



# Berkeley Zen Center



September 2003 Newsletter

**Fall Class...** on the Heart Sutra, co-taught by Ron Nestor and Karen Sundheim. Four Thursday nights: September 25 through October 16. 7:30 to 9:00pm. Class fee is \$20.00. Scholarships are available.

How do we spend four weeks discussing Emptiness? Take nothing for granted. We will emphasize both practicing the sutra and the study of the dharmic structure contained within. While understanding the sutra conceptually may not be difficult for some, living it requires one to course more deeply.

A short commentary and outline by Korean Zen teacher Mu Soeng Sunim will be our core text.



**All-Sangha Potluck and Board Meeting... Tuesday, September 16, 6:30 pm.** This is an annual meeting to nominate members to the Board of Directors.



**Women's Sesshin, September 21 8:30 am to 5:30 pm....** Linda Eby and Mary Mocine will lead the sesshin for women on Sunday September 21.

The schedule will be gentle. We'll do some chanting, sitting, dharma talking, sitting, practice discussing, working, eating, sharing our experience of the day and have tea. *(continued, page 2)*

## September & October Schedule

Founders' Ceremony  
Wednesday 9-3, 6:20 pm  
Thursday, 9-4, 6:40 am

Board Nominations  
Tuesday, 9-9, 6:30 pm

Bodhisattva Ceremony  
Saturday, 9-13, 9:30 am

Sewing Assistance  
Saturday, 9-13, 1 pm to 5 pm

Half-Day Sitting  
Sunday, 9-14, 8 am to noon

Women's Sesshin  
Sunday, 9-21, 8:30 am to 5:30 pm

Heart Sutra Class  
Thursdays, 9-25 to 10-16, 7:30 pm

Sewing Assistance  
Sunday, 9-28, 1 pm to 5 pm

Founder's Ceremony  
Thursday 10-2, 6:20 pm  
Friday, 10-3, 6:40 am

One Day Sitting  
Saturday, 10-4, 5 am to 9:30 pm

Bodhisattva Ceremony  
Saturday, 10-11, 9:30am

Half-Day Sitting  
Sunday, 10-12, 8 am to noon

Aspects of Practice  
10-26 to 11-22

One Day Sitting  
Sunday, 10-26 5 am to 5:30 pm

## Women's Sesshin, *continued from page 1*

We will remember our own women ancestors as part of noon service. Please let Linda or Mary know of women teachers, important for many of us, whom you'd like to include.

All women are invited to join us. Zazen and oryoki instruction will be available if needed.



## From the Practice Committee...

*If you would like to donate plants to the BZC garden, please speak to the head gardener, Marian Yu. Marian will determine whether BZC can use the plant. Please do not plant anything in the garden without permission from her.*

A reminder to people sitting zazen: *Please use the shoe rack for your shoes.* Please do not leave your shoes on the steps or the porch.



## Automated External Defibrillator...

*The BZC Board is considering the purchase of an AED or, Automated External Defibrillator.*

An Automated External Defibrillator is a device used to deliver an electric shock to an individual in cardiac arrest. Access to AEDs in public places is becoming increasingly prevalent. They are easy to use, requiring no special training. AEDs have been shown to save many lives. Both the Red Cross and American Heart Association now say that an AED is the single most important intervention that can be offered to a person in need of resuscitation—even more than CPR.

The average cost of an AED is \$2,000. Having one at our Zen Center seems like a worthy investment. Toward that end the Board invites interested sangha members to contribute to a specific fund for the purchase of an AED.

We have \$200 in the fund. If you are interested, put a check in the community room mail slot and mark in the memo section that the contribution is for an AED.

If you have questions, please speak with board member Greg Denny or board secretary Andrea Thach.



## 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.

September 6	No program
September 13	Childcare
September 20	Childcare
September 27	Childcare
October 4	No program
October 11	Childcare
October 18	Childcare
October 25	Childcare

# Lecture by Sojun Roshi

## On the Metta Sutra, Part Five

(Continued from last month)

The full quote of the previous section says, "May all beings be happy, may they be joyous and live in safety...all living beings whether weak or strong, in high or middle or lower realms of existence, small or great, visible or invisible, born or not to be born, may all beings be happy. Let no one deceive another, nor despise any being in any state."

*Student:* I'm fixated on being happy. Isn't that dualistic? **Sojun:** It is dualistic. We have to be careful. We live in a world of diversity, a dualistic world. The wisdom of non-duality has to be expressed within that diversity. You can call it the non-duality of duality. We can get stuck in non-duality as well as in duality. We may have to get our hands dirty or our minds polluted in duality. There is a zen expression, "Trailing mud and dripping water." This is to step off our hundred foot pole for the welfare of all beings.

