



Water Wheel

Being one with all Buddhas, I turn the water wheel of compassion.

— Gate of Sweet Nectar

A Koan of Forgiving

by Wendy Egyoku Nakao



The backdrop for Case 35 of the Mumonkan is an ancient T'ang Dynasty Chinese novel entitled *The Story of the Separated Soul*. Let's look at this story through the lens of forgiving.

There was an old man named Chokan who had a beautiful daughter named Seijo. He also had a handsome young nephew Ochu. Chokan would often say that Seijo and Ochu would make a fine married couple someday and, in fact, Seijo and Ochu fell in love. One day Chokan announced the betrothal of Seijo to another man. In despair, Ochu left the village by boat and saw Seijo running along the riverbank. They traveled together to a distant city, married, and had two children. Over the years, Seijo was homesick and could not forget her father. Together, she and Ochu decided to return. When they arrived, Ochu himself went to the father's house and humbly apologized and asked for his forgiveness. "What is the meaning of all this?" the father demanded. "After you left, Seijo fell ill and has been in bed ever since." Ochu assured him that he was mistaken and brought Seijo into the house. When she entered, the Seijo ill in bed rose to meet her, and the two became one.

Master Goso asked a monk, "Seijo and her soul are separated. Which is the true Seijo?"

It's been almost two months since I returned from the Bearing Witness Retreat in Rwanda, commemorating the 20th anniversary of the Rwandan genocide. Each Bearing Witness retreat has brought to light an aspect of myself that needed attention. In Auschwitz Berkinau, it was myself as perpetrator. In the Japanese-American concentration camps, it was myself as "other" and "othering." In Rwanda, forgiving. What is forgiving in my life? What needs to be reclaimed?



Rwanda Bearing Witness Retreat (Photo by Aleksandra "Ola" Kwiatkowska)

One evening in Rwanda, we heard testimony from Edward, a perpetrator, and from Allison (not their actual names), his victim. Allison was hiding in a swamp with her baby when Edward and several others attacked her, cutting her face, spearing her through the shoulder, and slicing her baby in two pieces. Edward cut off her right hand. Over a process of many years, Allison forgave Edward, and today he helps her family, and the family members of his other victims, with various tasks as acts of repentance.

Many stories of forgiving involve horrific, life shattering events, but what about the hurts that we inflict on each other in our everyday living? We beat up on ourselves, we

(Continued on page 2)



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 3 The Surface of the Moon by Sensei Kipp Ryodo Hawley
- 5 Sangha Practice of Collective Wisdom by Roshi Egyoku Nakao
- 7 There's More by Bonnie Mysosen Nadzam
- 11 Thank You
- 12 Sangha Rites of Passage

A KOAN OF FORGIVING (*Continued from page 1*)

stop speaking to family members sometimes for generations, we lash out at a co-worker or sangha member, or we withhold support from our partners. What about the so-called lesser offenses in which we gloss over, dismiss or somehow justify the hurt we have caused or are done to us, and simply go on as though nothing had transpired? What about the offenses which other people may not call us on, but we ourselves know we committed?

One of the sources I have been using in my study of forgiveness is *The Book of Forgiving* by Desmond Tutu and his daughter Mpho Tutu. Desmond Tutu led the Truth and Reconciliation process in South Africa at the end of apartheid. The Tutus propose that when we have been hurt, we can choose revenge or healing. The cycles of revenge and healing both start out the same way: a hurt, harm, or loss results in pain and suffering. Do we choose revenge or healing? Whether we are addressing a fresh hurt or a long-standing one, we can choose healing at any time, thereby interrupting the cycle of revenge. Let's not underestimate the power of this choice and its potential for transformation.

What is forgiving in my life? What needs to be reclaimed?

The Tutus set forth a fourfold path of forgiving. The first step is telling the story of what happened so that we can reclaim our dignity and accept that whatever has happened cannot be changed or undone. We reclaim our voice by speaking the truth and the facts. When trauma is severe, the story may take many tellings. Each time, different details and facts emerge. When Edward told his story, he neglected to mention that he had been shot in the leg because he at first refused to take part in the killings. When Allison told her story previously, she neglected to mention her baby. It may help to write out our story and let the facts and circumstances emerge. When we are ready to tell our story to another person, we choose carefully someone who can listen without judgement, acknowledge what happened to us, and empathize with our pain and suffering.

The second step is naming the hurt. We are often tempted to skip this step because naming the hurt means feeling vulnerable. We reclaim our ability to feel the emotions around what happened. Like Seijo lying ill in bed, our emotions around hurtful events are often suppressed and lodged in our bodies or manifest through addiction to drugs, alcohol, or food. To accomplish this step, we may need to learn how to identify and express our emotions and perhaps even learn a new vocabulary for talking about our feelings and naming how we have been hurt.

The third step is granting forgiveness because at this point we recognize and accept our shared humanity with whomever has harmed us. Granting forgiveness does not mean that what happened will somehow be erased, that the gravity of the offense is somehow diminished, that justice no longer needs to be served, or that the perpetrator is magically let off the hook. When we grant forgiveness, we are no longer a victim, and we can tell a new story about how we have released our suffering and moved forward with a sense of freedom and wholeness. In the process of granting forgiveness, we may realize that we need to forgive ourselves as well. Acknowledgement and acceptance are the keys to our transformation. The Tutus say that we know we are healing when we can tell a new story that contains the truth of all the many facets of what happened.

