



# Berkeley Zen Center



April 2003 Newsletter

**Reminder...Sangha 36<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration And Buddha's Birthday is scheduled for April 5<sup>th</sup>.** Check April newsletter or community bulletin board for details.



**Practice Period...** Our annual practice period will begin Saturday, May 10 and last through Sunday, June 22. Sojun Roshi invites everyone to increase their commitment to practice during this period while still minding those obligations "outside the gate."

Ekai Uji/Cherishing Ocean-Being Time Laurie Senauke will be Shuso/Head Student this year, sharing Sojun Roshi's seat as an example for all of us. For more on practice period, see the insert inside the newsletter.



**Hurray...** Rebecca Mayeno's acclaimed **Buddhist Sculpture Workshop and Day-of-Clay** is again available for children who bring an adult and for adults alone. Scheduled for **Saturday, May 24, 9 am to 3:30 pm**, it will be held at the Berkeley Buddhist Monastery, a larger venue than BZC. The workshop includes a slide lecture on Buddhist sculpture and hands-on work with clay to create your own Buddhist image. Be sure to dress for the clay mess. Watch the BZC bulletin board for more information and to sign-up; space will be limited.



**Mountains and Rivers Sesshin...** Our next Mountains and Rivers Sesshin will take place at Point Reyes Saturday-Sunday, April 26-27. It's an inspiring and invigorating combination

of morning and evening zazen with moderate hiking in silence during the day. Everyone is encouraged to try it. Sojun Roshi will be leading the sesshin.

Information and signup sheet will be posted on the zendo bulletin board. If you have any questions, please call Richard Haefele at 524-5670 or Walter Kieser at 925-283-5867.

## April & May Schedule

Founders Ceremony  
Thursday, 4-3, 6:20pm  
Friday, 4-4, 6:40am

Buddha's Birthday and  
BZC Anniversary Celebration  
Saturday, 4-5

Bodhisattva Ceremony  
Saturday, 4-19, 9:30am

One-Day Sitting  
Saturday, 4-19, 5am to 9:10pm

Mountains and Rivers  
Saturday 4-26 through Sunday, 4-27

One-Day Sitting/  
Open Practice Period  
Saturday, 5-10, 5am to 9:10pm

Kanzeon Sitting  
Sunday, 5-25

Founders Ceremony  
Monday, 5-5, 6:20pm  
Tuesday, 5-6, 6:40am

Bodhisattva Ceremony  
Saturday, 5-17, 9:30am

---

**Gasshos...** Many thanks to Mark Boydston for his long and successful tenure as Saturday Director and welcome to new co-Saturday director Kellie Hobbs. Also gasshos to Gary Artim who steps down from his position as Newsletter Distributor and welcome to new Distributor Maggie Vashel.



**A note on scheduling activities at**

**BZC...** The good news is that our community is strong and active; the bad news is we are having conflicts scheduling use of the Zendo and Community Room. Often the Community Room is being used just about every night of the week. For instance, one week recently, there was a dharma group on Monday; the regular residents' dinner on Tuesday; on Wednesday, the regular "drop-in" dharma group as well as a sewing class; and on Thursday, a class. One time a wedding was scheduled with the expectation that the Community Room could be used, but the Community Room had previously been scheduled for another function. The calendar in the Kitchen is our way of keeping track of when and who has reserved either the Zendo or Community room. Richard Haefele, as our coordinator, is responsible for keeping track of the schedule, so before you put your request on the calendar, it should be reviewed with him. Richard will help workout conflicts, priorities and scheduling collisions. When adding an event to the calendar, please specify the time range required, the facility needed (CR for community room, Z for zendo), and be sure to add a contact person in case problems arise. Make sure that a previous event is not scheduled for the same time and location. Finally, if you need items such as tables, chair, kitchen supplies for an event, don't assume that these are available, another event may also need them.



**Slide Show...** A slide show, documenting the trip many from BZC made to the 750 Years of Dogen's Teaching Celebration in Japan last year, will be held on **May 8th at 7:30pm**. Make sure to check the community bulletin board for more details.



**Change...** The meeting to discuss a dharma seminar with Mary Mocine for intermediate and advanced students must be postponed from **April 12 to May 3**. It will be at **12:**after the Saturday program. Please bring a bag lunch.



**Class:...Introduction to Zen...Starting April 10, 7:30 to 9:00, and continuing for 4 weeks through May 1**, this class will explore the roots of Zen in early Mahayana, and continue studying our Chan and Zen ancestors through China and Japan up to the present. It is appropriate for beginning and advanced students. Class instructors are Ross Blum and Laurie Senauke. Cost for the four weeks is \$20; watch for the sign-up on the bulletin board.



