



Garden Dedication & Art Auction

Saturday, September 23, 2017, 5:00 P.M.

You are warmly invited to a Dedication Ceremony commemorating the Zen Center's newly renovated garden. The Silent Art Auction will follow, drawing together Art and Fine Crafts from our Sangha and beyond, to help complete funding for this project. Friends and family are all welcome to this special evening of music, art, refreshments, and community.

Call for Artists and Collectors: Painters, sculptors, photographers and other visual artists are invited to donate work, as well as artwork in all media including work intended for outdoor display, to the Silent Art Auction. Collectors are also invited to donate Art and Fine Crafts, particularly Buddhist-inspired and Asian pieces. Funds and donations received will help with the \$5,500 balance left for the Garden Renovation. Please contact John Paredes at john@jollyoso.com or (919) 259-2749 or Josho Pat Phelan at pwhelan@nc.rr.com or (919) 967-0861 with any questions or to make arrangements for your donation.

All-day Sittings

All-day sittings are scheduled for Sundays, September 17, and October 15, from 6:00 A.M. until 5:00 P.M. The sitting will begin with orientation on Saturday night at 7:30, and will include instruction on the meal form and one period of zazen. The regular Sunday schedule, with zazen at 9:00 and 9:50 and Dharma Talk at 10:30, will be open to everyone. The day will include zazen, a lecture, *dokusan* and a work period, as well as breakfast and lunch. The fee is \$10 for members and \$20 for others. ***It is alright to sit half of the day, but please sign up in advance, and please speak to Josho Sensei if this is your first all-day sitting.*** For more information on the oryoki meal form see: <http://www.kannondo.org/oroyoki>



Beginning Zen Practice

A Class with David Guy

September 11 to October 23 (No class Oct. 9)

Monday nights, 7:30–9:00

Stop searching for phrases and chasing after words. Take the backward step and turn the light inward. Your body-mind of itself will drop off and your original face will appear.

— Dogen

Zen Meditation, or *zazen*, is the simple practice of being present with our experience. We hear the instructions in a matter of minutes, but spend a lifetime learning the practice. This class will introduce participants to meditation and give them support as they develop a daily sitting practice. It will also introduce them to other aspects of practice at the Chapel Hill Zen Center.

The first night will begin with meditation instructions and a short period of sitting. Each week we will continue to sit for a period at the beginning of class, gradually increasing the time. Participants will have a chance to ask questions and raise concerns about their practice. As the weeks proceed we will study other aspects of Zen practice, including walking meditation, protocol around the zendo, and the service of bowing and chanting. But the focus will be on zazen, and participants' actual practice as it unfolds. The content of the class will emerge from participants' questions and concerns.

Cost is \$60, payable the first night, and will be contributed to the Zen Center. Partial scholarships are available. For more information, or to sign up, please contact David Guy at 919-286-4952 or davidguy@mindspring.com.

David Guy has been practicing meditation since 1991, and regularly gives sitting instruction. He has co-authored two books with Larry Rosenberg of the Cambridge Insight Meditation Center – *Breath by Breath: The Liberating Practice of Insight Meditation* and *Living in the Light of Death: On the Art of Being Truly Alive*. In 2008 he published *Jake Fades: A Novel of Impermanence*.

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General Meeting

The General Meeting, our annual members' business meeting, will be held on Sunday morning, November 19, at 11:00, following *zazen*. The nominees for the next Board of Directors will be introduced and the budget for 2017 will be presented. Everyone is encouraged to attend, but only Participating Members are eligible to vote. If you have agenda items, please contact the Board President, Maura High at maurahigh@gmail.com.

Dharma Talks

September 17, at 10:30, by Josho Pat Phelan

October, 23, at 10:30, by Josho Pat Phelan

November 12, at 10:30, by Choro Carla Antonaccio

Study Group

The Study Group will resume meeting on September 14, and continue through November 16, on Thursday nights, from 6:45–8:00. We will study together *Being with Dying, Cultivating Compassion and Fearlessness in the Presence of Death* by Joan Halifax. There will be copies for sale in the entryway. Everyone is welcome and there is no charge.

