



# Berkeley Zen Center



September–October 2022 Newsletter

## Aspects of Practice 2022: Study of the Eightfold Path

This year our fall Aspects of Practice period will take place September 10 through October 9. The senior students will lead this intensive examination of the Eightfold Path, part of Buddha's Four Noble Truths and one of his earliest teachings. The Aspects of Practice period is a time to deepen our own personal practice and an opportunity to expand and enrich our sangha life together. We will consider how Dharma meets the world we find ourselves in and how we can open to the inevitable changes that are occurring in our time.

Aspects of Practice includes two sesshins (September 10 and October 9); a four-week series of Thursday night classes; and Saturday lectures on this theme. When you register, you will be asked to commit to practice in a way that harmonizes with your life. There is no right or wrong, but you are encouraged to make a commitment.

The registration form is here:

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfQ\\_YUN-N\\_uRJ1FATb97mnxI\\_piA4CP9QT7RPMImGrLyDP2PQ/viewform?usp=sf\\_link](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfQ_YUN-N_uRJ1FATb97mnxI_piA4CP9QT7RPMImGrLyDP2PQ/viewform?usp=sf_link) (Continued...)



### Affirmation of Welcome

Walking the path of liberation, we express our intimate connection with all beings. Berkeley Zen Center is a sangha of Buddhist practitioners drawing from the Bay Area's many spiritual and cultural communities. Just as Shakyamuni Buddha welcomed people of all backgrounds to practice, here at BZC our activities embrace diversity, and are available to people of every color, every way of life and ethnic background, class, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, and ability. May all beings practice in safety and equality, realizing our true nature.

## B Z C S C H E D U L E

### September

**Zendo Holiday**  
Monday, 9/5

**Founders' Ceremony**  
Wednesday, 9/7, 7:00am

**One-Day Sesshin**  
**(Opening Aspects of Practice)**  
Saturday, 9/10

**Board Meeting**  
Sunday, 9/18, 9:00–11:00am

**Online Sangha Meeting & Board Nominations**  
Sunday, 9/18, 7:00pm

### October

**Founders' Ceremony**  
Friday, 10/7, 7:00am

**One-Day Sesshin**  
**(Closing Aspects of Practice)**  
Sunday, 10/9

**New Member Entering Ceremony**  
Monday, 10/10, 7:30am

**Jukai (Lay Ordination)**  
Saturday, 10/15, 3:00pm

**Board Meeting**  
Sunday, 10/16, 9:00–11:00am

**Sangha Work Day**  
Sunday, 10/23

**Women's Sesshin**  
Sunday, 10/30

*For more complete and up-to-date information, please check the BZC website ([berkeleyzencenter.org](http://berkeleyzencenter.org)) and subscribe to BZC's community listserv.*

*(Aspects of Practice, continued from page 1)*

Below is the class registration form. Class fee is \$40 or what you can afford. Classes are online Thursdays 7:15–8:45 p.m., September 15, 22, 29, and October 6.

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfN6KhNCu1PdladBJcvZSrebqN7ZNTIpmLomHNrjBWWiJM9vA/viewform?usp=sf\\_link](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfN6KhNCu1PdladBJcvZSrebqN7ZNTIpmLomHNrjBWWiJM9vA/viewform?usp=sf_link)

The sesshin director will send out sesshin registration forms separately.

Please refer to the enclosed calendar for schedule details, and also check our website: [www.berkeleyzencenter.org](http://www.berkeleyzencenter.org). If you have questions about Aspects of Practice, contact Karen Sundheim ([ksundheim@gmail.com](mailto:ksundheim@gmail.com)). For questions about the class, contact Ryushin Andrea Thach ([andrea.thach@gmail.com](mailto:andrea.thach@gmail.com)).

### **One-Day Sesshins**

We will open Aspects of Practice with a one-day sesshin on Saturday, September 10, from 7:50 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., and will close it with another one-day sesshin on Sunday, October 9. You can participate either in person (enrollment limited to 30 people) or via Zoom. Gerry Oliva will give the dharma talk and offer dokusan at the September sesshin, and Judy Fleischman will do the same at the October sesshin.

Sign up for the September sesshin at <https://forms.gle/487kumLLDP6JaEsR7>. (Sign-up information for the October sesshin will be posted later.) For further information, please contact the sesshin director, Rob Lyons ([robertlyons2305@gmail.com](mailto:robertlyons2305@gmail.com)), and check the BZC website for updates.

### **Residency Changes**

BZC member and resident Heiko John Lake will be leaving the residency in early September to go to Tassajara Zen Mountain Center.

