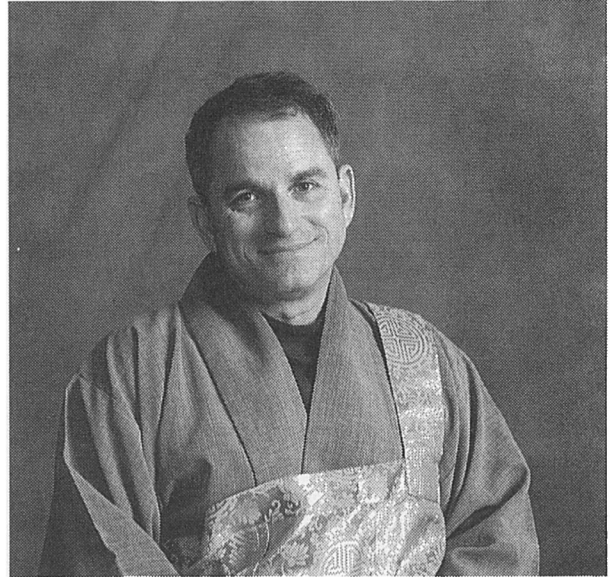


Stanley Lombardo becomes Zen Master Hae Kwang

*Transmission Ceremony
at Providence Zen Center, April 4, 1998*

DHARMA COMBAT

- Q: So the Tao has no name.
Where is it?
ZMHK: You already understand.
Q: Please teach me.
ZMHK: Go to the bottom of
the pond.
Q: The pond over there?
ZMHK: Your Tao is very deep.
- Q: As one academic to another, I
have a question for you. Zen Master
Seung Sahn teaches that you must
become very, very stupid in your Zen
practice. Yet I look around and see a
Ph.D. here, a professor there, a Ph.D.
there. How did you all become so
stupid?
ZMHK: YOU already understand!
Q: Yes, but I am asking you.
ZMHK: A second offense is not
permitted.
Q: Thank you.
- Q [*a young girl*]: Me and my friend
were talking about the color of
nothing, and she thinks it is black and
I disagree. Could you tell me the color
of nothing?
ZMHK: Yes, I know it very well.
Your jumper is maroon.
Q: OK! [*she laughs*]
ZMHK: Don't forget when you
put it in your closet.
Q: I won't!



DHARMA SPEECH

*[Raises Zen stick over head, then hits
podium with stick.]*

Buddha shared his cushion with
Mahakashyapa in front of the Pagoda of
Many Children.

*[Raises Zen stick over head, then hits
podium with stick.]*

Buddha held up a flower on Vulture
Peak. Mahakashyapa smiled.

*[Raises Zen stick over head, then hits
podium with stick.]*

Mahakashyapa walked around
Buddha's corpse. Buddha's feet broke
through the coffin.

Three transmissions. What did
Mahakashyapa attain?

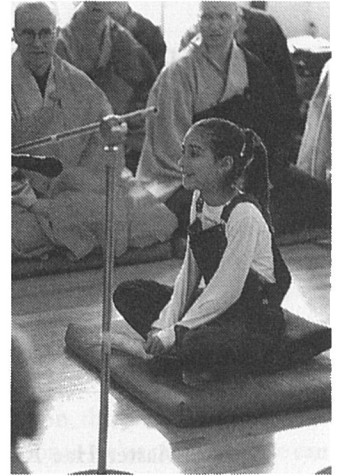
KATZ!

Venus was very bright in the eastern
sky this morning.

