



# Recollections of Zen Master Dae Jin

Beyond Great Truth  
For Zen Master Dae Jin

No mind  
Has Great Truth

Great Truth  
Has no life, no death

Beyond the Ten Directions  
Blue sky above peaceful ocean

When I wrote this poem, shortly after hearing of Zen Master Dae Jin's death, I hadn't seen him for many years, and even though we were both teachers, we hadn't had much contact with each other, so I wasn't familiar with how he taught. The typical image of how Zen masters teach involves concise expressions of wisdom, delivered with subtle yet powerful skillful means. In reading the recollections offered by sangha members around the world, what stands out is his humility, kindness, openness, generosity and directness. We should all be so skillful.

*Ken Kessel JDPSN*  
New York



While I don't have a specific recollection of Zen Master Dae Jin to mention, I was mainly just thankful for all that he did for Mu Sang Sa. I got to know him during the three years I lived in the nearby city of Daejeon. He gave countless dharma talks on Sundays and was instrumental in the operations of the temple and the direction that it took. He was fluent in Korean and readily sat down with any visitors who showed up at his doorstep. Korean visitors always asked him things like, "Why did an American like you decide to become a monk?" and he politely answered them with a smile on his face. Others would say, "Hey, you're that monk who's always on TV!" He became a famous figure in Korea. During interviews he showed a lot of care and concern for those who were facing difficulties in life and offered his sympathy to them. He followed the teaching of Zen Master Seung Sahn in a straight line, and that is how his life went. He will be remembered well by both Mu Sang Sa and Korea for all his hard work, contributions and teachings.

*William Condron*  
Daegu, South Korea

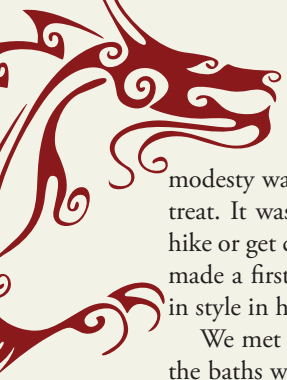


*Photo: Mu Sang Sa / KUSZ Photo Archives*



Thank you for your heart practice, Zen Master Dae Jin. When traveling to Korea for Kyol Che for the first time to sit at Su Dok Sa Temple, I was really happy to meet Mu Shim Sunim and Do Gong Sunim, who were assigned by Zen Master Seung Sahn to run the retreat. There were somewhere between 19 and 23 retreatants at these early retreats, usually arriving from as many as 11 countries. This retreat was unique in Asia, because it was likely the only place in the world at the time—or at least one of extremely few—where monks, nuns and female and male laypeople were practicing together in the same dharma room. This is because Dae Soen Sa Nim was and is an innovator, far ahead and beyond his time.

Mu Shim Sunim and Do Gong Sunim ran the retreat smoothly, bringing us to Su Dok Sa from Hwa Gye Sa. We arrived there later than the full-moon commencement day, starting the retreat in Hwa Gye Sa for a couple weeks to accommodate something, an event or preparations at Su Dok Sa. Imagine being the directors for a whole group, starting a retreat in two locations, traveling by bus and starting again. It all seemed to work. Mu Shim Sunim and Do Gong Sunim were quite chill in their roles and seemed to see themselves somewhat in the way of bus drivers. This



modesty was really attractive and I believe helped the retreat. It was a blessing, because we could really go for a hike or get chai in that very small town if we wanted to. It made a first Kyol Che really accessible and more Korean in style in how tight or loose the retreat was.

We met with Dae Soen Sa Nim regularly and went to the baths weekly. There were some hilarious scenes when Koreans came to do a practice fire drill at Su Dok Sa that are still in my memory, but I digress. I vividly remember parts of a walk down from Jung Hye Sa Temple during one late December day with Mu Shim Sunim and seeing the trees there. Also, Mu Shim Sunim was charged with taking me to Dae Soen Sa Nim's tailor for a full-length robe. I remember ducking into the tailor's angled-roof room covered in rice paper and Mu Shim Sunim telling me that Dae Soen Sa Nim had paid for this robe with his own money.