The fourth step is renewing or releasing the relationship. After we have told our story, named the hurt, learned why another person did what they did, and granted forgiveness, then we may be able to create a new relationship with ourself and with the other person. We can look at our own part in the conflict, and we can state what we need from the other person. A new relationship can be created out of our mutual suffering and the recognition and acceptance of our shared humanity. It does not mean that the relationship reverts to how it was before or that the journey of forgiveness is forgotten. When renewing the relationship is not possible or advisable, such as in circumstances where emotional or physical safety is a factor, we may release the relationship and have no further contact.

Just as the journey of forgiving has its own rhythm for each of us, another person may not grant us forgiveness when we ask. Edward told us that he asked for forgiveness of another survivor many times before there was an opening for a conversation. We are not owed forgiveness; however, we can apologize, stay steadfast in attending to our own journey, and keep affirming our shared humanity.

Forgiving is a practice of the heart, not the head. Forgiving loosens the constrictions of our hearts, freeing us to reclaim our dignity and humanity. Like Seijo in the story, we no longer need to suffer because of the separation from ourself and from others. Let's prepare the ground for healing by studying the practice of forgiveness and examining the areas in our life where forgiving may need to take root.

Desmond Tutu and Mpho Tutu, *The Book of Forgiving: The Fourfold Path for Healing Ourselves and Our World*, HarperOne, 2014.

Roshi Egyoku is ZCLA's Abbot & Head Teacher.

The Surface of the Moon

by Kipp Ryodo Hawley



Spiritual teachings are like fingers pointing to the moon. The great teachers tell us this all the time, even as they come up with new fingers to point with.

Master Unmon (Yunmen) once said:

Don't say that I'm deceiving you today! I simply cannot help performing a messy scene in

front of you; what a laughing-stock I'd be if some clear-sighted person were to see me! But right now I cannot avoid this.

*So let me ask you all: What has so far been the matter with you? What do you lack? If I tell you that nothing whatsoever is the matter, then I've already buried you; you yourself must arrive at that realization! **

So, what do we lack? How do we ourselves arrive at the realization that nothing whatsoever is the matter? And, how can telling us that bury us?

It's my experience that all the great teachings, including this one from Unmon, point to the spiritual essence from some particular angle. Using all of them as a group, we can triangulate them and see the one point where they all converge. Like spokes on a wheel that all connect to the same hub from different angles – one hub, many spokes.

Rabbi Hillel famously said to a gentile who asked him to teach the entire Torah in the time he could stand on one foot, "That which is hateful to you, do not do to your neighbor. That is the whole Torah – the rest is commentary. Go and study it." The Torah is vast, but Hillel expressed the essence in one sentence. Very clear pointer, but a pointer nonetheless – it has a distinct angle. Reportedly the gentile converted after hearing this.

Previous to this encounter, the gentile had asked the same question of Rabbi Shammai, Hillel's counterpart at the time. In response, Shammai chased the man away with a measuring stick. Just the way Master Unmon would sometimes drive all his monks out of the hall with his staff. More than just pointing to the moon, these are good, swift kicks in the butt to push us in that direction.

Gathering all these pointers together and triangulating on the goal takes extensive reflection, filtering and sifting the words and actions until the underlying essence is revealed. Rabbi Hillel said, "Go and study [the Torah]." The sooner you start doing the work, the sooner you'll realize it.

We study scriptures in Buddhism, too. Even though our Zen school emphasizes mind-to-mind transmission outside the scriptures, Zen training temples always include a well-stocked library. Scriptures give us a toehold on the spiritual terrain, along with landmarks to help us find our way along the path. But they can become a hindrance if we start relying on them, considering them to be "the truth," rather than the pointers to the Truth they really are. This is how we can get buried by the words.

A strong example of getting "un-buried" is Master Tokusan, who appears often in Zen literature. When we first encounter him, he is a past master at expounding the sutras, most notably the Diamond Sutra. He hears about the Zen school, and as Yamada Roshi said in his book on the Gateless Gate:

According to Buddhist doctrine, an incalculable period of time is necessary for ordinary people to become Buddha. Zen Buddhism says it can happen instantaneously through self-realization. Tokusan thought this was utter nonsense.

"If that is Zen teaching, then Zen is not Buddhism," he reasoned. "It must be the teaching of devils in disguise. I will go south where this teaching is flourishing and destroy it all."

So he packed up his sutras and went on his journey to refute this devilish teaching. But he wound up meeting Master Ryutan, who helped him see through to the source. After experiencing a sudden enlightenment, Tokusan brought his stack of books to the front of the dharma hall and burned them, finally free to directly connect to the essence without relying on the ancient teachings.

Master Tokusan once said: "Our sect has no words; in reality there is no doctrine to be given to mankind." No words, yet we study the sutras rigorously. We seem to need words to bring us to the place where there are no words. All of these words, even the ones that tell us about "no words," fall into what is termed "the secondary." One level abstracted away from reality. Pointers to the moon, not the

Continued on page 4

THE SURFACE OF THE MOON (*Continued from page 3*)

moon itself. Necessary for our development, but still not the essence, not the goal.