Children's Program

The Zen Center's Children's Program offers a variety of activities for children age 5 through 15, including meditation, mindfulness, Buddhist teachings and stories, crafts, songs, and movement, as well as participation in Zen Center celebrations throughout the year. Parents are encouraged to volunteer to help with the Children's Program or attend the concurrent adult program of *zazen*. The first meeting this fall will be September 10. Subsequent meetings are scheduled for September 24, October 8 and 22, November 5 and 19, and December 17. For information, please contact Maura High, at maurahigh@gmail.com.

People of Color Sitting Group

Wednesday nights from 6:00–7:30

The POC Sitting Group begins with *zazen* at 6:00, followed by *kinhin* (walking meditation) with the option to stay for group discussion. Both those new to meditation, or experienced, are warmly welcome to join us or drop in as you like. For more information, contact Conal or Kriti at pocsittinggroup@gmail.com.

Recovery Meeting

The Recovery Meeting meets on Tuesday nights at 7:30. This is a recovery group with a Buddhist perspective on the Twelve-Step Program which meets at the Chapel Hill Zen Center. The meetings begin with twenty minutes of silent meditation. For more information, contact: 919-265-7600 or ZenandRecovery@gmail.com.

Sangha Network

The CHZC has a Sangha Network of volunteers to offer short-term assistance to those in the sangha who need help with simple tasks such as shopping, arranging for meals, or transportation, due to transitions in one's life including illness, disability, or death of a loved one. If you would like to volunteer or if you need assistance, please contact Kris at krisgarvin@gmail.com or Jeff Sherman at jeffsherman3333@gmail.com.

Aging Gracefully, Befriending Death

Sunday, September 10

This is an informal discussion group that gives the opportunity to share readings, information, and explore conversations among ourselves on these topics. The group meets on Sunday mornings, around 11:15. Please contact Kris Garvin at krisgarvin@gmail.com, or Jeff Sherman at jeffsherman3333@gmail.com, if you have questions, would like more information. Everyone is welcome, regardless of age.

Sejiki Ceremony

The *Sejiki* Ceremony will be held on **Saturday evening October 28, at 7:00**, followed by pot-luck refreshments. Children are welcome and welcome to wear costumes.

“*Sejiki*” is a Japanese word meaning “feeding the hungry ghosts.” Hungry ghosts are depicted as beings with very large stomachs swollen from malnutrition, who have the tiniest of throats, and who are always hungry. They are symbolic of the state of mind which is never satisfied with who we are or what we have. In the ceremony we call forth hungry ghosts and beings who are stuck in intermediary states, as well the dark, unknown regions of our own psyches, bringing them into the light. We offer them the nourishment of Dharma with the hope of satisfying and releasing them.

The *Sejiki* Ceremony also has the feeling of a universal memorial service. In addition to releasing the spirits of the departed, the ceremony is intended to resolve our karmic relationships with the deceased. During the ceremony, the names of those for whom we have performed memorial services during the past year will be read. If you would like the name of a friend or relative, or other being, read during the service, please leave the name in an envelop on the zendo bulletin board, or give it to Josho Sensei no later than the day before the ceremony.

Scroll: Oni Demon Sitting Zazen

In the spirit of Sejiki, we invite you to bring a food offering for the Interfaith Council pantry of non-perishable goods, which will be collected in the entryway.



Looking Ahead

December 1–8, Rohatsu – the 7-day December Sesshin.

Sunday, December 17 – Buddha’s Enlightenment Celebration.

May 4 – 9, 2018 – Spring Genzo-e Sesshin led by Daitso Tom Wright. Tom Wright was a long-term disciple of Uchiyama Roshi and translator of *How to Cook Your Life*, or *From the Zen Kitchen to Enlightenment*.