What stands out about Dae Jin Soen Sa Nim was his pure kindness in his actions, speech and words. I don't remember him ever being in a state of impatience. He was welcoming and I don't remember his speech ever being harmful toward me or any other guests.

These attributes of humility, kindness and support are some of the greatest attributes of any dharma person's life gifts. They are so meaningful to me as they are the heart qualities which I most deeply value and believe are important to share. May our practice bring us in alignment with this kind of respect and kindness for all life, so we experience the great love and great compassion of Zen Master Seung Sahn's teaching and Zen Master Man Gong's Whole World Is a Single Flower.

*Denise Forest (Oh Shim)*  
Berkeley, California



A few years ago, Zen Master Dae Jin was visiting the Lithuanian sangha. After his dharma talk, there was a performance called "Golden Temple," where his student, Bo Haeng Sunim, a Lithuanian, was acting. I somehow ended up sitting near the Master. One of our sangha members was translating for him. I heard it and turned my head to that side. He noticed and said to the translator, "Thank you. It's enough. I don't want to disturb other people."

*Migle Simanaviciute (Do Kwang)*  
Lithuania



I will always remember Dae Jin Sunim as someone who early in his life made a decision to devote himself to practice and help others, including being a bridge monk in conveying Dae Soen Sa Nim's teachings that were de-

veloped in the West to a Korean audience, and being the first Kwan Um monastic to live in Korea.

*Kimball Amram*  
Cambridge, Massachusetts



I didn't know him as a teacher, but as a human. I met him at Providence Zen Center as he was following Zen Master Seung Sahn. I saw he was exceedingly alert, attentive and busy. It wasn't until I was a haeng ja at Hwa Gye Sa in 1998, when I was on the inside, that I began to know him. Behind all the turmoil and activity that surrounded Zen Master Seung Sahn and his first generation of monastics, there was an abundance of humanity.

There was a fever pitch at Hwa Gye Sa at that time, as all the young sunims rammed heads, new lines drawn, what would describe the future of our world sangha. Haeng jas, whirling within the same power architecture, fastened onto Dae Jin Sunim. He stood outside the fervor, calmly advising us, helping us to understand Korean culture, speaking on our behalf. Because of his close association with Zen Master Seung Sahn he was a mighty force, a kind and compassionate one. That he calmed the waters during the difficult trials of ordination, I will always be grateful.

I didn't see him for many years after that.

Once, as I brought him to the airport in Los Angeles, I told him I was thinking of returning to Korea to become a monk (again).

"You have to do it, now! Do you have your passport? You don't need any bags . . ."

He loved what he was doing, sincerely believing in it with his whole being. He gave his whole life to the dharma. He passed away not long after I'd finally returned to Korea to ordain.

His dedication and sincere effort directly influenced countless others. He was an important element, a catalyst, a force—the momentum carries through, is deeply embedded in the living tradition of the Kwan Um School of Zen and the greater sangha of the world.

*Won Il Sunim*



### Where is Zen Master Dae Jin?

My first-time visit to Hwa Gye Sa and Mu Sang Sa was in December 2011. In Hwa Gye Sa, I met with Zen Master Dae Jin. When I returned, I sent an e-mail sharing with him poems of my experience in Hwa Gye Sa and Mu Sang Sa. Somehow there is something of my first-time visit to both temples that opened my eyes as to the profound effect and the legacy left behind by our great teacher, Zen

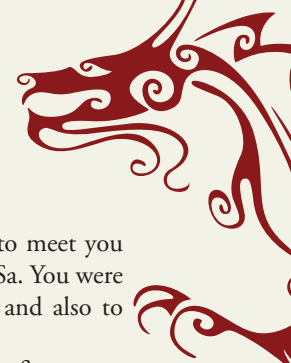


Photo: Mu Sang Sa / KUSZ Photo Archives

Master Seung Sahn. I bowed deeply at the stupa of Zen Master Seung Sahn. Zen Master Dae Jin used that opportunity to teach me on the kong-an, "Where is Zen Master Seung Sahn now?" The two poems I wrote to Zen Master Dae Jin and his reply are as follows:

**Hwa Gye Sa**

Abandoning likes and dislikes, practitioners focus their mind inward.

