tub and listened, while Soen Sa Nim chanted to us. Soen

Sa Nim said that this hot tub was the "best Dharma Room," because people felt comfortable and able to talk about what was really in their hearts.

All this was very interesting and exciting, but our family had no idea that this was the beginning of our house being a Zen Center. Perhaps if we had been able to glimpse the future, we might have suffered from a bit of checking!

By September of 1977 Ezra and I decided, along with the group who had been coming to our house regularly for the retreats and to sit on Wednesday evenings, that it was time just to "Do It"—and make our house an official Zen Center.

It had always been my dream to create an environment where people could come to take some time out of their lives to "get their heads together," and to find out what was really important. Also, I was by that time very committed to Soen Sa Nim as my teacher and wanted to help him bring the Dharma to the United States. I decided I was willing to try it. Ezra, always ready to try anything new involving people, was also game to put his warmth and energy into the experiment.

So the Zen Center began. Ezra was made the Head Dharma Teacher (there were no Abbots in those days) and I became the Director. Then Jeff Stephenson, from the Shim Gum Do School in Boston, moved in and became the House Master. Maggie Jacobs came, along with her two pet boa constrictors, and then Jim Wilson, who had been working on the pipe line in Alaska. Michael Mastropierro and Marge King soon followed, making a good enthusiastic group. A Zen Center phone was installed, a filebox was purchased, and the first house meetings began. Jeff assigned house jobs, everyone tried valiantly to learn to hit the moktak and the bell (a very small one in those days) and to get up in time. It was fun.

At first we called our center the *Berkeley Zen Center*, but we discovered that another place, the Berkeley Zendo, was really officially the Berkeley Zen Center, and so the name had to be changed. For a while it was called the *Berkeley Korean Buddhist Chogye Zen Center*, but no one really liked that name very much. So one day, after Soen Sa Nim had come and given a Dharma talk in which he referred to the "empty gate" (probably meaning the "gateless gate"—but in those days his English was not quite as good as it is now!), it was decided to rename it the *Empty Gate Zen Center*. That stuck.

The Zen Center grew and thrived for the next months, but it became increasingly clear that another house was needed.

The house in the hills was just too much the Clark's home and also the neighbors were beginning to be a little upset about the parking and the noise. I looked at many houses, sometimes with Soen Sa Nim, but nothing seemed right. Finally, I was told about a house on Arch Street in Berkeley— and went to look. Soen Sa Nim also saw it and all the Zen Center members liked it very much, although it would take a lot of hard work to get it in shape. The house was located right near the University and right across from Holy Hill where all the seminaries are. It was a



California Dreaming?

perfect location for a meditation center and it was a beautiful house, even having a view of the San Francisco Bay and two bridges. Soen Sa Nim said the energy there would be very strong for practicing.

At that time, the Zen Center was not incor-

porated and there was no possible way to buy it except for us to sell our home and use that money to buy it. No one else had any funds available— and yet it seemed like the perfect house. So the decision was made. An offer was made on the Arch Street house and accepted. Four days later some people walked up to the door of our home in the hills, knocked, and asked if there was any chance of buying the house. The house had not even been put on the market yet! The deal was consummated in a month. The new place had to be completely refurbished and the

old house moved out of by August 1, 1978.

It was a very busy summer. All the members of the Zen Center worked very hard to get the new house ready for occupancy. It was in terrible shape, the roof leaked making ugly stains on the ceiling and walls, the paint was all peeling and cracking, the floors were in sad disrepair. A new roof was installed right away and then the work began on the interior. Everyone gathered there for as many hours a day as they could spare, first to clean up the litter that had been left by the previous tenants, then to scrape, tape, plaster and paint. It was magical how people who had only a slight connection with the Zen Center appeared to lend a hand and often to make really significant contributions.

The Opening Ceremony was planned for September 4, 1978. Soen Sa Nim and Mu Bul Sunim came a few days early and worked with everyone on preparations. Mu Bul Sunim built the altar and Soen Sa Nim went to Chinatown to buy the red silk to be hung above it. One of our members, Kate Corriveau, took charge of making all of the mats for the Dharma Room. Invitations were made and sent out. Gifts of refreshments were, of course, prepared. It turned out to be a very gala day and Empty Gate got off to a wonderful start in its new home.