How do we realize this for ourselves? How do we transition from studying words to the instantaneous realization of Buddha? Our Zen school has a unique process for doing this – working on koans. When we first encounter them, they may appear to be nothing more than riddles that don't fall into the usual formats of spiritual teachings. "Such-and-such is so-and-so." "Our purpose here is etc., etc." "You will find true happiness by doing A, B and C." We're used to this linear format, where the spiritual question is answered with a conceptual formula. So what happens when we encounter a koan such as "Walk straight on a narrow mountain path with ninety-nine curves"?

What's different about koans is that they aren't fingers pointing at the moon – they put you directly on the moon's surface. No reflection necessary, no deep pondering or parsing of spiritual nuances are needed. Just walk straight on that mountain path and immediately you are there. How's the view?

What's different about koans is that they aren't fingers pointing at the moon.

Some of us are formally working through the many one-liners, quotes from sutras, and full-length cases that make up our koan study system. Some of us are counting our breath, some are just-sitting. Even so, all of us are still koan students in a way. Even when you think you're "just sitting," when you look within, you see mental and emotional currents running in many layers. The deepest of these are generated by a spiritual question you may not even be aware of. This is your natural koan, and you are working on it whether you know it or not.

The formal koans are like etudes in music. Short pieces written to help us master some specific technique and not meant for concert performance. Similarly, each koan zeroes in on some point of dharma that can be very sticky for us. Like practicing difficult chord changes in an etude, working through these koans helps us become fluid and supple where we used to be rigid. Do the chords over and over and they become natural. Penetrate each koan and those dharma points become free and easy.

Many of the cases in our system are there because at one time in the past they were someone's natural koan. All of these cases are useful for us, but you'll find that some will touch your raw nerve – these are the ones with "juice."

They affect you so strongly because they are close to your own natural koan.

But not all of them will. It could very well be that for us in the West that didn't grow up in a Buddha-centric culture, the questions "Does a dog have Buddha Nature or not?" or "What is Buddha?" might not be a compelling issue. But how about "Who am I?" or "Where did all this suffering come from?" How about "Why can't I ever be satisfied?"

When you finally click with a koan, when you feel the juice, you'll understand what Master Mumon meant when he said you'll feel like you've swallowed a red-hot iron ball and can't throw it up. It has such a hold on you, you can't let it go. You work with it over and over and over until you finally give up all your ideas about it and simply open your eyes to see what is True. Not what you think is true, not what anybody else says is true, not what is the opposite of something that is false, but what is actually True right here, right now, one hundred percent free of concepts, opinions and doctrines.

Now you are sitting on the surface of the moon. Smack in the center of the hub of that wheel of spiritual teachings. And your own responses to these questions are now different: "Love thy neighbor as thyself"? It's obvious! Drive everybody away with a stick? What took you so long! "Buddha is nothing but the ordinary mind"? How boring!

Once you've found your way to the moon, you can then begin exploring it. Each koan covers some different territory, and each one requires you to land on the moon once more. You start getting adept at dropping all your previous ideas and thought patterns and waking up in the specific context of the koan.

And the more you connect with your natural koan, the more you see that this is your moon. Now - how much difference is there between your moon and everyone else's moon? When you realize that there is no difference, no sameness, no comparisons at all, Master Unmon will no longer be able to bury you with his words.

**Master Yunmen*, translated by Urs App, Kodansha International, 1944, p. 88.

Sensei Kipp Ryodo Hawley is a teacher at the Westchester Zen Circle.

Sangha Practice of Collective Wisdom

by Wendy Egyoku Nakao

The practice of a Sangha is as vital to cultivating collective wisdom as individual practice is. In the Oct-Dec 2013 Water Wheel, we explored the individual commitments that create conditions in which collective wisdom can arise: not-knowing, self-awareness, and strengthening of relationships. In this article, we explore the key Sangha commitments for the arising of this wisdom.

Zen Master Thich Nhat Hanh said:

The Buddha, Shakyamuni, our teacher, predicted that the next Buddha would be Maitreya, the Buddha of love... It is possible that the next Buddha will not take the form of an individual. The next Buddha may take the form of a community, a community practicing understanding and loving kindness, a community practicing mindful living. And the practice can be carried out as a group, as a city, as a nation. (Inquiring Mind Journal, Spring 1994)

The Sangha – or any group, such as a family, workplace, or community – is a fertile field for the arising of collective wisdom. The Sangha is an organism with its own characteristics and life force. John Ott and Rose Pinard have introduced us to the Scallop Principle to illustrate how the body of a group and its parts are related. A scallop has many small eyes lining the top and bottom of the opening of its shell. Each eye transmits vital information to the scallop and is so important for the scallop's well-being that if an eye dies, another eye grows in its place because without it, the scallop's survival is at risk.

In Buddhism, the Great Compassionate Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva with her many hands and eyes is an apt metaphor for the critical importance of each eye. Each of us is a hand and eye, and we each have our own specific perspective and experience. It is the sum of these parts which comprise the great compassionate Sangha body. The Sangha's vitality, wakefulness, and activity are in direct relationship to the degree of how healthy the functioning of each hand and eye is.