Traveling to Hwa Gye Sa to meet the Master again after many years,

Bowing deeply at the relics and stupa, recalling his kindness,

The Master is no longer there, but yet his presence is everywhere.

**Mu Sang Sa**

Dragons and phoenixes adorn the temple of Mu Sang Sa.

They live in harmony in Mount Gye Ryong,

Protected by a Grandfather who rides on a tiger,

The lonely summer flower blooms in the winter chill.



**Reply by Zen Master Dae Jin**

Dear TK,

Thank you for your e-mail. I was happy to meet you and share the dharma teachings at Hwa Gye Sa. You were very fortunate in your visit to Mu Sang Sa and also to Hwa Gye Sa Temple in Seoul.

Your poems are also very wonderful. In the first poem you wrote in the fourth line, "The Master is no longer there, but yet his presence is everywhere." That is a good statement, but we occasionally ask our students to answer the question, "Where is Soen Master Seung Sahn now?" Then a simple, just-like-this answer is possible.

I trust that your return journey to Penang was uneventful and good. Looking forward to us meeting and sharing the Dharma again,

*Dae Jin*

In remembering Zen Master Dae Jin, I want to thank him for his wisdom and kindness in sharing the dharma teachings. Now that he is no longer with us, I pose the question, "Where is Zen Master Dae Jin now?"

*Valen TK Ong*



We both have the same Dharma name: Mu Shim—no mind.

Somehow I had the feeling that this connected me with you in a very special way.

Once you asked me this kong-an:

"Anika, when did the sun began to shine on the earth?"

"I don't know."

"Oh, that is very easy! The sun began to shine on the earth when you came into my life!"

Wow, thank you for this kong-an! Just now I am sitting in the sun, which is shining in my room, and I notice you are still in my life, with your teaching and all the memories of two great Kyol Che retreats with you.

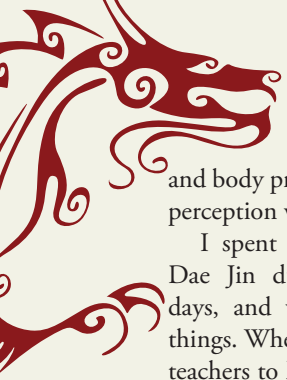
I will miss you very much,

Your little Mu Shim,  
*Vice-Abbess Anika Page*  
Dresden Zen Center



In 1997 Zen Master Seung Sahn, together with Zen Master Dae Jin, Zen Master Dae Kwan and Mu Sang Sunim visited Palma Zen Center in Spain. It was four years after the last visit of our Great Master in 1993 to Majorca Island. For me it was a very important event because, for some reason, all of us in Palma Zen Center were sad, because we felt Zen Master Seung Sahn would never come back to Palma Zen Center again due to his sickness





and body problems. And in fact this perception was right.

I spent time with Zen Master Dae Jin during the next several days, and we talked about many things. When the time came for the teachers to leave Spain, I went with them to the airport. I remember I was sitting in a chair next to Zen Master Dae Jin. I was deeply sad, because Zen Master Seung Sahn was leaving, but I didn't comment on this to anybody; I was just keeping my mantra silently. Then suddenly Zen Master Dae Jin looked at me with his eyes full of compassion and, without saying a word, he gave to me his own beautiful mala.

After a few moments of complete silence he added very softly and full of compassion toward me, "Just keep your mantra and don't check anything . . . Then no problem."

His presence, compassion and words deeply touched my heart and my mind, and I was relieved of a deep suffering.

Thank you Zen Master Dae Jin for your Clear Bodhisattva Mind.

With gratitude,

*Eduardo del Valle*

Palma Zen Center, Spain



Years ago, when Dae Soen Sa Nim visited Las Vegas on a regular basis to see Dr. Ju Cheon Lee for acupuncture, moxibustion and so forth, he stayed at the Hilton Hotel and Casino. I was very fortunate, being granted regular interviews with our great teacher early each morning in his hotel room.

Mu Shim Sunim JDPS (as he was previously known) was his secretary. Sunim and I, as per instruction, would frequently venture off in my car to fulfill errands for our teacher. Prior to our departure, Zen Master Seung Sahn would update Mu Shim Sunim regarding my current homework. He then instructed him to continue my kong-an work in the car on our way to various destinations.