There has been hardly a day in these past ten years when the moktak was not hit or the bell rung, bringing together in practice the strands of lives sometimes in great pain and confusion. It has been a place where people, often with little money, have been able to come for a long or short period to practice, to study the teachings of the Buddha and to answer the question that Soen Sa Nim always asks, "Why do you eat everyday?" May Empty Gate Zen Center ever renew its Great Vow to save all beings from suffering.

### Empty Gate Needs Your Help

September of this year marks the tenth anniversary of Empty Gate Zen Center. This anniversary brings with it the exciting possibility of buying the Zen Center a permanent home. \$60,000 for the down payment must be raised by the September anniversary. Close to \$35,000 has already been raised from members of the Berkeley and extended West Coast Sangha.

Abbot Jeff Kitzes says, "The easy half of the fund-raising has been done." Now Empty Gate must turn to Sangha members throughout the world for their support. As Director Susan Phillips says, "One way for people to express their thanks to Soen Sa Nim for his teachings is to give back your energy, in the form of money-energy to support the various Zen Centers. Right now it is Empty Gate that needs your help. Giving generously to Empty Gate will ensure that the Berkeley Sangha will continue to be able to share our teachings with others."

Please send donations to: Empty Gate Zen Center, 1800 Arch St., Berkeley, CA 94709. (See our donation coupon)

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READING MATTERS

(Continued from page 11.)

**The Fine Arts of Relaxation, Concentration and Meditation- "Ancient Skills for Modern Minds", Joel Levey, Wisdom Publications \$14.95**

Reviewed by Jon Kabat-Zinn

In this beautifully done book, Joel Levey has skillfully woven together contemporary insights into the value and need for meditation practice in our lives, with a large number of extremely evocative suggestions for making use of different ways to practice relaxation, concentration and meditation.

The first impression of the book is how beautiful it is physically and how satisfying it is to hold in one's hands. Wisdom Publications appears committed to publishing paperback books that embody in their appearance and materials a sense of care, attention and simplicity which is the essence of meditation practice. This is marred only by a number of spelling mistakes and typos which unfortunately were not caught by the proofreader. Nevertheless, it has the same feel as the Weatherhill paperback edition of *Zen Mind, Beginner's Mind*, which set a very high standard for how a book on meditation might look and feel.

The quality of the contents lives up to the surface beauty. The author masterfully describes for the reader in succinct introductory chapters of the major sections of the book: (1) the potential value of practicing relaxation, concentration and meditation; (2) what the essence of these practices consists of; and (3) how to apply them in one's life.

Joel Levey clearly has a great deal of experience teaching in a wide range of different settings and this is reflected in the precision and vividness of his instructions in and commentary on the various techniques. He is highly skilled in incorporating multi-sensory

"visualizations" into the instructions and suggestions for practice.

In essence, the book is a compendium of one or two page instructions regarding approximately fifty different meditation techniques from a number of different traditions. Major influences include Theravada and Tibetan teachers. The book is divided into sections on relaxation, concentration and meditation, followed by a short section outlining some application of meditative approaches to handling stress and pain, improving performance in sports, and using visualization and biofeedback. It is interspersed throughout with inspiring and wholly appropriate quotations from a wide range of ancient and contemporary sources and teachers, from Chuang Tzu and the Buddha to Albert Einstein and Henry Ford.

*The Fine Arts of Relaxation, Concentration and Meditation*— "Ancient Skills for Modern Minds" can be used as a practical manual for inspiration and guidance both in deepening and enriching one's meditation practice, and in cultivating particular qualities such as compassion and generosity. As such it will be an especially useful and inspiring book for people who already have a strong meditation practice.