Members’ Library Acquisitions

Zen at Daitoku-ji by Jon Covell, *The Book Of Tea* by Kakuzo Okakura, *Mindfully Facing Disease and Death* by Bhikku Analayo, *The Search for the Buddha* by Charles Allen, *Transmission of the Lamp: Early Masters* authored by Tao-Yuan, trans. Sohaku Ogata, *The Buddha’s Teachings on Social and Communal Harmony* ed. Bhikkhu Bodhi, *Engaging Dogan’s Zen: The Philosophy of Practice as Awakening* by Tetsuzen Jason Wirth & Shudo Brian Schroeder, *Emptiness: A Practical Guide for Meditators* by Guy Armstrong, *Records of Manzu and the Making of Classical Chan Literature* by Mario Poceski, *Zen Bridge: The Zen Teachings of Keido Fukushima*

ed. Grace and Peter Schireson, *Buddha before Buddhism* by Gil Fronsdal, *Loving-Kindness on Plain English: The Practice of Metta* by Bhante Henepola Gunaratana, and the DVD: *One Body, One Heart* a documentary film by Frederic Forrest.

Zazen is Vast Openness:

Completely Opening Ourselves and Accepting Whatever We are Experiencing

Sojun Mel Weitsman, Abbot of the Berkeley Zen Center. Excerpted from talk given to the Chapel Hill Zen Center, March 1993. Reprinted from a 2005 CHZC newsletter.

It's nice to be in this place, on this particular spot in the universe. Somehow, all of us are together on this particular spot in the universe. It's quite a wonderful thing. I don't know how it happened. Quite a diverse group of people – some of you come from different practice backgrounds, and yet we are all able to do this practice together without any problem.

In order to practice and experience Buddha nature directly, you have to give up all of your ideas. Rational mind, thinking mind, or accumulated knowledge, won't help much, and usually is a hindrance. Your usual way of figuring out what to do won't help when your legs become very painful. You can't figure out how to get out of it. You just have to give up. Before we get it all figured out, we just start moving in it.

This is the advantage of practice. You can actually practice and experience enlightenment without understanding or knowing anything about it. So it's wonderful that we can do this. All we have to do is just step in. If you want to know how to swim and get to the other side of the ocean, there is no way you can figure it out, you just step in and start swimming. The *Genjokoan* says, "When you find your place, right where you are, practice occurs actualizing the fundamental point." "Finding your place right where you are" means to really completely be right where you are, on your spot, in any activity. This is actualizing the fundamental point.

"Actualizing the fundamental point" is one way to translate *Genjokoan*. "*Genjo*" means actualizing in the present—something appearing right here, right now. The "*ko*" of "*koan*" means "to level" which stands for "nature" or Buddha nature. Buddha Nature is very level, no bumps, no special characteristics, no identifiable mark. The

"*an*" of "*koan*" means "the place," some given place, some position which Dogen called "dharma position" (or *juhoi*) At any one moment, everything in the universe is in its dharma position.

There are two aspects of the word "dharma." "Dharma" with a capital "D" means the law or reality, that is Buddha's law or Buddha's teaching. Dogen uses it to mean the way things are as fundamental reality. "Dharma" with a small "d" means "things." Anything and everything is a dharma. Every phenomenal thing is a dharma. So Dharma with a capital "D" is the reality about the dharmas with a small "d." The "thing" about the things.

Everything has its dharma position within Buddha nature, and, from moment to moment, that dharma position changes. Within reality, within undifferentiated reality, all of these dharmas are coexisting, interrelated, and moving, and we call it our life. How we find our dharma position on any moment within ultimate reality manifesting right now, that is our Zen practice. That's called *Genjo Koan*, the koan of moment-to-moment everyday life. This is how we deal with our phenomenal position within the vastness of Buddha nature.

So Dogen says, "When you find your place (your dharma position), right where you are, that's where practice occurs, actualizing the fundamental point. When you find your way at this moment, practice occurs, actualizing the fundamental point; for the place, the way, is neither large nor small, neither yours nor others'. The place and the way have not been carried over from the past, nor are they merely arising now. Accordingly, in the practice-enlightenment of the Buddha way, meeting one thing, is mastering it – doing one practice is practicing completely." "When you find your way at this moment, practice occurs." So time is very important. This moment, moment after moment is very important. In order to practice *Genjo Koan*, we must be aware of our activity in each moment. When we sit zazen, our life takes place moment by moment, right now. This is our dharma position which arises in the present, on this moment. So the moment is continuous and, at the same

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time, discontinuous. We sit for forty discontinuous moments; but, at the same time, we are actually sitting for one continuous moment. When you think, "I only have twenty minutes left before the end of the period," you have left your dharma position, because your dharma position is right now, with no past and no future. Your dharma position exists as just this moment's activity. So we sit for one "right now." "Right now" means any moment is "right now." There is no dividing of the moments, even though we sit, or we exist, from moment-to-moment, one breath at a time. So continuous time and discontinuous time are at the same time, but, when we sit, we are only aware of continuous time, which is called, "right now."