I will always remember this. Dae Jin Sunim's wisdom, compassion, encouragement and great vow were always present. His love for all sentient beings fueled his clear direction for a lifetime.

With humility, gratitude, and profound respect for a great teacher,

*Zen Master Ji Haeng*

Las Vegas, Nevada



*Photo: Mu Sang Sa / KUSZ Photo Archives*



I was sitting Winter Kyol Che 2010–2011 in Mu Sang Sa for six weeks. I was writing a diary and wanted to share these entries about about Dae Jin Sunim. Sometimes, when I would happen to look up, like at mealtime, and find myself looking directly into Dae Jin Sunim's face and his awake eyes. We would have eye contact for just a second and this one clear moment together. This kind of experience hasn't happened for me with anyone else here.

18th Dec., 2010: During mealtime, I saw how Dae Jin Sunim took some vegetables from a shared bowl with his own chopsticks, instead of using the correct ones from the bowl. He noticed that I noticed, looked at me and smiled. It was a very vivid, awake and funny moment.

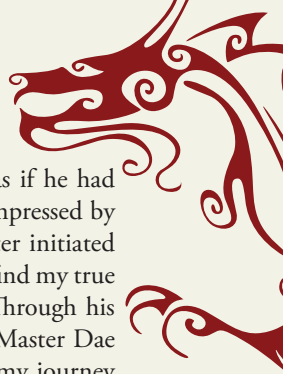
23rd Dec., 2010: I remember that Dae Jin Sunim was helping me a lot during interviews with my kong-an practice. He said that I should bring the kong-an to this moment. With this simple help, I was able to solve one kong-an, which was very important for me and which I was working on very hard for a couple of weeks.

*Iris Grabner*

Vienna, Austria



Dae Jin Sunim once told me that he lived in Berlin for a while as a child when his father was working in Berlin after World War II. That must have been in the 1960s and most probably after the wall had been built. He tried to recollect some of his German phrases of his childhood



when we met: “Guten Tag. Wie geht es Ihnen?” So Dae Jin Sunim was a “Berliner” for a while (I don’t know how long) and that is something we share.

I just remembered a funny poem in the Berlin dialect. I don’t know if it is funny in English too?

Ick sitze da un’ esse Klops  
uff eemal klopp’s  
Ick kieke, staune, wundre mir,  
uff eemal jeht se uff die Tür.  
Nanu, denk ick, ick denk nanu  
jetz isse uff, erst war se zu!  
Ick jehe raus und blicke  
und wer steht drauß  
en?  
Icke!

I am sitting there and eating Klops\*  
suddenly it knocks  
I sit, look, wonder,  
suddenly the door opens.  
Hey I think; I think hey!  
Now it is open; first it was closed.  
and I go out and look.  
and who is out there?  
me!

\* *Klops is a kind of dumpling, traditionally made with meat.*

Zen Master Dae Jin suffered the last one and a half years very much from not being able to eat, although he was very hungry. May he enjoy wonderful, nourishing meals, good company and have a relaxed and happy mind.



Arne Schaefer JDPSN

Arne Schaefer JDPSN  
Berlin, Germany



Zen Master Dae Jin, who knew that I am publishing my own cookbook and also that I am dedicated to healthy food, invited me to his room to show me a most wonderful and fascinating book, which contained a collection

of original recipes from monasteries. It was as if he had revealed a true treasure to me. I was deeply impressed by the unique recipe book and also the encounter initiated by Zen Master Dae Jin, which inspired me to find my true direction—and to realize my own creation. Through his endless kindness and great compassion, Zen Master Dae Jin helped to make my creative journey and my journey in South Korea such wonderful experiences.

Avital Sebbag  
Israel



Dae Jin Sunim moved to Korea soon after he became a student of Zen Master Seung Sahn, so I never was able to spend much time with him. His original monk’s name was Mu Shim, No Mind! I heard that, because of his sometimes “stubborn behavior,” Zen Master Seung Sahn used to joke with him and call him Rock Head. He would then say, “He will always show up, get up and be very loyal to the dharma.” This proved to be true, and I bow to him.