The book's major strengths are the simplicity of the author's explanations of the value of these meditative practices and his clear instructions for how to practice them. If the book has a weakness, it is that the value of disciplined and sustained practice of one method over an extended period of time is not emphasized adequately. In fact, it is not emphasized at all. Thus, the reader who is new to meditation may be somewhat overwhelmed by the sheer number of different techniques offered and might come away with the erroneous notion that doing "a little of this and a little of that" to fine-tune one's body or mind states is what meditation is about or what is required to manage the pain and stress in one's life. In the same vein, the reader who is new to meditation might also tend to be attracted to the visualizations offered to cultivate different kinds of internal experiences and feeling states, and avoid practicing the less sexy, more bare bones con-

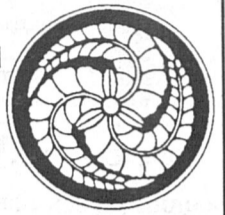
centration and mindfulness exercises which form the foundation for what in this reviewer's mind is the essence of meditation practice, namely moment to moment awareness.

However, these are the inevitable hazards of writing a short book which attempts to span such a wide range of different techniques and traditions. The author clearly states that he is using the word "meditation" to encompass three different types of practice: concentration practice; what he arguably terms "receptive" practice, meaning mindfulness; and "reflective" practice, meaning contemplative exercises to develop particular qualities. He also explicitly suggests that different blends of techniques may be more effective for individuals with different types of problems, although the beginner, again, is left with intuition alone for sorting through the alternatives.

For the readers of "Primary Point", who are for the most part involved in a personal meditation practice, *The Fine Arts of Relaxation, Concentration and Meditation* is certainly a book that they will want to own and consult regularly both for inspiration and for ideas about enriching their practice. It is a real gem. Joel Levey has proven himself to be a highly articulate spokesman for the Dharma in the modern world and I, for one, am looking forward to hearing more from him.

Jon Kabat-Zinn, Ph.D., is Assistant Professor of Preventive and Behavioral Medicine and director of the Stress Reduction and Relaxation Clinics at the University of Massachusetts Medical Center. A long-time student of meditation, he is currently writing a book about his experiences teaching mindfulness in a medical setting.

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**RETREAT**

by Larry Goolsby

During the evening meal of the first day of the retreat, I noticed the other participants intent on their eating, and I realized that I didn't know most of these people. I didn't even know most of their names. I had spent the day with them in silence. The night before, I had slept on the floor in the same room with them, and now I was eating with them in silence.

No one talks during a retreat, so there is little chance to "get to know each other", to ask about each other's jobs, or to inquire about other social aspects of a person's life. In that respect we were still largely before distinction, before discrimination, before opinion, and before prejudice. In the words of Soen Sa Nim (Zen Master Seung Sahn), we had not yet had the chance to form divisive opinions about each other. We were still largely empty in that respect. We had no basis on which to create distinctions and separations. We had no basis on which to discriminate.

So here we all were, just eating. We were just doing these things- eating, sleeping, sitting in silence. We did these things as individuals, but to the degree that we had not created each other through "knowledge" about each other, we also ate, slept, and sat as a group— as one. There was no expressing of opinions, no arguing over religion or anything else. We didn't come to the retreat to do that. We just came to do this strange thing, this practice— this sitting, chanting, and bowing. I decided that if a person is just paying attention, this sitting, chanting, bowing, watching a sunset, and eating are all practice— the practice of being alive in this world. Practice is an expression of

our before discrimination nature, an expression of our true nature, our "human" nature.

