

Editor's Note: After a series of discussions with representatives from our European, Asian and North American sanghas, we are trying a new approach to the production of Primary Point with this issue. We were looking at what we might do to enrich the journal, or even if we needed to think about that. We decided to see if changing the editorial process would have an effect on the content. We have begun this approach with the Asian region generating the content for this issue. Our thanks to the regional participants in this dialogue, particularly Arne Schaefer JDPSN, Paul Majchrzyk JDPSN, Koen Vermeulen JDPSN, Ben Gleason, Tamarind Jordan, and particularly to Kathy Park JDPSN, who carefully shepherded the content for this issue.

Our Original Strength and Compassion

Zen Master Soeng Hyang (Bobby Rhodes)

Practicing with don't-know means practicing with focused awareness coupled with the question, What is this? When something happens as huge as the Earth's climate change, it can be difficult to face it and to know what to do. There can be the tendency to want to put our heads in the sand.

When I first understood that the ice caps are melting at a much faster rate than had previously been predicted, and consequently the sea levels are rising rapidly, one of my thoughts was "Oh my, this is all going on in *my* lifetime! Human beings have been around for thousands of years. Why does this have to happen when *I'm* alive?" Well, that thought is a perfect example of attaching to self and other. It's also an example of attaching to time and space. It's not a good example of don't-know! It came from feeling afraid: afraid for my child, my grandchildren, for humanity, ani-

mals, rivers, oceans . . . it's so hard to conceive of.

When we can take the fear and just own it and learn from it, that is our don't-know returning us to our original strength and compassion. With our breath, move the fear and sadness down from our head, down from our heart, all the way to our center and ask, "What can I do? How can I help?" Our vow can come to life when we are able to breathe into our strong center. This is our practice.

Kwan Seum Bosal means, "Listen to the cries of the universe." Cry, fear and enter the lessons this universe is constantly giving. Enter the unknown, before thoughts of heaven and hell, loss and gain. We need to unconditionally move into life, and because of our fear and sadness, we will find our center. Our vow and direction are right there. When we attain that, we can truly find the way to help this thing we call Earth. ♦

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Hide Under the Path

Zen Master Dae Bong

A student asked Zen Master Seung Sahn, "Where can we hide?" He replied, "Hide under the Path! [*The Path refers to the Way, or the Tao.* —Ed.] If you practice strongly then you can save yourself, your family, your friends and dharma friends—all those closest to you. Because dharma energy is absolute energy, without opposites. It can cut through anything. So we always say, don't-know can cure any sickness. So only try, OK!"

You all probably remember that in 1996 Zen Master Seung Sahn said, "Before the year 2000, big things not happening. After the year 2000, big things happening. After the year 2000, correct-direction people, stronger correct way; wrong-direction people, stronger wrong way."

Then after 9/11, he said, "World War III already begun. Not usual war. Maybe many people fighting for 100 or 200 years. Much, much suffering. People kill each other. Some places have no food. Some places no water; other places too much water. Much pollution and many natural disasters. And disease. Finally human population

down, down, down, until maybe 1 billion people. Then more smooth."

It's no surprise, though very sad, that as a society we have been too shortsighted and greedy, unable to make necessary adjustments to our ideas of "progress" and unlimited economic growth, which have always been untenable and have brought about and sustain our current situation. It has been clear for most of our lifetime. Very sad.

Maybe young people now will drive the necessary changes: everybody reduce their personal needs and practice generosity on a personal and total societal scale. Not likely, huh?

Love, brothers and sisters, is the only way. Leonard Cohen sang, "Love is the only engine of survival." The other kind of survival is animal, not human.

I'm in Malaysia now, and it's raining outside. I hope you are all well!

Warm regards to you all,

Dae Bong ♦