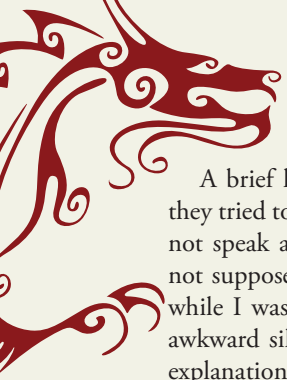
Zen Master Soeng Hyang  
California



### Deceived by Appearances?

In the weeks leading up to Buddha’s Birthday each year, Mu Sang Sa would receive a number of invitations to attend lantern lighting ceremonies from various Buddhist organizations in the surrounding area. As the abbot, Dae Jin Sunim was obligated to attend these events and I would often accompany him as the temple director. We were quite unknown to the Buddhist community, as Mu Sang Sa was just a few years old at that time. These events were held in the evening, so sometimes only the two of us would attend, as the other sunims were reluctant to go as it meant returning to the temple rather late in the evening and still having to rise at the same time in the morning.

We would be normally ushered into a room to have some tea before the start of the evening’s events. The hosts would engage in some small talk to set everyone at ease and invariably directed their questions at me. They assumed, I imagine, from my face that I was a Korean sunim who was there to help translate for the Western sunim. When the only response I could give was to smile wordlessly back at them as they posed their questions, they would, after a moment’s hesitation, politely repeat the question to me, thinking I had not heard them clearly, smiling expectantly in anticipation of my reply. It was usually at that moment that Dae Jin Sunim would jump in and reply for me in fluent and perfect Korean—he completely took everyone by surprise.



A brief look of panic would cross our hosts' faces as they tried to work out why the Korean-looking sunim did not speak any Korean, while the Western one who was not supposed to, did. Was Dae Jin Sunim the translator while I was the more senior monk? There was often an awkward silence and I could sense that they wanted an explanation but did not want to appear impolite in demanding for one. Dae Jin Sunim would go on to explain the situation to them—that I was a foreign sunim who had yet to learn Korean, and so did not understand their questions, eventually resolving their confusion, much to everyone's relief. This situation repeated itself a number of times until all the local Buddhists got to know Dae Jin Sunim and realized that he was the one who was fluent in Korean while most of the rest of us were still grappling with *annyeonghaseyo*.

*Myong An Sunim JDPS*  
Malaysia

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It's his smile that will stay with me all of my life. Zen Master Dae Jin encountered each person and the world with that serene and radiant smile—with equanimity and calm—even as a novice monk years ago. As a beginning Zen student, I would do retreats with him at the Providence Zen Center or at Cambridge Zen Center—and would see him at ceremonies. He was a regular guy—but someone who was always positive and dedicated. It was a shock to me to hear that he was one of the very first of

Dae Soen Sa Nim's American students to choose to become a monk and to put on the robes. Initially many of us were appalled at Soen Sa Nim's decision to encourage his American students to become monks. It seemed so extreme and old-fashioned—and threatening! We were surprised that some of us fell for it!

It took me a while to realize how right it was for Zen Master Dae Jin. It really sunk in when I traveled with him to Korea with a group led by Dae Soen Sa Nim way back in 1984. Zen Master Dae Jin spoke the language better than anyone else, and seemed to revel in the role of monk in the monasteries we visited. At each of the gorgeous, ancient temples we visited and stayed in, he would be our liaison with the monastic culture. It was weird knowing him before and after his becoming a monk, and then seeing him naturally and seamlessly transformed.

At one point we visited a city and ended up staying in a hotel, rather than a temple. Dae Soen Sa Nim was elsewhere. Our whole group was invited to go out on the town with a local guide. Zen Master Dae Jin refused to go, because the guide said that they might go to a show that would be a bit spicy—and there might be a few drinks shared. As a Christian minister, I stayed back with Zen Master Dae Jin and some other monks. I later heard from a breathless participant that the group went to a show that included some topless dancers; and I found myself regretting my decision. But for Zen Master Dae Jin it was not a problem. He was a monk through and through.