As we sit, we come up with the problem of discomfort. One of the problems that we have is we feel that discomfort or pain is an enemy, something to be conquered or done away with. But pleasure and pain don't exist independently. Even though we say this is pleasure and this is pain, pleasure and pain don't exist independently. Because we divide them into pleasure and pain, we feel that one is desirable and the other is not. This is the world of pleasure and pain. It is not the world of pleasure only, although we would like it to be. We really wish that it was the world of pleasure only, and so we orient our life to try and make everything as pleasant as possible, but it doesn't work because life is both pleasure and pain, and it is both birth and death.

We would also like to conquer death, or eliminate it. But in the same way that it is pleasure and pain, it is also the world of birth and death. So on each moment, there is being born and dying. We are being born on each moment and dying on each moment. We have to accept our coming to life and passing away on each moment. This is called nonattachment, and it is also called nonduality, because within our life there is death—at the same time. This moment will never arise again, even though there is nothing but this moment. In order to be comfortable in this world, one needs to accept reality. As long as we don't accept reality, we are always uncomfortable, even though reality is uncomfortable too.

But that is not as uncomfortable as not accepting reality. To be able to experience the pain and the pleasure of life at the same time, one doesn't need to be masochistic; within the pleasure is pain, and within the pain there is pleasure. Being masochistic means that you always want to keep creating some painful situation; that's not the same idea.

What it comes down to is forgetting all about pleasure and pain, just accepting the feeling you have. As soon as we start to discriminate and fall to one side or the other, as soon as we want to have one and not have the other, it's pretty hard. It is hard to keep our practice pure. Keeping our practice pure means not falling into the duality of craving for one thing and disliking the other. When we sit zazen, we don't try to create a wonderful, special, desirable state of mind, and we don't try to eliminate a distasteful thing.

Just accept everything as it is. When there are painful legs, it is just painful legs. When there is a pleasant feeling, it is just a pleasant feeling. You may think that when there is no feeling at all this must be the enlightenment they were talking about, but this is just another state of mind. States of mind are continually changing, and there is no special state of mind which is the "right state of mind" that you are seeking. The only thing that you are seeking is nondiscrimination, which is not a state of mind. It is merely giving up craving and rejection – not hanging onto anything and not pushing away anything. Pushing away, or aversion, is also a form of attachment. Whatever we push away, we become attached to.

The wonderful thing about zazen is, not that you feel euphoric, but that you allow yourself to sit in reality. When you can sit in reality without grasping or rejecting, hating or loving, then of course you have joy. That is a very joyful experience, but we have to let ourselves experience whatever comes, to be open to everything. Zazen is vast openness, completely opening ourselves and accepting whatever we are experiencing. Our tendency, of course, when something undesirable comes, is to tense up, or push away, so we have to let go of that instinct to close down or fight.

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The mind should be able to encompass everything. When we find some discomfort, just immediately open to it. So, instead of closing down, we just get bigger. We have to learn how to open our mind completely. Then we have some comfort, but our comfort includes both sides. So, Dogen says, "Accordingly, in the practice-enlightenment of the Buddha way, meeting one thing is mastering it." Actually, to meet one thing, just take care of that one thing. Fortunately when we sit *zazen*, we are just taking care of one thing. Just take care of that one thing, and master it. If you can do that, then you master everything.

You don't have to conquer the whole world piece by piece. Doing one practice is practicing completely. The whole body-and-mind is together with the universe. There's no gap.

"Here is the place, and here the way unfolds." Right here is the place to do it, and right here is where the way unfolds. "The boundary of realization is not distinct, for the realization comes forth simultaneously with the mastery of Buddha Dharma. Do not suppose that what you realize becomes your knowledge and is grasped by your consciousness. Although actualized immediately, the inconceivable may not be apparent. Its appearance is beyond your knowledge."