During his time with us Heiko served as work leader and as Saturday director, and took on countless other large and small projects. He goes with a deep bow of appreciation and support from all of us.

Due to Heiko's departure, BZC is now accepting applications for a residency opening in a shared apartment, beginning October 1. Residency requires regular attendance at daily zazen, Saturday program, sesshins, and classes, as well as taking a practice position as needed. Detailed guidelines and an application will be sent upon inquiry—please contact the Head Resident, Laurie Senauke ([lauriesenauke@gmail.com](mailto:lauriesenauke@gmail.com)).

### **Sangha Work Day**

On Sunday, October 23, we will be having a Sangha Work Day. The day will open with coffee and pastries at 8:00 a.m., then zazen from 8:15 to 8:40 and work circle at 8:45, with work starting at 9:00. Lunch will be provided by our tenzos from noon until work circle at 12:45 p.m., and we'll wind up with informal zazen 3:45–4:00.

If you would like to join us, please contact Greg Denny ([greg@techsperience.org](mailto:greg@techsperience.org) or 510-402-8282). Please also let him know which of the following categories of work you are able to participate in: cleaning; gardening; painting; and simple carpentry or building-related tasks (possibly using tools like drills or saws). Some work may get you dirty. Dress appropriately.

Finally, we will be adhering to the following covid protocols: Vaccination and one booster are required, and all must wear a KN94, KN95, or N95 mask while indoors. We recommend that people also wear masks outdoors as much as possible.

For any questions, contact Greg.

## Women's Sesshin

On Sunday, October 30, we will have a women's half-day sesshin. We are delighted that Jisan Tova Green will be our speaker and in dharma dialogue with us.

The sesshin will begin at 8:00 a.m. and end at noon. We hope that most participants will be able to be present in the zendo, but we will also have Zoom participation available. Luncheon will not be served; however, those who might wish to connect further after the sesshin may decide to gather at a local restaurant.

More details will be sent out soon along with sign-up information. For now, please mark your calendars for October 30.

## Many Communities, One Sangha

"Many Communities, One Sangha: Exploring the Realities of Equity and Inclusion" is a curriculum which guides an inquiry for us, in small groups, to articulate our values and explore our desires and ways to implement the goals we determine together. It is not a top-down training, but rather a grassroots program designed to help us decide together how we proceed. The principal teachers of the curriculum are Mushim Ikeda, Rhonda Magee, and Crystal Johnson, who many of you may know.

Rhonda Magee, one of the program's developers, will be providing experiential opportunities to acquire and practice the skills we have learned. Prof. Magee is also the author of *The Inner Work of Racial Justice: Healing Ourselves and Transforming Our Communities Through Mindfulness*. She is a Dharma Holder in the Soto tradition.

Participants must sign up by **September 15, 2022** and commit to two hours a month over 11 months. This will consist of five sessions of

videos, readings, and small, ongoing group discussions, alternating with five sessions with Rhonda Magee. We hope to have in-person meetings, without excluding those who are participating from a distance, through a hybrid option. The cost is \$150 per person, with scholarships and a sliding scale. Participation limit is 30 people (the number we can fit in-person in the zendo). If demand exceeds capacity, we will offer it again.

Here is the link to sign-up:

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfoxKmGbpROgR90paqYK1MAEKFULhtkSXdwX9ArEsgFHTNu3A/viewform?usp=sf\\_link](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfoxKmGbpROgR90paqYK1MAEKFULhtkSXdwX9ArEsgFHTNu3A/viewform?usp=sf_link)

If you have questions about the program, contact Karen Sundheim ([ksundheim@gmail.com](mailto:ksundheim@gmail.com)); Sonia Tamez (510-502-1425); or Gerry Oliva ([gryoliva@gmail.com](mailto:gryoliva@gmail.com)). If you have any questions about signing up, contact Mary Duryee ([maduryee@icloud.com](mailto:maduryee@icloud.com)). More info will be on the website.

—Mary Duryee, on behalf of the culture change committee (Judy Fleischman, Hanna Meara, Gerry Oliva, Hozan Alan Senauke, Mauro Sifuentes, Karen Sundheim, Sonia Tamez, and Penelope Thompson).

## New Member Entering Ceremony

Our annual New Member Entering Ceremony will be on Monday, October 10, 7:30 a.m. If you are a new BZC member, or if you are a member who has never participated in this ceremony and would now like to, please contact Hannah Meara ([hmeara@gmail.com](mailto:hmeara@gmail.com)). Although during this time the sangha cannot meet new members with an in-person bow, BZC most heartily welcomes and looks forward to greeting them in our virtual online zendo at the ceremony.