**Who Paints?...** Find out at a Watercolor Workshop at BZC. No previous art experience necessary. Have fun, focus attention, bring forth an image related to the Buddha Way. Class limit is 10 adults. Materials to be supplied. **Sunday, April 22, 1-4 pm** in the Community Room. Cost is \$20. Look for the sign-up on the community bulletin board and if you have any **questions call Moffett Hall at 527-9964**.



---

---

# Lecture by Sojun Roshi

## **Buddhism and War The Six Realms and What Bodhisattvas Do in Each One**

March 22, 2003

In the last few days, there's been a big change. The war has already begun. How does that affect everyone's attitude? That's a good question. Before the war there was a lot of protest. I don't think anyone ever thought that protest would change the fact that there was going to be war. It would have been very naive to think that would happen. Some people might think, "What's the use of protesting, if it's not going to change anything, or if it's not going to change the fact that there will be a war?" But that's not the only reason that people protest. This war is just the present focus, one little dot on the big map. The desire to bring peace to the world and maintain peace in the world is an on-going, endless effort. When the specter of war and aggression arises, then the people who want peace show their faces. It looks like there's an effort to do something to stop this particular incident. That's not untrue, but that's not all that it's about. It's about continuously making an effort to bring peace into the world. It doesn't change with circumstances. I think that's something that is very important to remember.

Since this war has started, the emphasis has changed. There needs to be some adjustment in how people approach this. So I thought I would talk about our current situation from the point of view of a Buddhist, or simply from the view of a person of conscience. How do we actually save the world? How do we save society? Our four vows as Buddhists are to save society and everyone in the world from suffering and confusion. There is a lot of suffering and a lot of confusion. If we keep that in mind it allows us to take the emphasis off of blaming people. There is blame enough to go around everywhere. But that isn't where we should focus. Instead, we should ask, how do we preserve our integrity? How do we actually bring peace and non-violence into a situation? It's easy to remain focused on the faults of others. But how do we see ourselves? What are we doing and how can we actually bring something positive into the world? The more attention we give to that, the more we see that there are others all around the world who are doing the same. Right now there's a huge groundswell of dissent.

I want to talk about this, using the Buddhist Wheel of Life. If you're familiar with the Buddhist Wheel of Life, you will recall that it's a circle with the twelve-fold chain of causation around the perimeter. The inside of the wheel is divided into the six worlds: the heavenly realm, the fighting demon realm, the animal realm, the hell realm, the hungry ghost realm, and the human realm. And inside the center is the hub, and the whole thing turns on this hub. The three bearings of the hub are the pig, the serpent, and the rooster, which stand for greed, ill will and delusion. The whole business, the whole wheel, revolves around greed, ill will and delusion. How do we introduce something different? How do we introduce a different hub so that the wheel turns on generosity, goodwill, and enlightenment?

What we need is a regime change. [Laughter.] In the six worlds, at the top is the heavenly realm and at the bottom, the hell realm. In between, there's the fighting demon realm, the animal realm, the human realm, and the hungry ghost realm—the pretas. The heavenly realm is usually called the realm of the Gods where one enjoys a wonderful life of extraordinary comfort. In human terms, it's the realm where people have everything they want. Or, everything that they think they want. They don't have to worry, they don't have to work, they don't have to mingle with poor people or even pay attention to the fact that there's misery in the world. This is like where Shakyamuni was when he was growing up. His father wanted to keep him from having any contact with the suffering of the world. So he created a kind of heavenly realm where Siddhartha could play all day long. Siddhartha had everything that his father wanted him to have, but he eventually became dissatisfied with it and began his pilgrimage. He entered a long period of practice which came to fruition in his enlightenment. In any case, if you are in the heavenly realm, you want to stay there forever, but it doesn't last. Your karma might bring you there, but invariably when your karmic effect runs out of steam, you migrate into another realm.

Another realm is the fighting demon realm, also known as the realm of the Asuras. The Asuras take satisfaction in creating disturbance, chaos and war. They are the warrior types. In the present situation, it is the warriors who are impatient to roll. War clouds have gathered and they are bringing forth a reign of terror.