*Rusty Eidmann-Hicks*  
Holmdel, New Jersey



Our huge Barcelona Buddha protector was sent by Dae Jin Sunim from Hwa Gye Sa. He was always the right (and left) hand of Zen Master Seung Sahn, always helping all the sanghas. This will never die. His teaching is alive here, right now in Bori Centro Zen Barcelona. Zen Master Dae Jin stays with us in Mu Sang Sa, here in Borisa and all the sanghas he helped and the people he trained.

At the time when I was a haeng ja, deciding who will be my unsa sunim [preceptor], Zen Master Dae Jin had just become the abbot of Mu Sang Sa. That was an extremely hard job, since the temple was under construction, and there was little support for such a huge task. Many doubted anyone from our Western family of monks could handle that job.

One evening our Hwa Gye Sa *son won jang* [Zen center director], Dae Soeng Sunim, was packing a Mun Su Bosal [Manjushri Bodhisattva] statue at Dae Jin Sunim's request. He told me right there, "Dae Jin Sunim is the only one who can successfully continue the Mu Sang Sa project. He will not give up, no matter what!" Dae Jin Sunim wanted the Mun Su Bosal statue for Mu Sang Sa's





Photo: Mu Sang Sa / KUSZ Photo Archives

provisional *sanshingak* [temple shrine]. He always believed that with practice, kido, sincerity and clear direction that a bad situation turns into a good situation. And it happened . . . Mu Sang Sa, Seung Sahn Sunim's dream, was becoming true.

I became a disciple of Dae Jin Sunim, and as a young monk I was fortunate to be around and learn from him and the sangha. That was a very busy and very happy time in my life; the whole sangha was working hard and somehow enjoying it wholeheartedly. His style was not easy, but more and more I came to appreciate his "No Mind" (Mu Shim) teaching. The more I digest it, the more it becomes "Great Truth" (Dae Jin).

We owe him, and the way to repay is to never give up our practice, no matter how hard the situation is, like he did!

Namu Amita Bul

*Tonda Horak (Dok An)*

Bori Sa, Alta Garrotxa (Catalonia)



Namu Amitabul  
Our Teacher passed away  
Where is He now?  
Sunlight through the clouds.

Наму Амиа Буль  
Ушел наш учитель  
Где Он сейчас  
Солнечный свет сквозь тучи.

*Mark Polyansky*



The route of the sun is short in winter.  
One can hardly come up with it . . .  
Путь у солнца короткий зимой.  
Вряд ли догонишь его...

*Elena Shubina*

[The previous two pieces were translated from the Russian by Svetlana Bebyakina, Abbot, St. Petersburg Zen Center.]



### Love Letter to Dae Jin Sunim

While I chant Namu Amita Bul for you,  
I see your face and I hear your voice in my mind.  
It makes me sometimes happy and sometimes  
sad to tears.

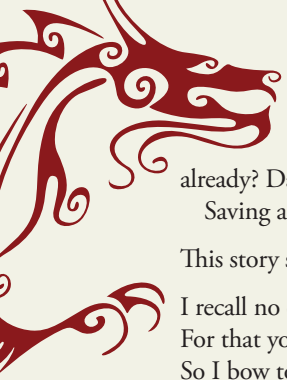
You called me one day twenty years ago,  
so unexpected.  
Congratulations, you have become a mother!  
I prayed for your safe delivery, you said.  
Only then I understood how my little daughter  
and I could stay alive  
after many hours of difficult childbirth labor.

You were the gate that led to Zen Master Seung Sahn  
at that time at Hwa Gye Sa.  
I remember clearly, sitting in your room at the end of  
a long corridor and listening to your  
phone call to Dae Soen Sa Nim.  
Sir, Namhee Bosal from Germany wants to talk to  
you. Now ok?

Even after Dae Soen Sa Nim's departure,  
wherever you were, Dae Soen Sa Nim was not far.  
You kept open the gate to Don't Know,  
where all the patriarchs and masters reside.

Some years ago you told us a story at  
Zen Center Berlin:  
As a young monk you went around in Korea  
visiting many temples.  
In one temple you were welcomed by an old  
monk who treated you very well with a good  
dinner. After the meal you both had a  
conversation together.  
Old monk: What do you practice?  
You: I am practicing Zen!  
Old monk: Why do you practice Zen?  
You: I want to save all beings!  
Old monk: How many beings have you saved  
until now?