## Coming-of-Age Program

BZC will be offering a Coming-of-Age program for youth between the ages of 12 and 14. Participants will study basic Buddhist teachings, mindfulness, precepts, and communication skills, and explore ways to celebrate their journey toward adulthood.

The program will meet monthly for two hours on Sundays from September 2022 through June 2023. For more information, please contact Marie Hopper at [marie\\_hopper@sbcglobal.net](mailto:marie_hopper@sbcglobal.net).

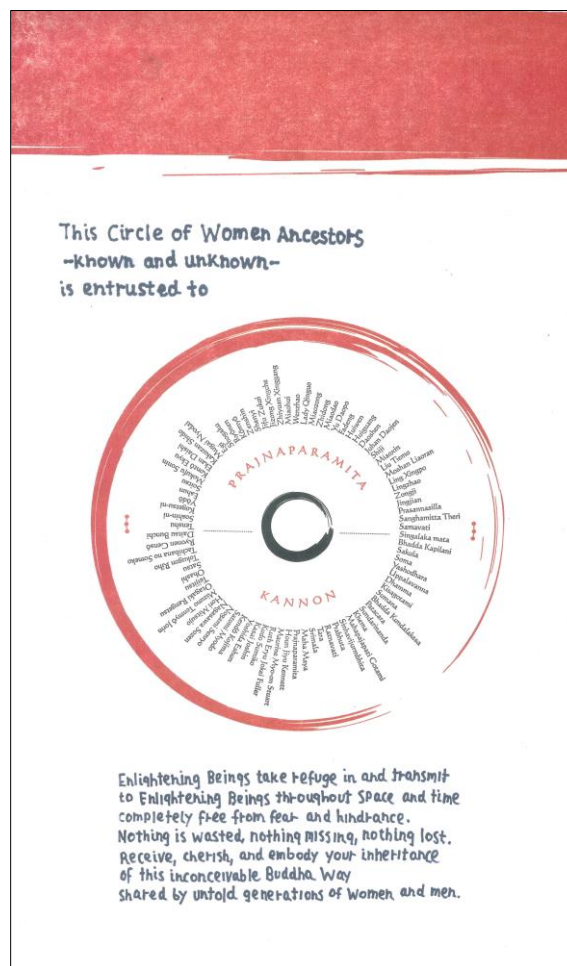
## Lay Ordination

This year's Zaike Tokudo (Jukai/Lay Ordination Ceremony) will take place on Saturday, October 15, at 3:00 p.m. in the zendo. Heather Sarantis, Helen Cheng, Yoni Ackerman, and Joe Buckner will receive precepts, rakusu, and lineage papers from Hozan; Nick Robinson and Nathan Britton will receive from Ryushin Andrea Thach; Diane Ritchey will receive from Peter Overton; and Phillip Sherard and Ten Bartholomew will receive from Gerry Oliva. Congratulations in advance to the ordinees, who have been studying and sewing diligently with our sewing teacher, Jean Selkirk, and with Hannah Meara. Everyone is encouraged to attend the ceremony either in person or via Zoom. In-person capacity of the zendo is limited to 30 people. Check the website and zendo bulletin board for details on attending.

## A Document of Women Ancestors

Some years ago the Soto Zen Buddhist Association created and distributed a document honoring our women ancestors in Buddhism and Zen. If anyone who had lay or priest ordination from Sojun Roshi would like to receive this document, Abbot Hozan would be

honored to prepare this for you, personalized with your dharma name. We can share these in a ceremony later in the fall. Contact Hozan if you have questions or write to Hozan's assistant Jonathan Koltz ([jonkoltz@gmail.com](mailto:jonkoltz@gmail.com)) if you would like to receive the document.



## What Is a Good Life?

On three Monday evenings—November 7, 21, and 28, at 7:15 p.m.—BZC is pleased to host Shaykh Yassir Chadfly in dialogue with Abbot Hozan about “a good life” in our respective Sufi and Zen traditions. Yassir is a Sufi imam, born in Morocco, ministering to Bay Area Islamic communities for many years. From 2002 to 2017 he taught Islamic and Sufi studies at U.C. Berkeley's Graduate Theological Union. Yassir and Hozan have been good friends since



the 90s, sharing the music and wisdom of our spiritual paths. Yassir has visited and lectured at BZC several times. His warm-hearted presence is uplifting.

We can accommodate up to 30 people in the zendo itself and will be live-streaming on Zoom as well. The suggested class fee is \$30. For further information, contact Hozan or class coordinator Ryushin Andrea Thach.