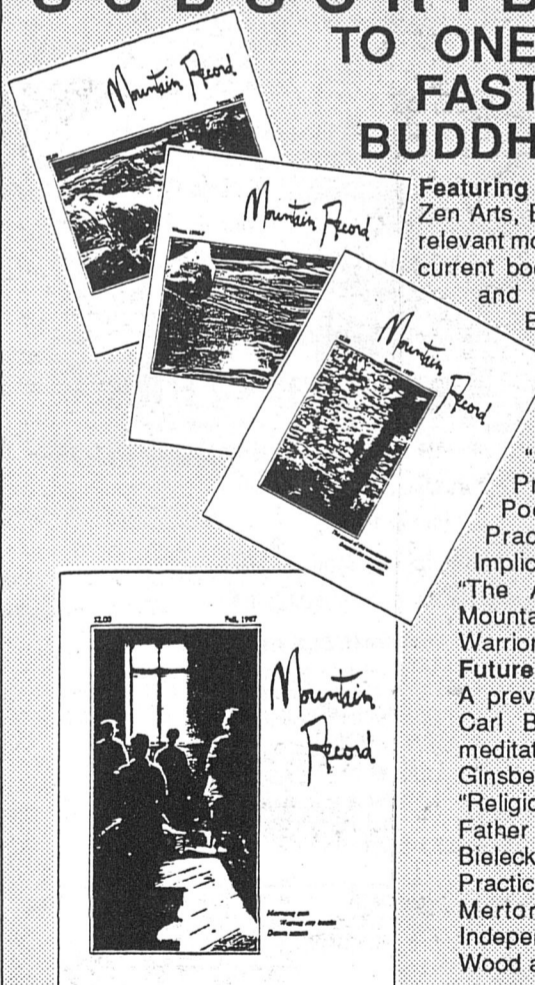
When we are sitting or bowing or chanting or eating, our mind wanders and we bring it back. It wanders again, and we bring it back again. Again and again. Sometimes when we are sitting, we bring our mind back and it is very still for a time. We are home for a while. We are living without discrimination.

It is a strange practice that we have— this sitting, chanting, and bowing. But, it's a strange world. We don't know where we came from before we were born and we don't know where we are going after we die. Nothing is stranger than that.

We are strangers in a strange land— a land of wondrous mysteries and forms arising from emptiness. The mystery permeates all. So we wander through this land of mysterious sights and sounds. Sometimes we practice; we just bow, we just chant, or we just eat. And sometimes we just sit watching our breath, aware of the stillness, aware of the emptiness: we return home. As we sit in the stillness, we may enter samadhi or we may not. We may become enlightened, or we may not. If we enter samadhi, we would still only be home. If we become enlightened, we would still only be home. And somehow, as we sit, with thoughts coming and thoughts going, we are still only home.

Larry Goolsby wrote this article after attending a retreat at the Nashville Zen Center. The article was excerpted by permission from "Paying Attention!", A Publication of the Very Center in Cookeville, TN., Bob Harwood, Editor.

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## DEVELOPMENTS

by Richard Streitfeld, School Director

*PRIMARY POINT* will be using this space to periodically inform our large and far flung readership of developments within Kwan Um Zen School.

Last year, Zen Master Seung Sahn celebrated his 60th birthday in Korea (see reports on this celebration in the February, 1988 issue of *PRIMARY POINT*.) This means, according to Korean tradition, that he had completed a "lifetime" of teaching and was entitled to "retire". Retirement for our teacher, however, means non-stop world-wide travel. There is a point to this, of course, and those who bemoan his diminished presence at our centers have to be careful not to miss it: He is invited and beseeched to come everywhere he goes—just like we asked him to come and teach. I asked him once why he travels so unceasingly. "You asked me", he replied.

Soen Sa Nim's increased journeying has fostered growth and independence in the network of Zen Centers and affiliates here in North America. Soen Sa Nim began teaching here sixteen years ago and for a long time we have been dependent on his clarity, energy and sense of direction. It meant, in large part, that we were dependent on him to make decisions for us. Increasingly, however, he is leaving all but critical matters in our hands. Creation of the Kwan Um Zen School as an administrative umbrella has contributed tremendously to this process.

The recent formation of a "Teachers Group", consisting of Soen Sa Nim and the seven Master Dharma Teachers, is another overdue step in this direction. The teachers are now meeting together three times each year to discuss kong-ans, practice and the School's direction. Along similar lines, Dharma Teachers and Bodhisattva Monks are congregating more often, defining their roles, taking more teaching leadership (see the article in this issue about the Kansas weekend).

Another trend to emerge recently within Kwan Um Zen School is the growth of non-residential Zen Centers and groups. The communal/residential

model was a natural for us in the 1970's, given the "spiritual culture" at that time and Soen Sa Nim's strong emphasis on "together action". Times have changed, and the identity of residential Zen centers is not so clear as it once was. The great benefit of living in a Zen center always has been community living and support for strong, daily practice. These centers also have the capacity for hosting large retreats and conferences.

