



Berkeley Zen Center



January 2003 Newsletter

Save the Date!... April 12, Early Afternoon!

- Huge Sangha Celebration of BZC's Founding 36 Years Ago.
- Ritual burning of recently paid off mortgages.
- Brunch immediately following the morning program celebrating Buddha's Birthday.
- Founding members from Dwight Way will be special guests.
- Details to follow but save the date now!

Welcome to new Members, John and Louise Rasmussen. Welcome to new Residents, Ann Greenwater and Mark Ray.

Also the following friends have changed to members: Brian Blix, Paul Cotton, Linda Hess, Marie Hopper, Ken Knabb, Peter Overton, Kent Welsh.



Reminder re: Members and Friends....

The Members and Friends categories are not based on financial contribution. The Friend category is intended for people who want to support Berkeley Zen Center, but for whatever reason (like physical distance, for instance), can't or don't practice regularly at the zendo. The Member category is for anyone who

practices regularly at the zendo (once a day, once a week, once a month), regardless of his or her capability for financial contribution. It is Berkeley Zen Center's policy that everyone who wishes to practice, be welcomed and encouraged to practice as Members, regardless of financial situation. So if you practice at BZC, pay what you can and be a Member. And if you don't come to practice, or can't, but wish to support the practice of others, be a Friend.

If you wish to change from a Friend to a Member, or vice versa, please leave a note for the Office Manager in the Community Room mail slot.



January & February Schedule

Founders Ceremony
Thursday, 1-2, 6:40pm
Friday, 1-3, 6:40am

One-Day Sitting
Saturday, 1-11, 5am to 9:10pm

Bodhisattva Ceremony
Saturday, 1-18, 9:30am

Kanzeon Sitting
Sunday, 1-26

Half-Day Sitting
Saturday, 2-1, noon to 4pm

Founders Ceremony
Monday, 2-3, 6:40pm
Tuesday, 2-4, 6:40am

Three-Day Sitting
Saturday, 2-15 through Monday, 2-17

Buddha's Parinirvana Ceremony
Saturday, 2-15

Bodhisattva Ceremony
Saturday, 2-16, 9:30am



Saturday Childcare

Childcare is offered on Saturdays from 9:15 to 11:15. The cost is \$5 per family. Note that the childcare schedule is tentative. Childcare is not offered if no one's planning to come, so please call Laurie the Thursday before to let us know if you're hoping to attend. For more information, call Laurie Senauke, 845-2215.

Jan 4	Childcare
Jan 11	No program
Jan 18	TBA
Jan 25	Kidzendo
Feb 1	Childcare
Feb 8	Childcare
Feb 15	No program
Feb 22	Kidzendo
March 1	Childcare
March 8	Childcare
March 15	Childcare
March 22	Kidzendo
March 29	Childcare



Affirmation of Welcome

Walking the path of liberation, we express our intimate connection with all beings. Welcoming diversity, here at Berkeley Zen Center the practice of Zazen is available to people of every race, nationality, class, gender, sexual orientation, age, and physical ability. May all beings realize their true nature.

Lecture by Sojun Roshi

Commentary on the *Enmei Jukko Kannon Gyo*

Enmei in the title means something like “eternal,” but eternal is not such an accurate word in Buddhism. Something like endless dimensions without beginning or end may be more accurate. Or we could say, unlimited life, eternal life, boundless life. *Jukku* (or *jikku*) means “ten phrases.” *Kannon* is Japanese for Avalokiteshvara or Kwan-yin, which is Chinese. *Gyo* is “sutra.” So, the title is “Endless dimension, ten phrases, Avalokiteshvara sutra.” Endless dimension also has the meaning of endless dimensions in the moment. If there is no beginning or no end, then this moment has, as Dogen says, its own past and future, its own endless dimension. We tend to think of this moment as one speck of time, one fleeting moment of time, but we also have to understand this moment as covering or including all time and all space. Extending life is the same as when we talk about no-birth, no-death – birth, death and no-birth, no-death in endless dimensions.