Informed by the collective wisdom work of John and Rose, we can identify four commitments to guide us in sustaining a highly conscious functioning of the Sangha body:

- We orient ourselves to the whole. We hone our ability to see the big picture of the Sangha by educating ourselves about and keenly observing its many facets. With an attitude of not-knowing, we discover new views about the organism by discarding our fixed interpretations and integrating the facts and perspectives that are continually emerging.



- We welcome all that arises. This is the commitment of inclusion, the discovery and acceptance of diversity. The group constantly penetrates the veil of its preferences and assumptions by questioning the status quo and inquiring, “What is alive in the group? What are we excluding? What is wanting to arise?” Each hand and eye is valued for the information it conveys about the one body, regardless of how it might contradict our own story about how things are or should be.
- We nurture the alignment of our common intention. Practitioners who take refuge in the Three Treasures of Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha come together as a group for a very specific purpose. At the Zen Center, our purpose is to help one another awaken and fulfill the Four Great Bodhisattva Vows together. “Do we consistently activate our vows and the heart of awakening?”
- We identify shadow energies. Inevitably, the Sangha organism carries hidden energies resulting from group dynamics and personal behaviors which affect the health of the Sangha. By its very nature, these are difficult to detect even in a highly conscious group. “What is not transparent? What undercurrents exist in the group?”

Can a Sangha wake up together? The practice of creating Sangha and maintaining the organization that sustains it challenges us to live our awakening fully engaged in our relationship to the Sangha body and to its many hands and eyes. Can we as a Sangha operate at a highly conscious level, inviting collective wisdom to arise in service of everyone's well-being and awakening? This is the high ideal that we aspire to.

Reflections on the Rwanda Bearing Witness Retreat

by Betsy Enduring-Vow Brown

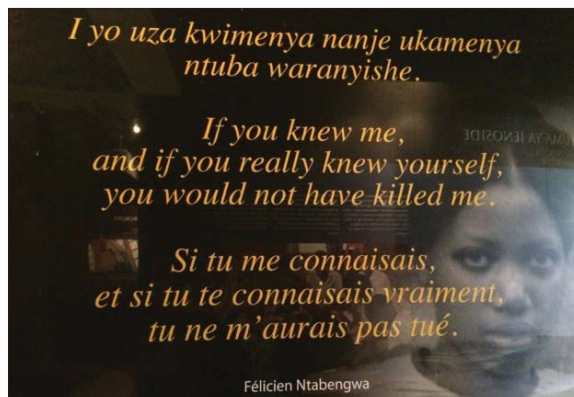
I registered for the 2014 Rwanda retreat despite my strong sense of wariness about going to a place where such brutality occurred. After seeing the movie *Hotel Rwanda* years ago, the image of a pickup truck filled with machete-wielding young men riding in the back entered my psyche as one of the most terrifying sights imaginable. So the thought of actually going to Rwanda was unnerving. In this fear-based projection, I also recognized I held a kind of subtle, arrogant notion that Rwandans were somehow different from me to engage in such brutality. I couldn't truly fathom the atrocities that happened there.

At Nyamata church, I stood looking at rows upon rows of human skulls and bones warehoused in mass graves and yet, my mind couldn't quite grasp the reality before me. The physical space, the torn, blood-soaked clothing now disintegrating on the floors and benches. The hideousness of what occurred there only magnified its incomprehensibility. I picked up a machete, dull and chipped, lying on the altar next to sets of victims' white plastic rosary beads. The suffering and despair I experienced in that church silenced everything. Within the intimacy arose the recognition of this one shared life. It wasn't that I couldn't put my head around it; Rwandans couldn't either, victims or perpetrators. It became clear why it mattered so much to people there that we came to bear witness to their suffering. It is immense and shattering.

I also bore witness to a society doing something equally incomprehensible – collectively



Enduring-Vow and Moses at Ntarama meditation bench.



Poem on display in the Murambi Genocide Museum



Mass graves (above) and skulls (below) at Nyamata.



refusing to carry past pain and wounding as the basis of their identity today. I bore witness to Rwandans not shutting the door on their past nor seeking to dehumanize and forever banish the genocide's perpetrators, but openly and honestly acknowledging, examining, and accepting responsibility for the causes of suffering and insanity that created Rwanda in 1994. I was humbled by the courage and willingness of people to choose wholeness for all Rwandans and not just for some. Rwanda is a great teacher if the student is willing to be shattered.

During the retreat, I met Marie Misukyoa from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), where many of Rwanda's killers fled after the genocide. Mass rape and murder have become the status quo in that country, too. Marie stands in the center of that madness making a difference. She is the executive director of SOFIBEL, a Congolese-based non-profit human rights organization particularly focused on helping women and children. She took a bus from the Congo to be at the retreat. I am now raising funds to bring Marie to the United States so she can meet with the staff at Peace Over Violence to share her experiences and learn from their many years of programs and experience in violence prevention. (More information will be coming about her trip.) If you would like to learn more about SOFIBEL, or to contribute to that effort, please contact me at betsybrown@earthlink.net. Any amount makes a difference and is deeply appreciated. Healing action is possible in the midst of great suffering.

