



Board of Directors for 2019

The new Chapel Hill Zen Center Board of Directors are Kenneth Wilson, President; John Paredes, Vice President; Mike McKillip, Treasurer; Nell Kriesberg, Secretary; Tripp Spivey and Sam Ridge, Members-at-Large; and Josho Pat Phelan, *ex officio*. Many thanks and deep bows to Maura High who served as president of the board for these past three years, and to Colin Maxwell and Andrea Ashdown who served as Members-at-Large for this past year.

All-day Sittings

All-day sittings are scheduled for Sundays, January 13, and February 10, from 6:00 A.M. until 5:00 P.M. *For these two months, we are holding the next Sunday open for a “snow make-up date” if needed due to weather conditions.* 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: <https://kannondo.org/getting-started/oryoki/>

Study Group

Eternal does not mean unchanging; it means that this impermanent moment goes on endlessly. In this way, we come to understand that time cannot pass away. It is the eternal presencing of all being-time.

— Shinshu Roberts, *Being-Time*

The Study Group will resume meeting on Thursday evenings, from 6:45-8:00, on **January 10**. We will continue reading together and discussing the book *Being-Time, A Practitioner’s Guide to Dogen’s Shobogenzo Uji*, by Shinshu Roberts, beginning on page 69, just before Chapter 6.

This is a commentary on and a discussion of Zen Master Dogen’s text based on his premise that being and time are inseparable. Everyone is welcome and there is no charge. Copies of the book are for sale in the entryway.

Beginning Zen Practice

A Class with David Guy
January 14 to February 18
 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 Zenji

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 919-641-9277 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*

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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*. David's Blog can be found at www.davidguy.org

Children's Program

The Zen Center's Children's program offers children four years and older a place in the Zen Center sangha through a variety of activities, including meditation, story, craft, song, and movement, as well as participation in Zen Center events and celebrations throughout the year. In each meeting, the children have the space and time to practice living mindfully and to learn about Buddhist teachings and contexts while giving their parents an opportunity to meditate in the concurrent adult program. The Children's Program meets twice a month, on Sunday mornings, from 8:50 until 11:00; the program will be held on **January 6 and 20, and February 3 and 24**. For more information, please contact Maura High, the program coordinator, at maurahigh@gmail.com.

Eco-Dharma Discussion Group

February 3, at 11:15

In this group we informally explore Buddhist teachings on the natural world, caring for the natural world as an expression of bodhisattva vow, and our own responses to current environmental issues. If you are interested, please contact Zenki Kathleen Batson at lulu@rumbleduss.com.

Aging Gracefully, Befriending Death

Sunday, January 27, at 11:15

This is an informal discussion group that provides the opportunity to share readings, information, and explore conversations among ourselves on these topics. Please contact Carol Klein at wmichael@nc.rr.com, Kris Garvin at krisgarvin@gmail.com, or Jeff Sherman at jeffsherman3333@gmail.com, if you have questions or would like more information. Everyone is welcome, regardless of age.

Looking Ahead

Zoketsu Norman Fischer, Tuesday evening, May 14, at 7:45. He will talk on his new book, *The World Could Be Otherwise: Imagination and the Bodhisattva Path*. Copies will be available to buy and he will be happy to sign them. The talk will follow one period of zazen at 7:00.

People of Color Sitting Group

The POC Sitting Group meets on Wednesday nights from 6:00-7:30, and begins with zazen at 6:00, followed by the option to stay for group discussion and community building. 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 poesittinggroup@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 12-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, Jeff Sherman at jeffsherman3333@gmail.com, or Carol Klein at wmichael@nc.rr.com.

Chinese Calligraphy and Brush Painting

Jinxu Zhao will teach Chinese Calligraphy on Sunday afternoons from **2:15-3:45**, on January 6 and 27, and February 3 and 24, and Brush Painting from **2:15-4:15**. Fees are \$30 per class, or \$110 for 4 classes. Please contact Jinxu at (919) 484-7524 or Jxznc@aol.com to register or for more information. Jinxu is also available to teach children's classes.