Here are explanations of the ten phrases:

1) **Kanzeon:** To evoke *Kanzeon* is to call forth the spirit of compassion. Each one of the ten phrases expresses our compassionate practice from a particular standpoint. *Kanzeon*, one might say, is our compassionate heart. It’s our unlimited, universal, compassionate heart. *Kan* has the feeling of penetrating, illuminating, piercing through or totally understanding. *Ze* means “world” and *on* is “sound.” So, *Kanzeon* is the one who hears the sounds of the world or the cries of the world and doesn’t ignore the suffering of the world. Sound here also can stand for sight or touch or taste or any sense. Avalokiteshvara is probably the most popular Bodhisattva and is given many human qualities. I think *Kanzeon* personifies what I like to think of as our humaneness, as distinct from our wisdom, which is Manjushri. Manjushri sees with a clear, cold eye, and Avalokiteshvara sees with a vast, warm heart. The balance or synthesis of the two is Buddha. So on one side of the altar we have Manjushri who personifies wisdom beyond wisdom, seeing everything just as it is without any distortion, and on the other side, we have Avalokiteshvara who personifies compassion. In between we have Buddha. Each one is a Bodhisattva who represents a different aspect of our nature. Since these are not idols but personifications, having these figures on our altar is a way we respect aspects of our own nature. Similarly, when we bow, we don’t worship something in particular, but we greatly respect these aspects of our nature. When we offer incense and chant the sutra, we invite the spirit of *Kanzeon* to join our practice. We evoke something from within ourselves. So the sutra is dedicated to *Kanzeon*.

2) **Namu Butsu:** *Namu* is sometimes translated as “Homage.” *Butsu* is Buddha. So, the phrase is “Homage to Buddha.” When we say, “pay homage,” it may seem like a vassal paying homage to a lord, and to see ourselves and Buddha in that way may be okay, but to translate *Namu* as “at one with” is another way of expressing that feeling. Not “Buddha is over there and I’m over here,” but “one with Buddha.” We use the word “atone” sometimes, and we think of atonement as penitence. The word has taken on that meaning. But atonement means to be at one, to return to oneness, or return to completion. It is what we do to be at one with “wholeness” or “holiness.” Whatever is necessary to be at one with Buddha is what we have to do. We can call it “at-one-ment” or atonement. Actually, *zazen* is atonement. You don’t have to make a fuss, just sit. So *Namu Butsu* really means at one with Buddha.

3) **Yo Butsu u in:** *Yo* means “with,” and *Butsu* is Buddha, and *in* means “direct cause,” or “fundamental cause,” or “seed cause.” In this phrase, we have *in* and in the next phrase, *en*. *In* means “direct” and *en* means “indirect” or “supporting.” This third phrase has the meaning of, “this very nature is Buddha, directly Buddha.” There are three ways of talking about Buddha nature. One is called *Ryo in Bussho*. *Ryo* means to realize; it means the capacity to realize our Buddha nature. *Bussho* means fundamentally, Buddha nature, Dharmakaya or, we are that. *En*

means through participating, or cooperating cause we can realize it. The seed is a direct cause for a plant. This is *in*. Sun, water, air, heat and so forth are cooperating causes, or *en*. Direct cause, or *in*, is the absolute fundamental factor of what we are, and *en*, or indirect cause, is what we have to manifest to realize it. *In* is kind of like your original face.

4) **Yo Butsu u en:** As I said, *en* means "indirect cause." So the third and fourth phrase go together. We have a direct cause for Buddhahood and also an indirect cause. The contributory cause is like a catalyst. Practice is like the water and the sun that causes the seed to sprout. *En* is rubbing the flint to create a spark or we can also call it the condition. *In en* is another term. *Inen* as the combination of *in* and *en* means "karma." When we have a volitional action which causes something to move, that's called karmic activity. That karmic activity is activity within emptiness or *ku*. *Inen* is constantly creating forms in emptiness. So, how we direct our effort is important. The basis of Buddhist morality is that you reap the fruit of your own action. If you do something unwholesome, then unwholesomeness follows. And if you do something wholesome, unwholesomeness follows. We're responsible for whatever we do and we share responsibility for the world. Some people think of Buddhism as fatalism because we don't talk about God or God's judgment. But instead of judgment, we understand the results of our actions as a kind of retribution according to the laws of karma.

5) **Bu po so en:** This phrase uses the same *en* as before, meaning indirect or cooperating cause. *Bu* is "Buddha." *Po* is "Dharma." *So* is "Sangha." Buddha, Dharma, Sangha, the Three Treasures are also a cooperating cause for understanding our Buddha nature, or for being one with our Buddha nature. The Three Treasures evoke our Buddha nature and cause us to remember our original face.