However, our membership is comprised increasingly of professionals and people with families who cannot live in a community situation. Non-residential groups have less financial worries—they don't have to support a house—and are also less apt to run into the oft-repeated personality clashes that occur when people live together.

The school is now working on a project to overhaul its membership structure. We've unwittingly evolved into a "false" system—we charge membership dues, then write letters to the same members for donations because the dues never are enough. The School Council is presently considering several options to have a revised structure which is more broad-based and unified.

I also want to take this opportunity to invite you to correspond with us here at the school office, to make use of the services we offer. We have networking expertise, chanting tapes, extra copies of *PRIMARY POINT*, teacher addresses, dharma talks to transcribe and talks that have been transcribed.

Lastly, and most important, this issue marks Bruce Sturgeon's debut as Editor-in-Chief of *PRIMARY POINT*. To this critical job Bruce brings a lot of diligence, enthusiasm, and, most importantly, a desktop publishing system. He is following in the brilliant footsteps of Ellen Sidor, who was the founding Editor-in-Chief of this paper. Ellen is staying with us as an advisor, and will continue to work and edit for *PRIMARY POINT PRESS*. Many thanks to Ellen and Bruce for their contributions to this paper.

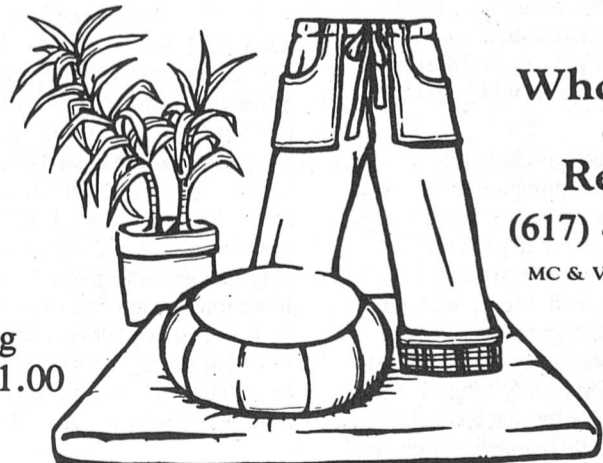
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## About The Kwan Um Zen School

**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 Chogye 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 50 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 ten affiliated groups, of which the Head Temple is Warsaw Zen Center. In 1985 a Kwan Um Zen School of Europe was established, with its Head Temple at Centre Zen de Paris.

Soen Sa Nim travels worldwide leading retreats and teaching Buddhism. 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.

Published works by and about Zen Master Seung Sahn's teaching include **Dropping Ashes on the Buddha** and **Only Don't Know** (collections of his teaching letters and Zen stories); **Ten Gates** - the Kong-an teaching of Zen Master Seung Sahn; **Only DOing It** (the 60th birthday tribute book with anecdotes from students and friends and a biography); and **Bone of Space** (a book of poetry).

He has given "inga" - authority to lead retreats and teach kong-an practice - to seven senior students. Called Master Dharma Teachers, they regularly travel to Zen Centers and affiliates in North America and abroad, leading retreats and giving public talks. They are: **George Bowman** and **Mu Deung**, Cambridge Zen Center; **Barbara** and **Lincoln Rhodes** and **Jacob Perl**, Providence Zen Center; **Robert Moore**, Dharma Sah (Los Angeles); and **Richard Shrobe**,

Chogye International Zen Center of New York.

**Training Programs:** Zen Centers offer daily meditation practice and introductory talks on a regular basis. 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. (Providence Zen Center requires a 50% deposit.)

**90-Day Intensive Retreat** (Kyol 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 annually three long Kyol Che's (one in Poland, Korea and the United States) and a three-week summer Kyol Che at Providence Zen Center. See schedule on this page.