In Nyugen Liz Moore's Buddhist Belongings

I found a note with this written on it –

"Show up

Tell the truth

Stay awake

Don't be attached to the outcome"

For me, this suggests:

Showing up – is to be right here

Tell the truth – don't fudge, don't take your story to be true

Stay awake – be with this moment, right now

Don't be attached to the outcome – don't look to the future, this moment is enough

—Joshō

Genzo-e Sesshin: March 1-6

Shohaku Okumura Roshi will lead a 5-day *Genzo-e* or teaching sesshin, beginning at 7:00 on Friday night, March 1, and going through Wednesday afternoon, March 6. In the *Genzo-e* sesshin, Okumura Roshi will give an hour and a half talk each morning and afternoon on Dogen's text *Menju* or *Face-to-Face Transmission*. Okumura Roshi will be using his own translation which will be available before he arrives. Other translations are included in Kaz Tanahashi's *Moon in a Dewdrop*, p.175, and in Nishijima and Cross's *Master Dogen's Shobogenzo*, Book 3, p. 155.

Shohaku Okumura Roshi is a wonderful teacher of Dogen's Way of practice and teaching, and we are fortunate that he will be able to lead sesshin in North Carolina. Okumura Roshi is the abbot of Sanshinji in Bloomington, IN. He was ordained in 1970 by Kosho Uchiyama Roshi, and he has translated many teachings on Soto Zen practice including, Uchiyama Roshi's books *Opening the Hand of Thought* and *Dogen's Genjokoan*; and *Dogen's Extensive Record: a Translation of the Eihei Koroku*; as well as his own books, *Realizing Genjokoan*, *Living by Vow and The Mountains and Waters Sutra: A Practitioner's Guide to Dogen's Sansuikyo*.

In order to help all of us settle into the schedule and our zazen practice, please arrive on time. If you can only sit part of the sesshin, please explain clearly what part of sesshin you would like to attend when you register, and come to orientation on Friday night. **Priority will be given to those attending the full sesshin.** It is advisable to sign up for sesshin sooner than you might normally, since there will be more people attending from out of state than usual. Please return your registration by **February 15**, with a \$40 deposit.

Sesshin will begin at 7:00 on Friday evening with orientation and job assignments. Following orientation, silence will be observed. The zendo will be open by 4:00 P.M. on Friday; so please try to arrive in time to settle in before 7:00 P.M. The sesshin day will include zazen, beginning at 6:00 A.M., kinhin, Dharma talks, a work period, and formal meals served in the zendo. The day will end by 9:00 P.M. Because expenses will be higher for this sesshin than in the past, the fees will also be higher and on a sliding scale for those who may want to offer more. **For members, the fees are \$225-\$300, and for others \$275-\$350.** There will also be an opportunity to make a donation to the teacher. *It is our intention that no one be turned away for financial reasons, and partial scholarships are available.* If you would like to request a scholarship, please contact Ken at kenneth.wilson@duke.edu and let him know what your participation in the CHZC has been. ***In the past, contributions received for scholarships were very helpful in allowing people to attend sesshin here and at the San Francisco Zen Center.***

You are welcome to sleep in the zendo, and there may be some space available in members' homes nearby. Please bring a pad for the floor, a sleeping bag, a pillow, a towel and wash cloth, an old washcloth to clean your feet on breaks, slip-on shoes, and layered clothing. Opportunities for bathing are limited. ***Please bring work clothes.*** For more information, please write: info@chzc.org, or call (919) 967-0861. The zendo emergency number is (919) 933-0776.