6) **Jo raku ga jo:** *Jo* here is another word for "permanent," or "eternal," or "endless dimension." *Raku* is "happiness" or "joy." *Ga* is "self" and *jo* is "purity." This has the feeling of, "in purity we have eternal joy of ourselves, or endless dimensions of enjoying our self-nature." I would say, "self-joyous samadhi." When we are one with our original nature, when we let drop body and mind and become one with truth, no matter what happens to us, we have joy and purity. So the sixth phrase has the sense of pure joy, self-joyous samadhi, which extends to everyone, and is not separate from anyone.

7) **Cho nen Kanzeon:** *Cho* is "morning." *Nen* is an important word. It means "mind," or individual consciousness, or our conscious thought. This phrase has the meaning of, "in the morning put your thought on *Kanzeon*." That is, put your undistracted thought on *Kanzeon*, or evoke *Kanzeon*. Bring *Kanzeon* to life. Don't neglect *Kanzeon*. *Nen* is like the conscious thought of this moment. There are different kinds or degrees of *nen*. There is the *nen* of this moment and there is the *nen*, which takes a step back and contemplates. The first *nen* is one with activity, without reflection, just direct perception. The second *nen* is when we reflect on something and try to identify it by thought or think about it. And the third *nen* is taking another step back and developing what the second *nen* has thought about the first *nen*. All these *nen* thoughts are important, but when we sit zazen, we are concentrated in the first *nen*, just direct perception moment by moment. So in the morning, just let your *nen* thought become completely with *Kanzeon*.

8) **Bo nen Kanzeon:** *Bo* means "evening." In the evening, let your *nen* thought be on *Kanzeon*. Together, these last two phrases mean, "moment by moment, be one with *Kanzeon*."

9) **Nen nen ju shin ki:** Thought after thought, conscious thought after conscious thought. *Ju* means "follow." Thought following thought. *Shin* is "mind" and *ki* is "arrived." Each thought which follows upon the last is no other than *shin*, which is big mind, all-inclusive mind. We can say Buddha nature, or universal mind. In this sense, *shin* is used to complement thought. So sometimes we call Buddha nature mind only. There are many ways of expressing it. Here our individual small mind is not separate from Big Mind and is actually an expression of Big Mind.

10) **Nen nen fu ri shin:** This complements the previous phrase. Again, it's *nen nen*. *Fu* means "not," and *ri* is "separate," and *shin* is "mind" again. This is just saying it in a different way. These

two phrases go together. Thought after thought arises from Big Mind; thought after thought is not separate from this Mind, meaning *Kanzeon* is not separate from you or I or Big Mind -- the mind of the universe.

Student: Where does the sutra come from?

Sojun: Sutras are supposed to come from India.

Student: What does the word "sutra" mean?

Sojun: Sutra means the word of Buddha. It comes from the Sanskrit root "suture," which means to sew or string together. Buddha's words strung together is the meaning. In Buddhism, a sutra is Buddha's very own words, but that has a very broad meaning because Shakyamuni Buddha's words were not written down until four hundred years after his parinirvana. It was a kind of oral tradition. In Buddhism what people recognize as being authentic is not necessarily something from Shakyamuni's mouth. We talk about Dharmakaya Buddha, Sambhogakaya Buddha, Nirmanakaya Buddha. Nirmanakaya Buddha is a person like Shakyamuni Buddha, a person who is a personification of Buddha. Sambhogakaya is more the spirit of Buddha. That's not a complete explanation. But sutras can be an expression of Sambhogakaya, the spirit of Buddha. It's Buddha, but it's not the Nirmanakaya, the person. And Dharmakaya covers everything both manifest and un-manifest. So people come to accept some sutras as authentic, not from Buddha's mouth, but authentic in that they arise from the spirit of truth.

Kannon manifests in many forms to help people. Sometimes as a prostitute, sometimes as a bartender or a taxi driver, a minister or statesman. If you try to pin Avalokiteshvara down to one form, you can't do it. Avalokiteshvara is always being called forth from emptiness. So you can say that *Kannon* or compassionate nature has no beginning or end. That's endless dimension.

Student: Is it ever appropriate to withhold compassion?

Sojun: I hesitate to say never about anything. What is necessary is to do the appropriate thing, and we don't always know what that is beforehand. If you have some rule and try to stick to it, you're creating inflexibility. So I would say that sometimes it's appropriate to withhold it. I don't know when. Don't ask me when. It's like, "should you never tell a lie?" Sometimes you have to tell an untruth. Don't ask me when. But you'll know when.

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