**Chanting Retreats (Kido):** Occasionally chanting retreats are offered. 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 affiliate 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 bi-monthly NEWSLETTER and the international newspaper, PRIMARY POINT (3 issues per year). The most up-to-date calendar information is in the NEWSLETTER. Non-members may subscribe to the NEWSLETTER for \$6.00 a year and to PRIMARY POINT for \$10.00 a year. □

## Retreat and Special Event Calender

JULY	2-4	HOLIDAY PICNIC & RETREAT -Lexington's Land			CHOGYE (MD)
	9-10	SEATTLE (BM)			NEW HAVEN (LR)
	15-17	Empty Gate KIDO (Chanting Retreat) (LR)		23-25	EMPTY GATE (JP)
	22-24	CAMBRIDGE (MD)		30-Oct 2	LEXINGTON (JP)
	29-31	SSN Birthday & School Congress, Providence	OCT.	8-10	NORTH FLORIDA (BR)
					PROVIDENCE (GB)
AUG.	2-21	Providence Summer KYOL CHE (MD) (3 day minimum)		8-10	BMA/DTA Weekend at Temenos
	12-14	CAMBRIDGE (JP)		15	NEW HAVEN (JP)
				21-23	KANSAS (BR)
SEPT.	10-11	"Walking In Balance on the Pathway of Peace" (Taoist/Native American Wisdom Workshop with Kenneth Cohen & Twylah Nitsch)		21-23	SEATTLE (BM)
				22-23	EMPTY GATE (GB)
					"Spirituality & Recovery" Conf. at PZC, with Charles Whitefield, M.D. & Richard Shrobe, M.S.W.
				28-30	DHARMA SAH (GB)
					ONTARIO (MD)
	17-19	NASHVILLE (GB)	NOV.	5	PROVIDENCE (LR)
		CAMBRIDGE (RS)		5-6	CHICAGO (RS)
				18-20	LEXINGTON (LR)

EMPTY GATE (BM)  
KANSAS (Kwong Roshi)  
CAMBRIDGE (GB)  
19-20 NEW HAVEN (JP)  
20 CHOGYE (MD)  
Beginning of Korea  
KYOL CHE

DEC. 10 Enlightenment Day, Providence  
12-18 7-Day Retreat with Weekend Kido, Providence (SSN)

Dates are subject to change. Call Zen Center to confirm. See PRIMARY POINT for addresses and phone numbers.

INITIALS: SSN— Zen Master Seung Sahn; GB— George Bowman; BM— Bob Moore; MD— Mu Deung; JP— Jacob Perl; LR— Lincoln Rhodes; BR— Barbara Rhodes; RS— Richard Shrobe

## One Crow, One Buddha

by Jerome Washington

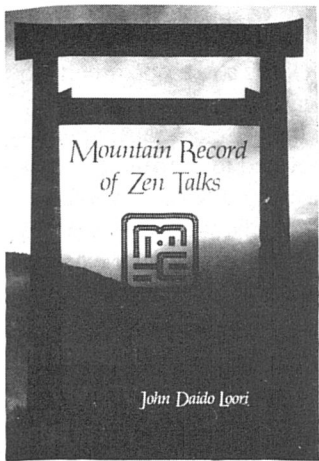
Crows come closer in winter. In summer they feed far away. 2/9/80

Following the breath the breath comes to rest. Being the breath the breather comes to rest. 1/21/88

The foot goes empty to the ground. The mind goes empty to the task. The empty foot grasps the full ground. The empty mind grasps the full task. In this way, the mindful tiger walks without stumbling. 3/12/86

Jerome Washington (74A395, Green Haven Correctional Facility, Drawer B, Stormville, NY 12582) is a member of a Zen sitting group at Green Haven that is sponsored by the Zen Mountain Monastery.

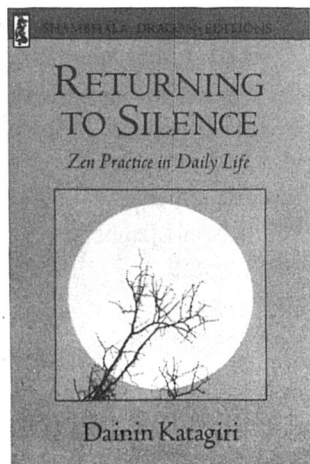
# Shambhala



### MOUNTAIN RECORD OF ZEN TALKS

By John Daido Loori  
Foreword by Hakuyu Taizan-Maezumi

Based on the Dharma Discourses of John Daido Loori, this book explores the seven areas of study that are the focus of training at Zen Mountain Monastery: meditation, study with the teacher, liturgy, art practice, body practice, the study of scriptures, and work practice. Daido Sensei gives special attention to unraveling the enigma of the koan through discussion of several classical Zen texts. \$9.95 Paperback