Happiness is not a thing. It's a quality that is a result of something. You can't get a happiness. We engage in various activities in order to make ourselves happy. Happiness then becomes an object to be sought and grasped. We even try to buy happiness. We do find various levels of happiness this way. But a more fundamental happiness or joy arises as the result of our behavior. Deep happiness or deep joy arises from the ground of being. When we touch that ground we are naturally joyous. This quality of happiness or joy is not so dependent on circumstances, good or bad. When we settle in zazen, we are grounded in a happiness which is beyond happy or unhappy. Some of the characteristics of this happiness are serenity and tranquility. No need to say "happy" or "unhappy". "May all beings be happy" is the wish for all beings to find that happiness which is fundamentally grounded in reality. When we're grounded, our happiness is like a deep river, which continues to flow even though there may be a lot of disturbing things on the surface.

*Student:* I've heard that anger isn't actually the opposite of lovingkindness, indifference is. Something is happening in anger that is definitely not indifferent. I think it is not that far away from lovingkindness. If you face the pain, it might teach you something.

**Sojun:** Emotion means "to move". It is the movement of our feelings. We have a feeling, and an emotion. We move the feeling out. Anger can move things. When there is an impasse and no other way to deal with it, anger can sometimes break it up. There is no emotion that is intrinsically good or bad. It is the way we use emotions or control them, or are used or controlled by them, that makes the difference. When we are mindful of the practice of observing our emotions, we are less liable to be caught by them.

I often think of how our emotional system is like a boiler. Like a large drum full of water over a burner. We turn the fire up under the water and when it boils it generates

steam. There are many pipes running out of it and each one of these pipes has an on and off valve. When the fire gets hot, the water starts boiling and the steam starts moving. We have a pipe called love and a pipe called hate and a pipe called anger and a pipe called jealousy. There is one for desire, faith, shame, arrogance, greed, and so forth. All these feelings and emotions have different forms, but the source of energy is the same. The energy that goes into love is the same energy that goes into ill-will. But it is possible to switch the channels of negativity into positive forms. Someone who is an angry demon can transform into a Bodhisattva when the energy is transferred because emotions have no self-nature and are not fixed. There is nothing more wonderful than to see someone who has an angry disposition try another channel. Sometimes the valve is stuck because it is so seldom turned. The penetrating oil of suffering is sometimes enough to loosen the valve. The liberated emotion comes pouring forth.

*Student:* Brother David and Aitken Roshi did a book together, and Brother David quoted Thomas Aquinas who said anger is the extra energy needed to overcome obstacles. Aitken Roshi said that anger is a virtue unless it's indulged in.

**Sojun:** Anger has its place just like any other emotion. The problem with anger is that the fire quickly gets hot, and "boom". Two examples of emotions that can easily get out of hand are anger and sexual desire. They have to be controlled. When they get out of hand, they can be like a raging fire and burn everything to the ground. But both of them used in the right way, without self-centered attachment, can be positive. We have to control the flame under the boiler, so that it doesn't boil over.

*Student:* What we're talking about is an inability to express our anger honestly. A moment of clear anger is here and it's gone. (*Snaps her fingers*) Most of us have very little experience with this. If you take the example of the boiler, all those valves are closed and all we can feel is the heat that's about to explode in a way that's about to burn us all. If we can learn to govern our anger in such a way that anger is simply one of our expressions with one another and honestly done, I feel that's where some of the focus needs to go on how to feel better.

**Sojun:** One thing I want to say is that when we get into a difference of opinion with each other, to deny the other person's reality is a major cause of problems. To say, "No, that's not right, it's like this" makes for separation. I have to acknowledge the other person's reality, whatever it is. "Yes, I understand what you are saying" and the implication is, "I completely accept your right to see it that way." And then I say what I have to say, which may not agree with their position. Otherwise "No, you're wrong, this is right." As soon as I say that, I am denying that person's reality, who consequently may feel pushed into a corner and will have a hard time seeing my point even if it is correct. We push each other into corners with our righteousness and then wonder, "What's their problem?" We have to allow that the other person has a valid point of view whether we believe in it or not. The best way to influence someone is to show them respect and not embarrass them.

## Buddha Girl

By evelyn natalya

*Editor's Note: evelyn performed this poem at skit night in June.*

i'm a Buddha girl  
and I find the time  
to sit on my cushion  
and have "Empty Mind"

but tonight I feel like  
some takeout food  
and a chocolate ice cream  
and a movie too

and I'll sit on my cushion  
tomorrow morn'  
but tonight I'll be hangin'  
with my dis-trac-tion

cause I'm a Buddha girl  
and I ate too much  
yeah my thoughts are racin'  
and I'm feeling stuffed

i miss my "ex" and I'm  
out of soap  
i can't fall asleep  
no I just can't cope

cause I'm a Buddha girl  
and I love to dance  
i don't need no partner  
cause I'm not "Attached"

i'm not the "I" that  
you think you see  
that's just the veil of  
my surface person-al-ity

don't believe the stories  
you hear in your mind  
they're just a scratched record  
that's doin' time

there is no Time in the  
oneness of Being  
when the mind is still and the  
heart is free

so don't let your mind  
runaway with you  
be the captain of your ship  
don't let the wind trap you  
into believing --

you have no control  
over thoughts and emotions  
that delude the "Self"

stay strong and focused and the  
storm will lift  
even when you think that you have  
--- lost your breath

it's the space in-between  
the in and the out  
where you find what this song  
is really talking about

when you arrive ---  
you know you've been there all along  
it's got nothing to do  
with your external  
con-di-tion

cause you're a Buddha kid  
the awakened one  
and this state of grace  
has been there all along

so like the turtles at  
the bottom of the ocean do  
do the turtle dance  
which is to say  
don't move!