### Second Koan Class

Ryushin Andrea Thach, Ellen Webb, and Ron Nestor will present our second Zoom koan class on three Thursday evenings: October 20, October 27, and November 3. Classes will be at 7:15–8:45 p.m. All are welcome.

We'll be continuing with three cases from *The Book of Serenity*, the koan collection most closely associated with the spirit of Soto Zen. There's a subtlety and nuance in this collection that we've really enjoyed. We'll also be providing excellent commentaries from Yamada Koun on each of the three cases in online Word documents, including paper copies on the BZC bulletin board shelf for those without printers. Based on our first class series last year, we particularly enjoy the give and take of group discussion rather than a strict lecture format. What do these koans bring up for you? Where is there confusion? Also, after focusing on mainstream Buddhism during Aspects of Practice, it may be interesting to switch gears into a Zen context.

Cost for the series is \$30 or whatever you can afford. We'll be announcing the three cases we've picked and sending out the texts and commentaries as we get closer to the starting date, allowing ample time for study before we actually meet.

### Calling All Chidens: Past, Present, and Future

Please join Nancy Friedberg and Nancy Suib (co-head chidens) and Hozan Roshi for a chiden review and training in the zendo on Wednesday, October 19, 3:30–5:00 p.m.

This is a wonderful and fulfilling opportunity to deepen your practice of mindfulness and the aesthetic in attending to the altar.

A deep bow to all the past and present chidens for their service. We hope that you will join the new chidens and members interested in becoming a chiden for an orientation and review.

Masking and vaccination status is required for participation. Please RSVP to Nancy Suib ([nancy.suib@gmail.com](mailto:nancy.suib@gmail.com)) or Nancy Friedberg ([94618nf@gmail.com](mailto:94618nf@gmail.com)).



## Sejiki—Feeding the Hungry Ghosts

On Saturday, October 29, BZC will again celebrate Sejiki, an annual ceremony from our Soto Zen tradition that we have missed during the pandemic. The morning program will include a short zendo talk by Hondo Dave Rutschman, followed by a joyous ceremony in the courtyard.

The outdoors altar will be filled with fruit, cakes, and other food offerings to entice spirits from the beyond and those present. Raucous noisemaking by children and adults will call forth hungry ghosts and the spirits of the departed. After offerings and chanting of the “Sutra of Opening the Gate of Sweet Dew,” we will read the names and honor all those who have died this year.

Families and children are encouraged to participate. Since we have adapted the tradition to dovetail with the western tradition of Halloween, members and children are welcome to come in Halloween costumes. Noisemakers will be provided and you may also bring your own. The talk and ceremony will start in the zendo at 10:15 a.m. All are welcome to join the work circle at 7:45 a.m. to help set up the altar.

## Current Weekly Schedule

Many of our programs are now open to a limited number of in-person masked attendees. If you are interested in attending, please send your vax and booster information to the Office Manager ([bzcofficeamanager@gmail.com](mailto:bzcofficeamanager@gmail.com)) AT LEAST ONE WEEK BEFORE YOU ATTEND (if you come sooner than that, also bring your vax card and ID with you).

Our programming varies between in-person-only, online-only, and hybrid. See the BZC website ([berkeleyzencenter.org](http://berkeleyzencenter.org)) for details.

## Saturday Speakers, 10:15 a.m.

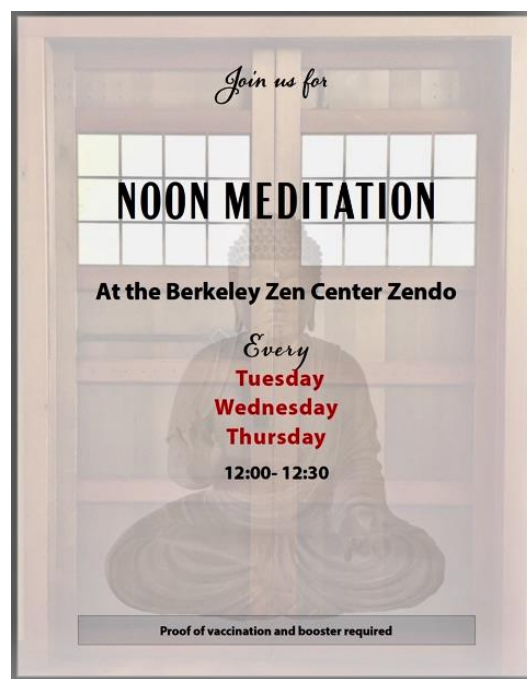
September 3:	Mary Duryee
September 10:	Gerry Oliva
September 17:	Greg Denny
September 24:	Karen Sundheim
October 1:	Ryushin Andrea Thach
October 8:	Rhonda Magee
October 15:	Susan Moon
October 22:	Peter Overton
October 29:	Dave Rutschman

