



On April 9, 2000, Jane Dobisz JDPSN received transmission from Zen Master Seung Sahn at Providence Zen Center and became Zen Master Bon Yeon.

zen master bon yeon dharma combat

Student: The sutra says all Buddhas dwell in a single sound. If there is no sound, where do the Buddhas dwell?

Zen Master Bon Yeon: *[Makes "shhhhh" gesture with a finger over her mouth.]*

Student: Only that?

ZMBY: *[waves goodbye silently]*

Student: I thought they dwell at Cambridge Zen Center.

ZMBY: Don't be attached to Cambridge Zen Center!

Zen Master Bon Yeon: Great doctor, I'm glad you're here.

Student: You're becoming a mother very soon, and I think all of us in some ways are always searching for mother. So, what is mother's mind?

ZMBY: You already understand.

Student: Please teach me.

ZMBY: What are you doing now?

Student: Sitting on the cushion.

ZMBY: That's a mother's mind.

Student: Thank you very much.

ZMBY: Take care of your true self.

Student: Hello.

ZMBY: How are you today?

Student: Good, thanks. Congratulations!

ZMBY: Not yet.

Student: Over the years, you've given me many hard questions, and I'm wondering if you can give me the one question that can't be answered.

ZMBY: Who are you?

Student: You already understand.

ZMBY: I ask you.

Student: Sitting here talking to you at your transmission ceremony.

ZMBY: There, you've answered it!

ZMBY: Mu Shim Sunim! How are you today?

Mu Shim Sunim JDPS: Very good, wonderful to see you here.

ZMBY: You, too.

MSSN: You and I, besides being in the same Zen school, have something very much in common. We're both born in the same year, the year of the dog, according to the Chinese calendar. This dog tends to follow others and tends to be very loyal to just a few people, and sometimes follows blindly. Sometimes runs after a bone. So you're a dog year person.

ZMBY: I'm a what?

MSSN: You're born in the dog year, today become a Zen Master. How will you not run after the bone?

ZMBY: You already understand.

MSSN: So I ask you.

ZMBY: *[Growls loudly and makes clawing action.]* Get out of my territory!!

MSSN: Thank you for your teaching, thank you very much.

zen master bon yeon dharma talk

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

You are the universe, the universe is you.

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

In this sound, you and universe disappear.

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

You are just you, the universe is just the universe.
Three worlds, which one is correct?

KATZ!

You and the universe together make it happen.
Moment to moment, just do it.

Transmission really just means giving something to someone. I feel tremendously grateful for everything that I've received from all of you here, particularly this gentleman sitting up here in the bright orange robe with the glasses on, known as Dae Soen Sa Nim. He's given every one of us so many gifts—you couldn't begin to count them. We heard a wonderful story this morning from Morgan about Zen Master Seung Sahn and the "birthday cake sutra." Each of us who has been fortunate enough to spend time with him have our own stories like that, don't we? It's quite extraordinary, actually. He's taught us very much, even how to pick up this big stick and hit the table. That's a wonderful, wonderful present! Who else could put three thousand years worth of spiritual training in such a nice and simple package that we can access, right here in our own lives? Today, I would like to share two major transmissions I think we've all gotten from Zen Master Seung Sahn for which I am particularly grateful.

The first one occurred at the first dharma talk I attended here at Providence Zen Center. Zen Master Seung Sahn was speaking, and during the talk he pointed to the cup and said to the audience, "Here is a cup. If you say this is a cup you are attached to name and form, and this stick will hit you thirty times. If you say it's not a cup, you're attached to emptiness, and this stick will also hit you thirty times. What do you call it?"

Everyone was silent. Probably all of us were stuck at the same time, wondering, "What can I do? What is it?" Then he poked the student next to him and said, "Show them."

The student, of course, picked up the cup and drank from it. I remember sitting there and just smiling, thinking, "That's right! How perfect." This one action encapsulates all the wisdom of all the sages through many thousands of years of human practice. What does it teach us? Correct situation, correct relationship, correct function and just do it. Throw away all opposites; cup/not cup, form/emptiness, good answer/bad answer, explaining something... throw it all away and just do it! In this one small teaching we all get a profound transmission: a way that we can take the metaphysical truth of the universe and bring it right into our life in this moment. This teaching is extremely important for us. Whenever I get lost I think of it: "What is the situation? What's my correct relationship? What's my job, or correct function?" Then just do it. You can be sure if one of those things is off, there's something that's going to go wrong. When that happens, you make it correct and try again. So that's the first really excellent teaching that he's given us that I'm grateful for.

The second main teaching which is also emphasized in our school is direction: Why? Why do something? Only for me? Only to be some sort of a Zen Master or something? That's not going to help anyone. Zen Master Seung Sahn's whole emphasis is always, "For you." For you, for you, not for me. Over time, if we practice hard and we try, this "for you" teaching grows on us. When you combine a clear direction with the means to implement it (correct situation, relationship, and function), and the ability to "just do it," well, that's quite a powerful combination. It's a recipe for saving all beings. I don't know of any other teacher who has managed to boil it down to such a simple and accessible practice like our teacher has. In addition, he's tossed in a little bit of fun, the "potato theory," hard training, a big dash of humor, and a little bit of kimchee... very spicy!

We've all gotten transmission from the ancient Buddhas through many, many generations, from Zen Master Seung Sahn, down to each of us.

How will we transmit Buddha's mind to others?

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

Somebody asked Un Mun Zen Master, "What is Buddha?" He said "Dry shit on a stick."

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

Somebody asked Seung Sahn Zen Master, "What is Buddha?" He said, "Who are you?"

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

If somebody asks you, "What is Buddha?"
What will you say?

KATZ!

On the altar the gold Buddha is smiling.