When I first met Zen Master Seung Sahn, Venus was in the evening sky, along with all the other planets. This was in the summer of 1978. We were in Big Sur, doing a kido, a three-day chanting retreat in a house overlooking the Pacific Ocean. Practice would end just as twilight deepened, and in the indigo western sky you could see Jupiter low on the horizon and then Mercury above it and then, going up the Zodiac, Venus and Saturn and Mars. It was a pretty cosmic line-up, and I was very excited about everything. This was my first retreat, first meeting with a Zen Master, and so forth. The house had a sauna, and after evening practice a bunch of us crowded into it. My back was really hurting from all the practice, and I stood up against the vent where the steam was coming out. I was standing there soaking in the warmth, and after a while Zen Master Seung Sahn came in. He said, "Oh, this sauna not very warm." Then he saw that I was standing in front of the vent, and he asked, "Why are you standing there?" I explained that the steam felt good on my sore back, and he looked me in the eye and said, "Only for you?" All day long we had been chanting the name of the bodhisattva of compassion, Kwan Seum Bosal, Kwan Seum Bosal, so I got the point and hurried over to the other side of the room and sat down. The only problem was that I took the last seat and there was no place for Zen Master Seung Sahn to sit down. Deciding not to waste any more words on me, he came over and calmly sat down in my lap. We were just sitting there sweating, but I was sweating more than anyone. At that time Zen Master Seung Sahn had a very substantial physique, so everybody started to laugh and make jokes like "Where does a three hundred pound Korean Zen Master sit down? Wherever he wants to. Ha, ha, ha." I sat perfectly still. So that was Zen Master Seung Sahn's first transmission to me.

About ten years later I was sitting a retreat at Bul Tah Sah in Chicago. During the second round of the late morning sitting, I heard someone whispering my name in the hall. It was Zen Master Seung Sahn, and he was motioning to me to come out of the dharma room. I went out to him and he said a car and driver were waiting and we were going for a little ride. I thought to myself, oh no, this is it. When we were in the car he explained that we were going to see a famous Chinese acupuncturist. Zen Master Seung Sahn and I were both recovering from leg injuries at the time. I had sustained my injury a couple of years before when in a moment of utter clarity after a retreat I walked through a glass door. Zen Master Seung Sahn knew I was still having trouble with it. He himself had fallen into an auto mechanic's pit at night. We were a real pair. When I first told Zen Master Seung Sahn about my injury, how I was in the hospital for a week with life-threatening complications, he said, "Oh good, you almost died." The acupuncturist was a wizened old practitioner. He had us both get undressed and lie down on a big bed. He looked me over and said without any prompting, "Glass into leg three years ago, no prob-

lem." Then he got out these huge needles, like knitting needles, and stabbed them into me all over my body until I looked like Saint Sebastian. He did the same thing to Zen Master Seung Sahn. Then he left us there for about a half an hour, groaning and bleeding on the bed. I was in a state of suspended animation, staring at the ceiling, utterly transfixed by the entire experience, listening to Zen Master Seung Sahn's groans. When the acupuncturist finally took the needles out and I stood up I found that almost all the feeling had returned to my right foot, which had been numb since the accident. I gave the old doctor all the money I had on me. When we were driving back to Bul Tah Sah, Zen Master Seung Sahn said, "That's a number-one acupuncturist."



I am very grateful to be fully clothed on this occasion—and in this fine gold brocade at that. Something is transmitted in a ceremony such as this, but it's impossible to say exactly what. Buddhist practice is a relentless search for mind and its correct function. Kyong Ho Sunim, the great-great grandfather in our teaching lineage, gave a famous dharma talk about the necessity of letting go of all our petty concerns and trivial preoccupations and devoting ourselves whole-heartedly to realizing our mind and helping this world. Zen Master Seung Sahn let me know this ceremony was going to take place by writing me a very simple letter, just two sentences. The second sentence was, "When you become a Zen Master, how will you save all beings?" This hit me very hard. I thought of my family and friends and teachers and how much they have helped me, and I am grateful to have so many of them here today. What is finally passed down is a job, the great work of life and death. We all have that job, and the only way we can do it is all together, family and friends guiding us along the ancient way.

[Raises Zen stick over head, then hits podium with stick.]

I take refuge in the Buddha, the Precious One, which is the original brightness of our mind.

[Raises Zen stick over head, then hits podium with stick.]

I take refuge in the dharma, the Precious One, which is the universe in all its purity.

[Raises Zen stick over head, then hits podium with stick.]

I take refuge in the sangha, the Precious Ones, and that's all of you, in all your shining perfection.