## Monday Morning Talks, 8:00 a.m.

September 5:	Zendo holiday
September 12:	Hannah Meara
September 19:	Abbot Hozan
September 26:	Leslie Batholic
October 10:	Heather Sarantis
October 17:	Taryn Elliott
October 24:	Kabir Nabi
October 31:	Courtney Gonzalez

## Friday Afternoon Talks, 5:45 p.m.

September 2:	Juliayn Coleman
October 7:	Ron Nestor



Poster design: Afsaneh Michaels

# Three Aspects of Practice

Some years ago Sojun Roshi invited me to lead a fall practice intensive that we have come to call Aspects of Practice, which focuses on the basics of our Zen Buddhist tradition. With the partnership of senior students, we created this month-long program, which served well as a point of entry for newer students and as a kind of refresher for more experienced practitioners.

This fall's Aspects of Practice begins on September 10, continuing through October 9, led by Karen Sundheim and other practice leaders. Details can be found elsewhere in this newsletter. But in this space, I'd like to review three essential "aspects" of our dharma practice: daily zazen, meeting with a teacher, studying the Dharma.

When Suzuki Roshi came from Japan to be the priest at Sokoji, the Soto Zen temple in San Francisco, he established a practice of daily zazen that we maintain more than sixty years later. His disciple Sojun moved to Berkeley and followed much the same practice. As we have done for fifty years, BZC is open for sitting six days a week. We strongly encourage people to come to the zendo, sit together, and share a daily practice. Taking into account members' work and family lives, everyone cannot come to the zendo every day, but the doors are always open. Sitting side by side we sustain each other naturally, and we come to a wonderful intimacy of practice.

The Covid pandemic compelled us to create new modes of online zazen that are not our traditional body-to-body zendo practice. But Zoom has served us pretty well these last few years, even if it's not everyone's cup of tea. But now we are back in the zendo early mornings, afternoons, and Saturdays. I want to encourage you to resume our long-standing in-person practice. Join us. Those of us who have returned to BZC feel refreshed and encouraged again by the opportunity to sit zazen together. This is the shining heart of the Sangha treasure.

The second element of our practice is meeting with a teacher. When I came to BZC in the early 80s, there was an implicit expectation of meeting regularly with a teacher. Back then, our only teacher was Sojun, but in time, students' maturity and understanding have deepened. Now we have a roster of practice leaders and teachers who are available as guides, as mirrors, as dharma friends or *kalyanamitra*. This is the Buddha treasure. A teacher as Buddha reveals that you yourself are Buddha. A practice leader or teacher doesn't dispense wisdom or give out answers to our difficulties. She or he or they help us to stand on our own feet, to find our own inborn wisdom.

As abbot, I welcome the opportunity to meet with people—formally or informally. My dokusan signup for meeting face-to-face during morning zazen is just to the right of the zendo door. To schedule an online meeting with me, see this link: <https://calendly.com/asenauke/dokusan?month=2022-08> or contact me at [asenauke@gmail.com](mailto:asenauke@gmail.com). Also, if you scroll down the "Teachers" page on the BZC website, there are email addresses to contact all of our practice leaders: <https://berkeleyzencenter.org/teachers/>.

Studying the Dharma is the third treasure. In the broadest sense, zazen is our principal study. As Dogen Zenji writes in *Genjokoan*: "To study the buddha way is to study the self. To study the self is to forget the self. To forget the self is to be actualized by myriad things." In zazen, we sit still and allow the myriad things—which are the ever-changing elements of our "self"—to arise and to fall away. To complement this experiential study, we immerse ourselves in the teachings of Suzuki Roshi, Sojun Roshi, and our luminous ancestors in Japan, China, and India, going back to Shakyamuni Buddha. Their words and actions illuminate our own lives. During the upcoming Aspects of Practice, we'll explore the Buddha's Eightfold Path, a timeless map for living found in his very first teaching.

These three dimensions of practice create a whole, each including all the others. Each of us must find the right balance for the circumstances of our life. May the journey be complete.

—Hozan

**NEWSLETTER SUBMISSION DEADLINE**  
for the November–December issue is  
*Friday, October 21.*

**Please submit items to  
[knabb@bopsecrets.org](mailto:knabb@bopsecrets.org).**

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