You said, you got completely stuck then. With a big  
question you returned back to Hwa Gye  
Sa. After bowing to Dae Seon Sa Nim you asked him  
Sir, how many beings have you saved



already? Dae Soen Sa Nim answered immediately,  
Saving all beings already finished!

This story strongly hit my mind. Thank you, Sunim!

I recall no occasion in which I ever hugged you.  
For that you were too much a Korean monk to me.  
So I bow to you today after 49 days of your departure  
and say farewell.  
Namu Amita Bul.

*Muchak JDPSN (Nambee Chon)*  
Germany



“Hello this is Mu Shim from Korea, we received your application to join our three month retreat in Shin Won Sa, Korea, but we did not hear from you, are you planning to come join the retreat?”

“Sorry, I wanted to come, but I cannot afford to come!”

“Our teacher said no problem. We will help you.”

This was my first encounter with Zen Master Dae Jin in October, 1991, over the phone.

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When I arrived at Hwa Gye Sa, a few monks came to help me with my heavy bags. One of them was Mu Shim Sunim (Zen Master Dae Jin’s ordination name). I was so touched by this warm and ready-to-help reception.

Before we began my first winter retreat in Shin Won Sa, he took us to a Korean temple. On the way, he told us a story about Dae Soen Sa Nim teaching in Taiwan. At that time I had no idea who was Zen Master Seung Sahn. He told us that they were in a taxi when Dae Soen Sa Nim saw that there was a mini-size Diamond Sutra hanging in the car. So Zen Master Seung Sahn asked the taxi driver: “When you are driving the car, how do you practice the Diamond Sutra?” The driver was stuck. Then Dae Soen Sa Nim asked the driver to ask him the same question. Zen Master Seung Sahn replied, “Red light, stop. Green light, go.” When we heard this story we burst into laughter. So Zen Master Dae Jin was the first person who helped me to understand Dae Soen Sa Nim’s teaching.

Who would have thought after that retreat Zen Master Seung Sahn would want to start a Zen center in Hong Kong? Now that Zen center (Su Bong Zen Monastery) is already 24 years old.

During all these years I had many opportunities to travel together with Zen Master Seung Sahn, with Mu Shim Sunim being his secretary. When Zen Master Seung Sahn was active, he came to Hong Kong up to four times a year. Each time Dae Soen Sa Nim came to Hong Kong, he would go to at least three to four other countries. So we spent a lot of time together not only spreading the dharma, but also handling many everyday life issues.



*Photo: Mu Sang Sa / KUSZ Photo Archives*

Mu Shim Sunim was a very loyal person to Zen Master Seung Sahn. No matter how much of a hard time Dae Soen Sa Nim gave him, he never ran away or said bad things about his teacher. On many occasions, Zen Master Seung Sahn shouted at him in front of many Korean bosalmims, but he would just digest it and continue to help his teacher.

In Asia, we usually treat our guests to a feast—10 to 12 courses for one meal! Very often, whatever food Dae Soen Sa Nim couldn’t finish, Mu Shim Sunim would have to help finish it. One time Zen Master Seung Sahn’s good friend Venerable Sing Wai joined us for a meal. After Dae Soen Sa Nim put his food in Mu Shim Sunim’s bowl, Venerable Sing Wai followed too! This meant that Mu Shim Sunim had to eat three people’s portions. At that time I also couldn’t finish mine, but I didn’t dare to ask him for help. When he saw my face, he said, “You want me to help you as well?” “Could you?” I asked. “Give it to me,” he said. This is Zen Master Dae Jin.

I would like to take this opportunity to show my utmost gratitude to Zen Master Dae Jin for everything that you did to help Dae Soen Sa Nim. Helping our teacher was helping the sangha. On behalf of all the students from Su Bong Zen Monastery, I bow to you with deep gratitude! I feel grateful that we became DSSN’s students, that we learned and practiced together, and that we went through many crises together. Finally the way we became good friends was not to hold but to put it all down. This is the experience I had together with you!

Thank You!

*Zen Master Dae Kwan*  
Su Bong Zen Monastery, Hong Kong