I will speak more about the other realms later. Now though I want to point out that in each one of these six realms is a Bodhisattva. What is the place of the Bodhisattva in each one of these realms? The place of the Bodhisattva in each one of these realms is to educate people, to enlighten people, to make them aware of nirvana, of cooling it, of cooling off, and teaching that satisfaction can be found in peaceful harmonious co-existence. That is the role of the Bodhisattva in each one of these worlds. And as a Bodhisattva, as a Zen student, we find ourselves in these worlds. How can you find your place as a

---

---

Bodhisattva in the heavenly realm, or the fighting demon realm, which is where our attention is at the moment? In the heavenly realm, the Bodhisattva teaches meditation which seems to be the easiest way for the people in the heavenly realm to find their Buddha nature. In the fighting demon realm, it's morality, or the precepts. The Bodhisattva teaches precepts. Don't willfully take life. Don't take what's not given, don't be untruthful, don't harbor ill will, and so forth.

I was listening to an interview on TV yesterday. Of course, every TV station has the war on. In this case, the interviewer was interviewing some pilots. The interviewer was asking, "What do you think about when you're up there dropping bombs on people?" The interviewer didn't say this exactly but that's what he meant. "What was it like up there in this fantastic firestorm. How did you feel about it?" And the pilot said, "It was a great experience, I'll never forget this experience." Then interviewer said, "But what do you feel about it?" And the pilot kept avoiding actually examining his feelings about it. The interviewer again said, "Well, what do you really feel about it?" And finally, the pilot paused for a moment, as if he got it, and then composing himself, went on, "Well it was a experience I'll never forget". But it's like a video game for the pilots. To actually allow yourself to think that there are people down there that you're killing is very difficult to do. There was another pilot they interviewed. And that's kind of what he said. He said, "Well, you know, it's so quiet and you drop the bomb and everything is so smooth and you're away before even the bomb drops so you don't even see the effect of what you did." The interviewer said, "Well, what do you feel about dropping that bomb?" And the pilot responded, "Well, well I..." He couldn't answer. If you are in that position, and you think about what you're really doing, what the effect of what you're doing, it could cause doubt which could be a problem. These wonderful young men are the cream of the crop. But I believe they're programmed to not think about what they are actually doing.

I heard Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld and the President say how sorry they were for the Marines that have been killed, how they would write letters to all the marines' families. But I thought, "Why not write a letter to each one of the Iraqi families, apologizing for killing their relatives?" That would be a great act of nobility. A great act of morality and evenhandedness. War is an immoral act, in itself. And there is actually some question and debate in the world about whether or not war should just be outlawed. Short of that there is the question of the legitimacy of "preemptive" war. When one nation is so powerful and imposes its will, it creates disharmony and suffering for the whole world, for the whole body. The world is one body and must learn to control and harmonize all its parts. Each nation must learn how to submit itself to the whole.

Those caught up in the fighting demons realm can transform their behavior by paying attention to precepts and morality. This is what the bodhisattva teaches in this world. Don't steal. Don't take something that's not given. Don't lie. I mean, don't lie? Lying seems to be at the basis of the whole thing. They said, "Going to war is the last thing we want to do." That seems like the biggest lie of all.

The animal realm is where our animal instincts prevail. We just pay attention to satisfying our bodily needs. Instead of applying our capacity for critical thinking, we run with the herd, exploit the land, our resources, and stay completely engrossed in material satisfaction. The Bodhisattva in the animal realm teaches people Prajna Paramita. The perfection of wisdom. This is what people lack. In this realm, the Bodhisattva teaches that form is emptiness and emptiness is form.

The hell realm, of course, is a realm of our own making. Heaven and hell are the two opposites. In the hell realm, we're punished for our transgressions. We suffer the consequences of our own karma from beginningless greed, ill will, and delusion. We can make this a world of hell, or whatever we want it to be. Heaven and hell are earthly realms created by our very own actions and thoughts. Right now were making it hell for a lot of people. In this realm, the Bodhisattva teaches patience.

Then there's the hungry ghost realm. This is the realm of greed, where we can never have enough. The folks here have huge stomachs and narrow necks and are always hungry and can never get enough. I feel sorry for our industrialists, and our administration, because they are mired in poverty. The wealthiest people are mired in poverty because they can never have enough. This is true poverty. You just don't have enough. The wealthiest person I know has a robe and a bowl and is perfectly content. Those who can never have enough are the poor people. In a way I feel sorry for them. But since they are driven by avarice, they don't realize how they are hooked. The craving for wealth, the craving for power, the craving for recognition, all of these cravings are captivating. They become habits that are hard to break. Especially the craving for power. It is the most captivating and hardest to let go of.