Even though we don't know everything and don't even realize what we do realize, our practice is complete when we sit with a pure and nondiscriminating mind. So, you may not even know the complete meaning of your practice.

Dogen then gives an example, "Zen master Baoche of Mount Mayu was fanning himself. A monk approached and said, 'Master, the nature of wind is permanent, and there is no place it does not reach. Why then do you fan yourself?'" "Wind" here means Buddha nature. He is saying, if Buddha nature is all-pervasive and there is no place where it is not, why are you fanning yourself? This is a good question. This was Dogen's question when, as a young monk, he went to China. Dogen said to himself, "If everybody has Buddha nature, if Buddha nature pervades the universe, why do you have to do anything?" So, he went to China with this in mind, "Why, if Buddha

nature is everywhere, why are you doing something about it? Why are you fanning yourself?"

"Baoche replied, 'Although you understand that the nature of wind is permanent, you do not understand the meaning of its reaching everywhere.' 'What is the meaning of its reaching everywhere?' the monk asked again. The master just kept fanning himself. The monk bowed deeply."

What is the nature of "permanence?" The master's fanning means, even though the nature of wind is permanent, in order to experience that, or in order to understand it, you have to do something. You can't just lie back. You have to do something. You have to actualize Buddha nature or realization through activity. Even though the nature of everything is Buddha nature, and Buddha nature is all existence, in order to realize what it is, we have to do something. For example, in order to get a cake, although all the ingredients are there, you still have to put the ingredients in a bowl and mix it up, and put it in the oven. Otherwise you have no cake.

Why do we practice? Why do we have to do this? Why do we sit with our legs crossed? Why do we study, if everything is right here now? Dogen's whole understanding of practice is that practice and realization go together. In order to realize your true nature, you have to realize it through practice, you actualize it through your practice activity. Therefore, Dogen says practice is not different than enlightenment, and enlightenment is not separate from practice. That is why he says some may realize it and some may not: even though realization appears through practice as practice, and practice appears as realization, you may not recognize that. But if you practice, realization is there.

Then he continues, "The monk bowed deeply. The actualization of the Buddha Dharma, the vital path of its correct transmission is like this. If you say that you do not need to fan yourself because the nature of wind is permanent, and you're going to have wind without fanning, you will understand neither permanence, nor the nature of wind." In other words, you won't

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understand Buddha nature, and you will also not understand your own activity, even though you think you understand your activity. The nature of wind is permanent. Because of that, the wind of the Buddha's house brings forth the gold of the earth, and makes fragrant the cream of the long river."

There are many important points, but I think the important point here is how to bring to life, our life on each moment, and, in this way, to extend zazen into our daily life by finding our dharma position on every moment within the realm of reality. It means no self-centered activity. Just basically not to be selfish. That is very simple. To

find our place, our dharma position, within the realm of Buddha nature, moment by moment is to not have any self-centered activity. As soon as we revert to self-centered activity, we lose our dharma position. We lose our way and our place. But as long as we continue this non-self-centered activity, the way and the place open up wherever we are. There is no special thing that we have to do, but everything we do is very special, special in the sense that it's real. Sweeping the floor, washing the dishes, just ordinary activity becomes the Way.

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Photo: John Paredes



Chapel Hill Zen Center



P.O. Box 16302
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Schedule

Sunday Morning *Tuesday Evening*

9:00 zazen	7:00 zazen
9:40 kinhin	7:40 kinhin
9:50 zazen	7:50 zazen
10:30 service	8:20 service

Monday to Friday

<i>Thursday Evening</i>	6:00 A.M. zazen
6:00 P.M. zazen	6:50 A.M. zazen

Meetings at 5322 NC Highway 86
2.5 miles North of I-40 exit 266
Josho Pat Phelan, Abbess

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Holiday

The zendo will be closed on Monday, September 4,
but the Sunday morning program on September 3 will be held as usual.

*After the bells had rung
and were silent
Flowers chimed a peal of fragrance
— Basho*

Embracing diversity, the Chapel Hill Zen Center
expresses the fundamental connection of all beings
by welcoming everyone to the practice of zazen.
May all beings realize their true nature.