There's More

by Bonnie Myosen Nadzam



*Sangha Arts offers a platform for ZCLA members who are artists to tell how their artistic and Zen practices intertwine. Myosen Nadzam, whose dark and stunning debut novel *Lamb* has won awards and critical acclaim, describes her creative process.*

Writing a story is like heading out into the wilderness alone, with no map, a hunch, and about equal parts doubt and faith. You don't know where you're going. Are you heading into the mountains? To a desert? Will there be bears? Another person? Or ten thousand miles of nothing? And then when do you encounter something – a character, say, with a broken heart and a vendetta, that character, too, is an open, uncharted territory. You no more know this character than you knew what would unfold on the blank page. Every idea that comes into your mind, you have to throw away, or be willing to throw away. Every time you think you know what something means, you're on the wrong track – that's just your ego talking, all pleased with its own cleverness. You have to ignore it, and you can't fake it, or the story won't be any good! So you take one step at a time, left foot right foot, into this unknown country, just as completely open as you can be. Will anything come of it? Will I get anywhere? Will anyone read it? Will anyone care? Doesn't matter, doesn't matter. You just keep going (now there's a phrase we've probably all heard before).

Sometimes – occasionally! – a story works out. You find yourself in a wonderful land, full of the inventory of the world you've created, and send your published pages like a map out to your readers, so they might find their way, too, around this place you've discovered. Then it's like a group of friends have joined you in, say, a wide-open grassland, and they are all camped around you. There are familiar sounds and faces, cooking fires burning, good food, children laughing, the sharp green smell of the tall grass. You feel rich, fat, and happy. People say kind things about you. It's all very alluring, this place. Got it! You want to say. I've arrived!

But as you move among your friends and family, bird-song all around you, the hair goes up on the back of your neck. You feel something pluck the back of your shirt, just between the shoulder blades, as if to say: There's more. Turn around. Look. It's a line of trees – the front-facing wall of a deep, dark wood, about a day's walk away from

the camp. Maybe you stay in the camp another week, or year. But eventually you can't ignore it anymore, and off you go. There's happiness in the camp, but there's deep, burning joy when you're out there journeying. It's like being in sesshin. You hate it. You love it. It's unbearable. It's perfect. It's all for nothing. There is deep purpose. It's a waste of time. It's the only way to spend your time.

I can't help but seek this way, journeying into the unknown, sitting myself before a blank page to pull some character or world out of the shadows with a filament of language. Creation and destruction, like life and death, arise together. There are dark days of doubt and frustration writing a book, or even a ten-page story. It's not unlike the second-to-last day of a sesshin, perhaps, in the fifth sitting period of the day, body full of pain, heart full of doubt, mind full of chatter: I'm no good at this; I should quit; I'd rather be eating pancakes. Pancakes pancakes pancakes. But after finishing a second novel this spring, I started a third. And, two weeks later, God help me! A fourth began to knock at my temple. And I will of course see you all in the zendo again, and again, and again.



On Earth Day 2014, the Brown-Green Group led Sangha members in creating sand paintings of the four elements: Earth, Air, Fire and Water. The results were displayed in the Sangha House and later destroyed as a teaching of impermanence.

Resident Voices: Living at the Zen Center

Interview with Tim Zamora by Deb Faith-Mind Thoresen

FAITH-MIND: What has been your experience living and practicing as a ZCLA resident?

TIM: It's a great opportunity. You can't imagine how living here can change you. One great benefit is learning how to relate to people and not get so caught up in yourself. You're living in a community with like-minded people, and we all have to contribute in many ways; you have to be engaged in and caring for the Zen Center. It can't just be your way. It's not like living alone and making decisions for yourself. Plus you're transparent to others – we're not raised to be so open – but there's no fear of repercussions. All of this creates a space of intimacy.



Nilotpala garden

FAITH-MIND: What was the most difficult aspect of living at the Zen Center?

TIM: For myself, taking on too much. The teachers encouraged me to slow down. I felt I had to volunteer for everything. I had to work on finding the right balance between my work and relationships outside the Zen Center and my life and practice at the Zen Center.

“Having the zendo on the grounds where I live has made it possible for my internal meditation space to be permanently installed. Living at ZCLA is like a big heart I can roam in. Somewhere, I can always find an echo. If I don't have enough arms, someone is there to help me.”

–*Susanna Knittel*



Residents gather for a farewell to two departing residents, Penelope Luminous-Heart Thompson and John Heart-Mirror Trotter.

FAITH-MIND: Living and practicing at the Zen Center means taking on unfamiliar jobs, tasks, and skills. That can be stressful for some people. How about you?

TIM: It was very valuable for me to step out of my comfort zone. It taught me how to work with people, to listen better and be more patient. The Precepts often come up for me, reminding me even in situations at work or with friends and family. They bring me back and keep me grounded. The Days of Reflection are very important. They help keep me grounded and aware in practice. For me, it's an intentional life, a life of integrity. My family has seen the changes. My Mom says I seem happy, peaceful and content.

My parents have been very supportive. And at work, people comment that I'm very calm and easy to work with.

I was very lucky because when I began to practice, my work and life allowed me to really throw myself into the practice for a fair amount of time, to sit all the sesshins and attend everything that was offered. Now as my work has picked up, I don't have as much time, but the beginning was a great foundation.