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Genzo-e Sesshin Registration Form March 1-6 — Applications Due February 15

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____

E-mail _____

Emergency contact person: Name _____ Phone _____

Liability waiver: *prior to sesshin, you will be required to sign a waiver whereby you release the Zen Center from any liability for accident or injury, and agree not to sue. You may request a copy of the form in advance.* Do you have a **medical condition** (e.g., diabetes, heart condition, pregnancy) or **dietary restrictions**? If so, please attach a short statement of explanation:

Do you need a chair? Full time Part time

I have an oryoki I can bring Yes No

I plan to arrive at _____ on _____ I plan to leave at _____ on _____

I can help set up (4:00 P.M.—6:00 P.M.) I can help clean up

I have enclosed my deposit/sitting fees \$ _____

I would like to donate toward a scholarship fund \$ _____

If this is your first sesshin with the Chapel Hill Zen Center, please attach a short statement about your zazen practice and history: How long have you been sitting zazen? How often are your currently sitting? Have you sat a one-day sitting or longer sesshin before? If so, when and with whom?

Do you have room in your home for someone from out of town to stay? Yes No

Where do you plan to sleep?

Checks payable to
Chapel Hill Zen Center
P.O. Box 16302
Chapel Hill, NC 27516

Stillness and Contentedness

Joshō Pat Phelan

*A yogi feels joy like a leaf
slowly falling from a tree,
or like a stone*

sinking deeply in the ocean. — Milarepa

This reminds me of Sharon Salzberg saying, "...our deepest happiness... is born from letting go of what is unnecessary." When I first read the Sharon Salzberg quote, I thought it referred to giving away unnecessary things, and it took me awhile to realize that this could also mean unnecessary emotions and our psychological or mental creations – our mental possessions and burdens, such as judgements, grudges, jealousies, regrets, attachments – basically, anything that doesn't pertain to this moment.

This idea is also found in the Chinese Buddhist and Taoist meditation manual, *Secret of the Golden Flower*. Referring to meditation practice, it says, "The more you let go, the greater the subtlety; and the greater the subtlety, the deeper the quietude." I would like to talk about the joy of letting go by looking at the relationship between stillness and contentedness. I think true contentment is possible when the mind is still, when whatever processes we go through to create and manifest the self come to rest. In stillness, the "I want," "I think," "I feel," "my memory," "my plans," and so on can stop. When wanting and thinking come to rest, the stillness and spaciousness that are left is true contentment. But the stillness I am referring to is not a static or dead space – it is vibrant and dynamic and it's what allows us to be open to the aliveness of everything. The energy in stillness connects us to the energy in all things. To be completely still requires the engagement of our full being. Eckhart Tolle said, "Only the stillness in you can perceive the silence outside." I would say that the opposite is also true, paying attention to silence outside can help us settle and return to our inner stillness.

Contentment is often considered the fulfillment of desire. I don't know if any of your desires have ever been satisfied, but when mine have, they are

pretty quickly replaced by new desires. I heard about a study done with people who had won the lottery and instantly became multi-millionaires. The study concluded that the happiness people felt when they heard that they won lasted about five minutes, or about the same length of time that happiness lasts from more ordinary causes. I don't know if this is accurate, but I think that the habit of wanting, of reaching away from ourselves, is so strong for most of us, that it just overtakes us. In Buddhism the world we inhabit is considered a desire world or *kama loka* where the objects of our senses push and pull us along; and attachment to sense objects is what binds us to *samsara*, to the cycle of birth and death.

Shakyamuni Buddha taught the Four Noble Truths in his first sermon. More recently I have heard the Four Noble Truths of early Buddhism compared to the Four Bodhisattva Vows of Mahayana Buddhism. The first Noble Truth addresses the prevalence of *dukkha*, which is commonly translated as suffering but has a wide range of meaning that includes an underlying restlessness, an uneasiness, or dissatisfaction. The first Bodhisattva Vow is, "Beings are numberless, I vow to save them," or to free them, or to ferry them from this shore of *samsara* to the Other Shore of liberation. In the book *Living by Vow*, Shohaku Okumura said that "the deeper meaning of *dukkha* ...is related to impermanence.... The fact that we cannot control the reality of our lives is the root of the suffering described by Buddha which is based on our delusions and attachments to ego [or self]."