we're all Buddha kids  
and we've got the chance  
to free ourselves from  
the future and the past

just be here now  
make room for love  
see yourself in the other  
and become the One

yeah I'm a Buddha girl  
and I find the time  
to sit on my cushion and have  
"empty mind"

but tonight, well tonight I feel  
like some  
takeout food  
and a chocolate ice-cream  
and a movie too

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## Mountains and Rivers...

Ken Knabb received this poem from one of the participants in the August Mountains and Rivers Sesshin. She traveled from Vermont to attend this sesshin.

### Mountains and Rivers

8.03

This majestic windswept endless edge  
where land crumbles into sand  
offering itself in an endless bow

water water water  
breaking breaking breaking

while the sky rides horseback  
into caverns of fog and the eyes  
of white deer gleam back at strangers

and sun and thirst play checkers  
until they tire of taking turns.

And we all go to sleep  
under the revolving stars.

No moment is not turning.  
Restless as we are,  
we rest in this.

--Anya Raven Hunter



### Ethics Procedures...

The BZC Board recently put the finishing touches on the final piece of our *Ethics Guidelines and Procedures: the Formal Grievance Procedure*.

*The Formal Grievance Procedure* outlines the process for situations when informal attempts at reconciliation have been exhausted or are deemed inappropriate.

It's interesting to labor over a document that we all hope we will never need to use!

New members will receive the entire set of documents, which also includes the *Ethics Guidelines* and the *Informal Procedure*.

These documents are posted on the main bulletin board; if you would like a copy, leave a note in the Office Manager's mail slot.



### Dharma Group Forming...

We are starting a new dharma group at BZC for people of color. Long time BZC member Robin Gregory will facilitate the group and the focus will be studying the dharma together. An initial meeting will be in September; date and time to be announced. For more info call Robin, 839-2344, or Laurie Senauke, 845-2215.

BZC initiated dharma groups in 1996 to encourage in our members a spirit of *kalyanamita* or spiritual friend. Although a senior student serves as convener, dharma groups focus on study and mutual support as peers. Some groups have continued since the beginning; others have started in the intervening years. Two of the current groups are seeking new members. The Sunday socially engaged dharma group meets every 3rd Sunday at BZC, 6:30 pm to 8:00 pm. If you're interested call Ed Herzog, 666-3696 (eherzog@seiu250.org). The Tuesday group meets every other week at 7:30 pm at members' homes. For more info, contact Jim Storey, (jamesbstorey@aol.com) 434-9455. For questions about these groups or the dharma groups in general, you can also contact Laurie (lauries@kushiki.org) 845-2215.

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## Further Announcements...

### Welcome to New Members...

Tamar Enoch and Greta Pearson



### Congratulations to Raul Moncayo...

BZC priest and practice leader, on the publication of his article, "A Finger Pointing at the Moon: Zen Practice and the Practice of Lacanian Psychoanalysis," in *Psychoanalysis and Buddhism: An Unfolding Dialogue*, edited by Jeremy Safran. Please find Raul's new publication on the Recent Acquisitions shelf in the BZC Library.



### Sewing Assistance...

These times are for repairs and sewing of either previously begun or second *rakusus*.

Saturday September 13 1-5 pm

Sunday September 28 1-5 pm

Saturday October 11 1-5 pm

Classes for starting first *rakusus* will begin as usual in January. Please call Jean Selkirk before your first visit. Check the bulletin board for dates.



### Calling All Chidens...

If you would like to help care for our beautiful altars, contact Catharine Lucas, Head Chiden, (526-3100) to be trained for open positions on our current chiden schedule. This is a quiet, lovely way to support our zendo practice.



## Jikidos, Past and Present...

Andrea Thach assembled this list thinking of the BZC ancestors, many now years ago – enough that they may not be remembered – in gratitude for their efforts, and as a reminder that each small thing each of us does is important.

Connie Worthen

John Fleischnhauer

Malcolm Coffino

Nora Sugahara

Bob Norman

Bob Yanasak

Bob Poulsen

Daniel Leonard

Ross Blum

Richard Haefele

Kathleen Gustin

Anne Busse

Susan Marvin

Ann Greenwater

Nancy Farr

Tom Dinwoodie

Julia Summer

Vanessa Ramirez

Greg Fain

Malcolm Fairbrother

Peter Carpentieri

Andrea Thach

Clay Taylor



#### 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.

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