“Being a residential student is a rewarding commitment for dedicated students and having a supportive sangha and great teachers is an important part of our Zen practice and our vow for awakening. The more you put in, the more you get out.” –*Dylan Neal*

“I am grateful daily for the opportunity to be a resident member of ZCLA. This is a community of seriously committed, kind-hearted, and trustworthy people who work to live the Buddhist precepts in community. My personal challenges quickly became evident in this fishbowl of relationships. As hard as I may try, there is no escaping me. Zazen and meetings with teachers hold a constant mirror to my face. There is great learning and miraculous freedom. I am grateful every day for this gift.” –*Patricia Pfost*

Residential Training Opportunities

We currently have two studio apartments available. The Buddha Hand Circle (BHC) oversees the application and admission process. Interested parties can contact the BHC by emailing programsteward@zcla.org for information and requirements.

The Wisdom Circle Evolves

by Ellen Reigen Ledley and Rosa Ando Martinez



The Zen Center of Los Angeles Wisdom Circle was formed last year with the task of formalizing a process for dealing with grievances in the Sangha should any arise. It has as its mission

the resolution of disagreements or complaints within the ZCLA community. The Circle began meeting to review the existing grievance process then in place. Recently completed, the revised Grievance Procedure was submitted to Marie Fortune of the Faith Trust Institute for review. (The FTI is a multi-faith, multi-cultural organization that provides faith communities with training and consultation regarding sexual and domestic violence.) The Grievance

Procedure must be approved by Roshi Ekyoku and adopted by the ZCLA Board of Directors to become part of the core documents of the Zen Center.

The Wisdom Circle is recommending, within the Grievance Procedure, formal and informal steps for conflict resolution. To facilitate this, guidelines for dialoging in a conflict situation are included as well. Upon approval, the Grievance Procedure will become part of the Zen Center's core documents along with the Mission/Vision, Core Values, Core Practices, and Teachers' Ethics statements. A major focus for the Circle will be to inform and familiarize the Sangha with these documents and procedures.

Longtime members of the Wisdom Circle, which meets bi-monthly, are Rosa Ando Martinez (co-steward), Ellen Reigen Ledley (co-steward), Lorraine Gessho Kumpf, Cliff Shishin Collins, and Mark Shogen Bloodgood.

The Development Circle: Ensuring Our Future

by Darla Myoho Fjeld



The mission of the Development Circle (DC) is to link with community, nurture relationships, secure resources, and to ensure the sustainability of ZCLA. The DC is a committee of the Board of Directors; it sits in the Ratna (Resource) Sphere of the Zen Center's Mandala and is made up of board members and non-board members.

Everyone knows that development involves fundraising, but it involves more than that. Development is about relating funding to the purposes and programs of the Zen Center. Ultimately, it is about growing and sustaining the resources that are necessary for awakening.

To this end, the DC guides three key fundraising strategies: the Annual Appeal, the Dharma Training Fund, and the Legacy Circle, which is made up of people planning to leave bequests to the Zen Center. We are also always on the lookout for foundational funding sources. In addition, the DC is a key Circle in the strategic planning process that the Zen Center is now undergoing. This process will ensure that the Zen Center grows and thrives for years to come.

Thus far this year, the DC, along with members of the Board and staff, has focused on creating a Strategic Plan for the Zen Center's future. We have also been building relationships with donors and making sure that everyone who gives to the Zen Center is thanked for their contribution.

We are presently involved with the Dharma Training Fund Appeal, where we are doing something a little different. Out of respect for the environment and to save on the cost of printing and mailing, we are conducting our appeal electronically, while also giving donors a chance to contribute in person by placing their donations in a DTF envelope in the Sangha House. We have the goal of raising \$10,000.

In the months to come, we will be inviting more people to join our Legacy Circle and to participate in planning and preparations for the Sangha Celebration, to help implement the Zen Center's Strategic Plan, and to conduct the Annual Appeal in conjunction with Ango (our intensive three-month training period).

The Development Circle is open to new members who would like to contribute their wisdom and skills to ensuring that the Zen Center of Los Angeles remains a vital practice place for years to come. Anyone interested in joining the DC should contact Myoho by e-mail at dr.fjeld@gmail.com

ZCLA Board of Directors: Sustaining the Zen Center

by Patti Muso Giggans



The ZCLA Board sits in the Ratna Sphere of equanimity and generosity. The role of the board is to provide oversight for legal and safety issues, support the Abbot, the staff, the teachers and the teachings, and fundamentally make sure that the Zen Center has all the resources it needs. The board is composed of nine members who meet bi-monthly and who view this opportunity to serve in this way as practice. We practice Shared Leadership and

use Council, the Three Tenets, and Guiding Questions as the tools for our Board practice.

The Zen Center is a mature Dharma center and we will be celebrating our 50th anniversary in 2017. As mother

temple for the White Plum Sangha, we hold a very special place in the arc of Buddhism coming to America. We are a thriving sangha with a strong lineage. With this in the forefront of our mind, the board has engaged a process of developing a 5-year strategic plan. We held an all-day board and staff retreat in May and were led through a process by a skilled facilitator. The overarching goal of this process is to develop a plan to strengthen the core work of collective awakening, support the practices of zazen, teaching, and study through ensuring the long-term sustainability of the Zen Center.