### RETURNING TO SILENCE

ZEN PRACTICE IN DAILY LIFE  
By Dainin Katagiri  
Foreword by Robert Thurman

The Abbot of the Minnesota Zen Meditation Center offers a basic understanding of Zen Buddhism, with special emphasis on discovering the experience of enlightenment in the midst of everyday life. Among topics covered are the practice of sitting meditation, the meaning of faith, insights into the precepts of Buddhism, and the importance of compassion. \$10.95 Paperback

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ing scale fees... We have a rustic 54' lodge for group events available May through October. Write for information about rentals or our summer workshops to: Temenos, Star Route, Shutesbury, MA 01072, (413)549-2699.

Ongoing intensive **SAMATHA MEDITATION RETREAT** (tranquility), Jan 1- Dec 31, 1988, at rural center under the guidance of Ven. Gen Lamrim-

pa and Alan Wallace. Emphasis of the retreat is on meditation practice, with teachings/instruction relating specifically to concentration practices that are used for the development of mental calmness and stability. For information/application contact: Cloud Mountain, 373 Agren Rd., Castle Rock, WA 98611 (206)524-2521 or (206)274-4859. Staff cook position also available.

## 1988 Summer And Fall Schedule at Providence Zen Center

### Coming Events

- June 26 10:30am "Christian Meditation & Mystery" Talk by Father Kevin Hunt, Trappist Monk, St. Joseph's Abbey
- June 29-July 4 Artist's Retreat
- July 2 6-hour Sitting with Master Dharma Teacher (MDT) Barbara Rhodes
- July 10 10:30am "Zen & Everyday Life"  
Talk by Senior Dharma Teacher Andrea Feit
- July 24 10:30am Continuing Series from the *Mu Mun Kwan* -Talk by MDT Jacob Perl
- July 29 All day— KUZS Council Meeting
- July 30 2:00pm— Birthday celebration for Soen Sa Nim
- July 30-31 KUZS Congress and Precepts Ceremony
- Aug 2-21 3-week Summer Kyol Che with MDT Mu Deung
- Aug 14 10:30am— Dharma Talk (Speaker/Topic to be announced)
- Aug 28 10:30am— "Zen Master Chinul & The Transformation of Korean Zen"  
Talk by Mu Soeng Sunim
- Sep 10-11 "Walking in Balance on the Pathway of Peace", 2-day workshop on Native American/Taoist Wisdom with Twylah Nitsch & Kenneth Cohen
- Sep 30-Oct 2 3-day Yong Maeng Jong Jin (Meditation Retreat) Teacher to be announced
- Oct 22-23 "Spirituality in Recovery from Addiction, Compulsion, & Attachments", 2-day workshop with Charles Whitfield, M.D. & MDT Richard Shrobe
- Dec 12-18 7-day Traditional Buddha's Enlightenment YMJJ with Zen Master Seung Sahn
- Jan 1-Mar 31 90-day Winter Kyol Che with MDT Mu Deung

## Seven Day East Coast Retreat

with Zen Master Seung Sahn  
December 12-18

Meditation retreats are a rare opportunity to simplify our lives, for 7-days asking only "What is this present moment?"

This is the traditional retreat held in Zen monasteries all over the world to celebrate the Enlightenment of Shakyamuni Buddha.

Silence, kong-an practice with a keen-eyed teacher, quiet country environment, vegetarian meals, sitting, walking, bowing, eating, working, lying down. Please join us.

Costs: \$35/day (\$22 for KUZS members) 2-day minimum registration. Entry Monday noon or Wednesday & Friday evenings.

## Spirituality in Recovery from Addictions, Compulsions & Attachments

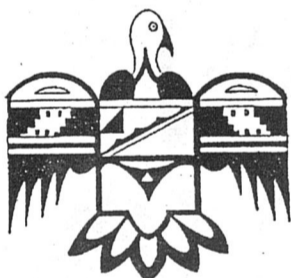
A 2-day Conference Oct 22-23

This conference will focus on addictions, compulsive behavior, attachments experienced by alcoholics, adult children of alcoholics, and co-dependents.