So the Bodhisattva in this realm has to teach letting go and generosity. One of the qualities of an enlightened person, is how to be easily satisfied. This is hard in our culture where we keep pushing the envelope so that whenever we make some advancement in the so-called standard of living, we have to keep upping the ante. Then we have to keep stealing more and more from the rest of the world. We have the poorest standard of living in the world but we think it's the highest. The reason it's the poorest is because it needs to feed itself by draining the rest of the world. This keeps driving the desire for more, which keeps driving the wheel of domination, which drives the wheel of war. We have to look at ourselves, "How much do I need?" That's the bottom line. We're all hungry ghosts, big tummies with a great demand for more. But we have

---

---

narrow tiny throats--we can't get enough. As the world becomes more complex, we need to have more information, we need to have more conveniences, we need to have bigger cars, we need to have all this equipment.

I was making a sandwich the other day and I realized that in order to make a sandwich, I had to go to this big box that keeps things cold, take out the bread which is wrapped up in a bag which has a tie on it, then take some mustard out of the refrigerator, then take something out of the freezer...then get an onion and then get a tomato and then get some lettuce and on and on and on and on, just to make this little thing that I'm going to put on a plate and eat. I think about how much energy went into creating those things and bringing those things to this place so I could have a little sandwich. That's just one example. If you go into your garage, if you have one, what's in there? [Laughter] Think about it. It just keeps coming and coming. There's a never-ending stream of stuff we think we need that maybe we don't. But this drives the engine. Drives the economy. The economy has evolved in such a way that if the stream is not happening, the whole thing starts coming apart. As Bodhisattvas, how do we deal with just our own greed much less deal with the greed of the world around us? It has to start here. We must try to let go of our greed and our "necessities."

Then there's the world of human beings. The human realm is humanity caught up in greed, hate and delusion; all of these worlds coalesce in the human being. They are the human world. The human world is also the world of salvation. It's the highest. So people say, "Well, what does it mean to be a Buddha? What is the end or goal of practice?" The goal of practice is just to be a real human being. A true human being, able to deal with greed, able to deal with ill will, able to deal with delusion. I don't want to say, "free of." Few human beings are free of it. Greed is something that we will always be dealing with. We might say, "Well, at some point when I'm enlightened, I will no longer feel greed. Or I'll no longer feel ill will, or I'll no longer feel delusion." But that's not it. When you're enlightened, you realize that you are greedy. You understand your greed and understand what causes it. You understand how to relate to it. You are always aware. When you're enlightened, you understand your own ill will. It's not that you don't have it, but you make some effort to deal with it and not let it get out of hand. You make an effort to disarm it so that it's not harmful. Same with delusion. When you're enlightened, you realize how deluded you are. To be enlightened means to understand and realize your own delusion. It's not, "I will never be deluded because I'm enlightened." It's, "Because I am enlightened, I understand that I will always be deluded. If you think, "I have no delusion," then you're not enlightened. That's really being sunk deeply in delusion.

How do we work with greed, ill will, and delusion? That's the point. When we work on our own greed, ill will and delusion, it can have an effect on other people, it can help the people around us because it influences other people to do the same. Bringing peace to the world is not an easy thing, it means always working on yourself. That's our practice. How do I save all sentient beings? Start with this one. That's primary. To actually work on the sentient beings of your own mind is to save all sentient beings. The Bodhisattva in the human realm encourages people to exert effort in seeking the Ring of the way.

These are the six worlds between which we constantly transmigrate. Sometimes we're a fighting demon, sometimes we're a hungry ghost, sometimes we're in the hell realm, sometimes we're in the heavenly realm. And this goes on day in and day out. And to know, "Oh, now I'm in the hungry ghost realm. Or, now I'm in the fighting demon realm." How do I just become a human being, a normal human being? Normal is something we don't experience very often. We think normal is just what I'm always doing. Buddha is reported to have said, "All I teach is the norm. That's my whole teaching, just the norm." But the norm is elusive.

In my opinion, the human race is evolving. There are people who are very evolved as humans and there are people who are not very evolved as humans. And then there's the whole range in between. So I think we must realize this and be understanding and patient with people. We shouldn't just think, "I'm highly evolved and they're not." There has to be some education. We should be careful to help people to come up to where we are and then reach up to those who can help us to go beyond who we are. We have to have lots of patience. Even though it looks like the world is coming apart at the seams, to have patience is the greatest virtue. We should take care of what we can deal with the best we can and have patience with that which we can't do much about.





## 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.

April 5                Buddha's Birthday/  
                                 Anniversary Celebration

April 12 No program

April 19 Childcare

April 26 Childcare

May 3                Childcare

May 10              No program

May 17              Childcare

May 24              Childcare

May 31              Childcare

Berkeley Zen Center  
1931 Russell Street  
Berkeley, CA 94703