While sustaining the Zen Center is the primary role of the board, it is also the shared responsibility of all of us. In the coming months, the Sangha will have an opportunity to engage in this process as we also plan to mark the historic milestone of our 50th anniversary. We look forward to visioning and planning and celebrating with the Sangha.

The Executive Circle: A New Era of Leadership

by Darla Myoho Fjeld

ZCLA's Executive Circle held its final council this past May and has been dissolved. The EC came into existence in the late 1990's out of the spirit of Shared Stewardship to serve as the Zen Center's Collective Executive Director. Over the years, the EC has been instrumental in the healing of past wounds and bringing the Zen Center to where it is today.

About a decade ago, the members put together the following Statement of Purpose:

"In the Ratna Sphere of all-enriching wisdom, the Executive Circle cares for the the Zen Center's resources that hold and nurture the Sangha's practice. We oversee the day-to-day operations, finances, and facilities to support the Center's mission and vision."

Over the past year and a half, the Zen Center has transitioned to a new form of leadership, bringing on Deb Faith-Mind Thoreson and Darla Myoho Fjeld as Temple Co-Directors. This was possible, in part, because of the training they have received through their work on the EC – training that has taught them to take the widest possible view, while at the same time taking good care of the myriad details that arise in the day-to-day operations of the Zen Center. In order not to lose this training aspect of the

work of running the Zen Center, a Temple Co-Director's Circle (name to be determined) will be formed in the near future.

The members of the EC were acknowledged in a leave-taking ceremony held on May 31st. As the most recent Steward of the EC, Myoho wishes to express her deep gratitude to everyone who has served on the EC, to Roshi for her guidance, and to Mary Rios who has been an advisor to the EC for a decade and a half.

Dharma Training Fund

Please join us by giving a gift to support the Dharma Training Fund. Make your donations by going to www.zcla.org/donate

The Legacy Circle

Please consider joining the Legacy Circle by arranging for a bequest or other estate gift to ZCLA. For more information, contact Patti Muso Giggans at patti@peaceoverviolence.org

Your Gifts are Received with a Heartfelt “Thank You!”

The Zen Center is maintained by the hands and eyes of each one of you.

To **Carla Flowing-Mountain Schmitt** for helping to put back the name tags from the Paramita class;
To all our talk recorders: **Ty Jotai Webb, Tom Dharma-Joy Reichert, Reeb Kaizen Venners, Betsy Enduring-Vow Brown, and George Mukei Horner;**

To **Joe Gallagher** for the book donations;
To **James Soshin Thornton** for leading the first Green Order Retreat and giving three talks to the Sangha;

To our fushinzamu kitchen cleaning crew: **Tim Zamora, Darla Myoho Fjeld, Roshi Egyoku Nakao, Nem Etsugen Bajra, Yoko Bajra, Ingeborg Buzan Prochazka, Reeb Kaizen Venners;**

To **Jotai** for stewarding the Day Managers;
To **Myoho** for being tenzo for the Green Order Retreat;

To **Nan Reishin Merritt** and **Tim Zamora** as tenzos for the Council Training workshop;
To **Jared Oshin Seide** and **Alana Mitnick** for leading the March Council Training workshop;
To **Roshi Pat Enkyo O’Hara** for offering a Thursday night teisho ;

To **Brown Green Circle** for leading us in making those fabulous Earth Day sand mandalas;
To **Debbie Ching** for facilitating the board and staff in the all-day Visioning Retreat;

To **Roshi** for leading the Paramita classes;
To **Tara Jiho Sterling, Jessica Oetsu Page, Jonathan Kaigen Levy, and Ellen Reigen Ledley** for being Anjas for the Paramita classes;

To the new members of our flower group: **Reigen, Yoko, Janet KoRen Sager, and Cathy Sammons;**

To **Yudo** for all the extra graphic work he’s done for the Development Circle, the Dharma Training Fund, for the Buddha Hand Circle, and the banner;

To all our parking bodhisattvas: **Dylan Neal, Oetsu, Patricia Pfost, Mak Muan King, and Lorraine Gessho Kumpf;**

To **Mukei** and **Deb Faith-Mind Thoresen** for their work on the new speaker area in the Dharma Hall;

To **Jotai** for all the extra watering of the potted plants and grounds;

To all our Zen Practice 3 & 4 instructors: **Mark Shogen Bloodgood, Jeanne Dokai Dickenson,**

Mukei, Gessho, Rosa Ando Martinez, Dharma-Joy, DeWayne Gojitsu Snodgrass, Penelope Luminous-Heart Thompson, Faith-Mind, and Bill Earth Mirror Corcoran;

To all our Sunday Tenzos and their assistants: **Enduring-Vow, Jane Chen, Etsugen, Yoko, Reishin, Kaizen, Luminous-Heart, Kane Phelps, Charles Duran, Jotai, Susanna Knittel, Laos Onshin Chuman, Tim, Dylan, Daniel Lessler, Nikki Starrett, Mujin Sunim, Bill Ware, Rosa Ando Martinez, Oetsu, Frank Martinez, and Roland Palmer;**