The second Noble Truth is that *dukkha* – suffering or dissatisfaction – is the result of craving, including a subtle kind of wanting that's pervasive in our culture and to a large extent, in our consciousness. The second Bodhisattva Vow addresses desire and it is, "Delusions or desires are inexhaustible, I vow to end them." Okumura Roshi said that delusions refer to "the hindrances, troubles, defilements, or passions that drive us to unwholesome action." He listed the four types of delusion which are "ignorance, egocentric views, arrogance, and self attachment [which] are the cause of suffering and

unwholesome karma.” He talked about arrogance and said that when we try to justify ourselves or try to be righteous, that those are causes that lead to arrogance, one of the forms of delusion.

The third Noble Truth is that when craving or desire ends, *dukkha* or suffering will end. And the third Bodhisattva Vow is “Dharma Gates, or the methods of practice leading to liberation are boundless, I vow to enter them.” Okumura Roshi said that Dharma Gates “means teachings about reality and about reality-based practice.” The fourth Noble Truth is that there is a method of practice that leads to liberation or to the ending of suffering which is described in the Eight-fold Path. The fourth Bodhisattva Vow is “Buddha’s Way is unsurpassable, I vow to attain it or, we say, to become it” which, in a sense, is vowing to mature in the Eight-fold Path. Okumura Roshi said that the word “Way” is actually translated from the Sanskrit word “*bodhi*,” which means awakening. So, the meaning of the fourth Bodhisattva Vow is, “Buddha’s awakening is unsurpassable, I vow to attain it.” These two sets of teachings, that form the foundation of Early Buddhism and Mahayana Buddhism, address our predicament which is characterized by craving and delusion, and the antidote to both is practice, especially the practice of awareness right now, in this moment.

Letting go of the pursuit of our desires, recognizing that desire is inexhaustible – unquenchable – and allowing our desires to come to rest, at least for the time being, is true contentment. We might say that the opposite of stillness is the wanting or dissatisfaction of *dukkha*. Another way *dukkha* is defined is the quality of experience that results when the mind is acted upon by delusion, and it can be any kind of delusion, or delusion about anything. The most basic and prevalent form of delusion is the idea that we are separate. Without this sense of separation, we couldn’t and we wouldn’t want to reach out for something else. In Zen our understanding of the second Bodhisattva Vow, “Delusions and desires are inexhaustible, I vow to end them,” includes the idea of penetrating them, meaning to see our

delusions and desires for what they really are – knowing how they push us around, propelling us to reach away from our present experience. By knowing them for what they are, we are no longer intoxicated with them, fearful of them, or cling to them in the same way. We may not end them, but we can become free of their power.

I think of *dukkha*, whether it is the more subtle form of wanting or restlessness or the stronger form of misery, as being off balance from our present experience, as if we had one foot in the present and the other foot anticipating what will come next, reaching out to the future in hope of fulfilling our expectations and desires. The other way we are off-balance is from reviewing the past and feeling regret or resentment, with one foot stuck in the past. In this divided state, we are off center, whereas contentment, which is characterized by equanimity, is to have both feet balanced, resting squarely in the present. When we feel desire, anxiety, regret and so on, we are off balance, wobbling, ready to fall back into the past or tip over into the future. So, we could say that Buddhism is the practice of coming to rest, finding the still point of our equilibrium, through unambivalent engagement with the body and mind of the present, accepting that our own body and mind are enough. In the precepts ceremony we say, “Don’t put another head on top of your own.” This means to trust that your own body and mind are acceptable, are enough for practice.

Buddha gave a short teaching called “Five Subjects for Frequent Recollection.” These are, “I am of the nature to age. I am of the nature to sicken. I am of the nature to die. All that is mine, beloved and pleasing, will become otherwise, will become separated from me.” And the last is, “I am the owner of my karma [or actions], heir to my karma, born of my karma, related to my karma, I abide supported by my karma; whatever karma I shall do, for good or for ill, of that I will be the heir.” So, the actions of our body, speech, and mind matter. This may sound depressing, but according to Buddha, it’s reality, and delusion can be defined as being at odds with reality. So, let’s face reality so we won’t be taken by surprise. Death means that there has been life.