Presented by Charles Whitfield, M.D., a recognized authority in the field of chemical dependency, having treated alcohol-and-drug-dependent people for the last fourteen years, & Master Dharma Teacher Richard Shrobe, M.S.W., a Gestalt Psychotherapist with a private practice in New York City.

These two teachers/clinicians will teach, discuss and lead experiential exercises and blend their studies and background with those of the participants.

Costs: \$175 (\$125 for KUZS members)



## Walking in Balance on the Pathway of Peace

"A Workshop in Native American & Taoist Wisdom"

With Twylah Nitsch & Kenneth Cohen

September 10-11

Our relationship to the universe as a whole must be understood as an integral part of our lives. How we eat, talk, act, feel, work and behave with our children and old people, even how we discipline our thoughts, are part of a whole, which can flow harmoniously. This idea of harmonious flow is called *walking in balance*. A harmonious flow within each one of us is our "pathway of peace", a pathway that allows each one of us to walk hand-in-hand with others.

In this workshop we shall explore two ways of walking in balance. From Twylah Nitsch, Seneca Elder and Clanmother of the Wolf Clan Teaching Lodge, we shall learn the Native Way of discovering and honoring our spiritual gifts. We shall express gratitude and respect to all our relations—mountains, plants, animals, other people and most importantly, the Great Mystery—through sacred ceremony, song and dance. From Kenneth Cohen, ordained Taoist priest, we will explore the *breath of life*, learning how to detoxify the body with ancient Chinese healing exercises (ch'i kung). We will practice *animal frolics*, modeled

after the crane and bear, and various meditations, which help us regain the vitality and freshness of the mind of childhood. These two traditions, though coming from opposite sides of the planet, are complementary approaches to the same Pathway of Peace.

Twylah Nitsch is an Elder and Clanmother of the Wolf Clan Teaching Lodge of the Seneca Nation Historical Society. She travels widely around the country transmitting the wisdom of her tradition.

Kenneth Cohen, M.A. is an ordained Taoist priest and an internationally known scholar and Master of Taoist Healing Arts. He has also trained extensively with Native Elders and apprenticed to the Cherokee crystal teacher, Keetoowah Christie. He is a former collaborator with Alan Watts and author of more than 100 journal articles. He is on the faculty of Boulder College in Colorado.

Costs: \$125 (\$95 for KUZS members). Child care is available at \$15/day. A 50% deposit is required with registration. Costs include room and board.

## Intensive Meditation Retreat

Kyol Che at The

Providence Zen Center

Summer '88—Winter '88-89

Kyol Che is a rare opportunity to look intimately at what is happening in our lives. It is a time when all our energies are devoted to deepening and clarifying the meaning of what it is to be human. Kyol Che training is a powerful tool for enriching our everyday lives with greater clarity and direction.

Master Dharma Teacher Mu Deung will lead both the summer and winter retreats this year. Mu Deung has been a student of Zen Master Seung Sahn for

fourteen years and received inka (authorization to teach koans) in 1981. Mu Deung will offer guidance, dharma talks and private interviews.

The 3-week retreat in summer and the 90-day retreat in winter will be held at the Diamond Hill Zen Monastery, located on the beautiful grounds of the Providence Zen Center in rural Rhode Island. Conducted in silence, the daily schedule includes nine hours of sitting meditation, with chanting, bowing, prostrations and formal Zen meals held in the traditional temple style.

**Summer Retreat: August 2-21**

A deposit of 50% is required. Minimum of three full days.

Costs:	Members	Non-Members
20 days	\$335	\$435
7 days	\$125	\$175
per day	\$20	\$30

**Winter Retreat: Jan 1, 1989 to March 31, 1989**

Jan 1-22	First 3 week period
Jan 22-Feb 12	Second 3 week period
Feb 12-19	Intensive Week (Not open to new students)
Feb 19-Mar 12	Third 3 week period
Mar 12-31	Fourth 3 week period

21-day minimum registration. Contact PZC Director for costs.