To **Roshi** for leading the Priest Retreat;
To all our photographers seen and unseen: **Roshi, Yudo, Burt Wetanson, Kaizen, Kaigen, and Dharma-Joy;**

To **Jotai** for removing the invasive morning glory plant by the shed;

To the residents who do security check: **Flowing-Mountain, Jolene Beiser, Spencer Hecht, Kaizen, Mukei, Charles, Yudo, Patricia, and Gessho;**

To those who have given Dharma Chats: **The Health Circle, Heart-Mirror, and Tim Vreeland;**

To **Myoho** for creating the Dharma Training Fund letter;

To our altar chidens: **Gary Belton, Butsugen, Burt, Kaizen, Jitsujo, Dylan, Luminous-Heart, Patricia, Jiho, Carla, Mukei, Gemma Cubero, and Gessho;**

To **Sensei Pat Shingetsu Guzy** for scheduling talks and teachers for F2F interviews;

To **Tom Pine-Ocean Cleary** for stewarding the Disaster Preparedness Group;

To **Michael Jishin Fritzen** for donating books to our library;

To **Flowing-Mountain** for delivering donated food from the Gate of Sweet Nectar service to the food bank;

To all our Zazen kai tenzos and their assistants: **Kim Kimu DeBacco, Yudo, Tim, Diane True-Joy Fazio, Kaizen, and Myoho;**

To all our Day of Reflection people who prepared the Saturday snack: **Senshin, Luminous-Heart, Nan, and Dharma-Joy;**

To **Kimu** and **Gessho** for preparing lunch for Tangaryo;

To **Jiho** and **Heart-Mirror** for their service at helping in the bookstore ■



Butsugen “always” doing dishes.



Nikki Starrett, tenzo for Sunday lunch.



Jane Chen busy at the stove cooking our Sunday lunch.

ZCLA Affiliated Groups

The Lincroft Zen Sangha (NJ)

led by Sensei Merle Kodo Boyd

The Monday Night Meditation Group (Pasadena, CA)

coordinated by Betty Jiei Cole

The Ocean Moon Sangha (Santa Monica, CA)

led by Sensei John Daishin Buksbazen

The San Luis Obispo Sitting Group (CA)

coordinated by Mark Shogen Bloodgood

The Valley Sangha (Woodland Hills, CA)

led by Sensei Patricia Shingetsu Guzy

The Westchester Zen Circle (CA)

led by Sensei Kipp Ryodo Hawley

The Boundless Mind Sangha (Santa Barbara, CA)

led by Sensei Gary Koan Janka

Contact info@zcla.org for information.

The *Water Wheel* is published by the Zen Center of Los Angeles, Great Dragon Mountain / Buddha Essence Temple, which was founded by the late Taizan Maezumi Roshi in 1967.

Our mission is to know the Self, maintain the precepts, and serve others. We provide the teaching, training, and transmission of Zen Buddhism. **Our vision** is an enlightened world free of suffering, in which all beings live in harmony, everyone has enough, deep wisdom is realized, and compassion flows unhindered.

Founding Abbot: Taizan Maezumi Roshi

Abbot 1995-1999: Roshi Bernard Glassman

Abbot: Roshi Wendy Egyoku Nakao

Staff: Deb Faith-Mind Thoresen, *Co-Temple Director*; Darla Myoho Fjeld, *Co-Temple Director*; Mary Rios, *Business Manager*; *Guest Steward*, Office Assistant to Roshi Egyoku; Ty Jotai Webb, *IT Steward*; Robert Diaz, *Facilities Manager*. *Water Wheel: Editor:* Burt Wetanson; *Production Artist*, Tom Yudo Burger; *Proofreaders for this issue:* Sensei Ensho Berge, Bonnie Myosen Nadzam and Ty Jotai Webb; *Photographers for this issue:* Roshi Egyoku and Tom Yudo Burger.

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Sangha Rites of Passage

Welcome New Members

Ryan Emslie	Ingeborg Buzan Prochazka
Bob Goldberg	Robert Dokan Sandberg
Eleanor Heaphy	Susan Seeck
Spencer Hecht	Tim Vreeland
Frank Martinez	Bill Ware
Sarah McCarron	David Weinman
Shawn Shaon Nichols	Chris Wilson
Kane Phelps	Larry Zempel

Welcome New Residents

Hilda Bolden
Spencer Hecht
Gabriel Lucero

Shared Stewardship Entering

Photography Group Steward

Nan Reishin Merritt

Day Manager Steward

Deb Faith-Mind Thoresen

Altar Flower Circle Group

Yoko Bajra, Tina Jitsujo Gauthier, Diane Enju Katz,
Lorraine Gessho Kumpf, Ellen Reigen Ledley,
Janet KoRen Sager, Cathy Sammons,
Penelope Luminous-Heart Thompson,
Nina Reiju Wasserman, Pat Way

Shared Stewardship Leave-Taking

Day Manager Steward

Ty Jotai Webb

Photography Group Steward

Reeb Kaizen Venners

Executive Circle Steward

Darla Myoho Fjeld

Altar Flowers Group Member

Gemma Cubero

Development Circle Member

Cassie Riger

Resident Leave-Taking

Betsy Enduring-Vow Brown
Gemma Cubero
Penelope Luminous-Heart Thompson
John Heart-Mirror Trotter