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Without life we wouldn't die. And life is synonymous with impermanence – because we are alive, we have the opportunity to change and grow and to enjoy the ever-changing beauty of life.

Katagiri Roshi said that “The cause of suffering is that we have an object.” “Having an object” refers to our everyday, discriminating consciousness which works to divide, separate, and compare, to judge and then reject or grasp its object. Through discriminating consciousness, we experience separation and divide the world into inside and outside, into “I like this and want more” or “I don't like that, and want it to go away.” Zen emphasizes that the object, meaning duality, is the source of *dukkha*, the source of being off-balance.

Creating duality, separating from something and taking it as an object is necessary for clinging or craving. Anything that clings or is clung to as “I” or “mine” keeps us from fully entering this moment of experience and is considered a form of *dukkha*. Our usual way of being is to take our body and mind to be “me” – my perceptions, my feelings, my hangnail, my astigmatism, my character, my sense of humor, my insight. The Thai teacher, Buddhadhassa said that sometimes this teaching “is misunderstood to mean that birth, old age, sickness and death are themselves *dukkha*, but” he said, “these are just its vehicles. birth, old age, sickness, death, and so on, if they are not clung to as “I” or “mine,” cannot be *dukkha*. The body and mind are the same. *Dukkha* is not inherent in the body and mind.” He said, “ Only when there is clinging... do they become *dukkha*.”

The opposite of craving is nonclinging, which means when seeing, just see without responding to what you are seeing as pleasant or unpleasant. When we are able to just see, just taste, just hear without comparing or judging, without the desire either to hold on to or stop the experience, this is nonclinging. Since everything in the universe including our body and mind is constantly changing, our attachment to the way we want things to be is a constant source of dissatisfaction. Resisting change keeps us off balance, keeps us from entering the present moment completely. So, resistance is another form of

dukkha. Resistance is characterized by contracting and tightening and leads to being stuck.

Eckhart Tolle talked about gratitude for the present moment, for the fullness of life we have at hand right now as true prosperity. Cultivating gratitude for this moment of being, for simply being alive, gives all of us tremendous potential for prosperity. Instead of trying to stay aware or mindful throughout the day, practice can be cultivating gratitude, a moment by moment gratitude for life. Soon, certainly sooner than we think, this life will end. *Did we squander this moment of life?*

It seems to me that joy is an antidote to the conditioning that closes our minds. Actually, beginner's mind is joy, and this joy sustains our practice. Practice can include a painful body; it can include the work needed to stay present, to stay on the cushion physically and mentally; it can include difficult emotional states; but over the years the bottom line is an underlying joy in the experience of zazen. Sometimes joy is felt as a relief from the complications of the world, and we take joy in the simplicity of just sitting. What I mean by joy isn't the same as happiness. Happiness is stronger, an emotion accompanied by an object. Chuang-tzu talked about happiness and it has been translated as, “Happiness is the absence of the striving for happiness.” I think of this kind of happiness as joy, which can be very simple, or maybe joy is simplicity – the simplicity of doing one thing at a time and doing it with our whole being. In Zen, sometimes it's said that the essence of Mind is light, and returning to this light is joy. This joyful returning is only possible when we aren't reaching out to attain something.

Suzuki Roshi said, “The true practice of zazen is to sit as if drinking water when you are thirsty....You do not have to force yourself to drink water when you are thirsty; you are glad to drink water.” He said, “If you have true joy in your zazen, that is true zazen.”

Chapel Hill Zen Center



P.O. Box 16302
Chapel Hill, NC 27516
(919) 967-0861

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

Joshō Pat Phelan, Abbess

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In the icy moonlight

Small stones

Crunch underfoot

— Buson

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.