

# Myōju



September 2023, Issue 93

Soto Zen Buddhism in Australia



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JIKISHOAN QUARTERLY

# Editorial

## **Theme — Contribution: Being a member**

In a world emphasising individualism, contribution often goes unnoticed. Yet, it is vital for the growth, success, and sustainability of communities, organisations, and groups. This edition of *Myoju* further explores the theme of contribution and delves into being a member, recognising its potential to shape individuals and the collective. Teishin Shona Innes, a Jikishoan member since 2005, shares her insights in the feature article 'Feeding the Fire: A Journey of Practice and Discovery', highlighting the Zen training in Japan, and the benefits of being a contributing member. Her monastic ordination led her to channel passion and effort towards monastic routine practices, realising the impact of actions on the greater good. This sense of purpose and direction brings profound fulfilment beyond individualism. Being a contributing member transforms lives and nurtures communities. As we explore this theme, we uncover the power of collective efforts and the value of everyone's contribution. Together, we can create a world where the spirit of contribution is cherished and celebrated.

**Ekai Korematsu—Editor**

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### **Upcoming Edition**

Anticipate the forthcoming edition of *Myoju*, scheduled for release around the December 2023 solstice. We kindly invite contributions that resonate with our practice and training. This encompasses a diverse range of content such as articles, assessments of literary works or online resources, dialogues, individual contemplations, poetic expressions, artistic creations, and captivating photography. Kindly note that the final date for submitting content is October 22nd, 2023. The focal point for the next edition will be **"Contribution: Attachment and Non-Gaining."**

# Welcome to Jikishoan

Jikishoan is a Zen Buddhist community based in Melbourne, Australia. It was officially inaugurated in 2018 as the first Soto Zen temple in Australia. Our main teacher, Ekai Korematsu Osho, has been teaching Soto Zen Buddhism for 40 years in Japan, USA, India, Australia, and New Zealand. He established Jikishoan in Melbourne in 1999 and introduced an active learning program called Zen and Integrated Buddhist Studies (IBS) in 2010.

The name Jikishoan reflects the spirit of our community. 'Jiki' means straightforward or direct, 'sho' means proof or realisation, and 'an' means hut. Our practice itself is the proof—there is no realisation separate from the direct experience in the here and now. At Jikishoan, we offer a wide range of training and practice throughout the year. You are invited to attend our courses, workshops, retreats, weekly meditation, and daily practice activities.

Our community follows Soto Zen Buddhism, which was founded by Eihei Dogen Zenji and Keizan Jokin Zenji in the 13th century. Please refer to the teaching schedule on the last page of this magazine or visit our website at [Jikishoan.org.au](http://Jikishoan.org.au) for more information.



## Myoju

### ***About the meaning of Myoju — 'Bright Pearl'***



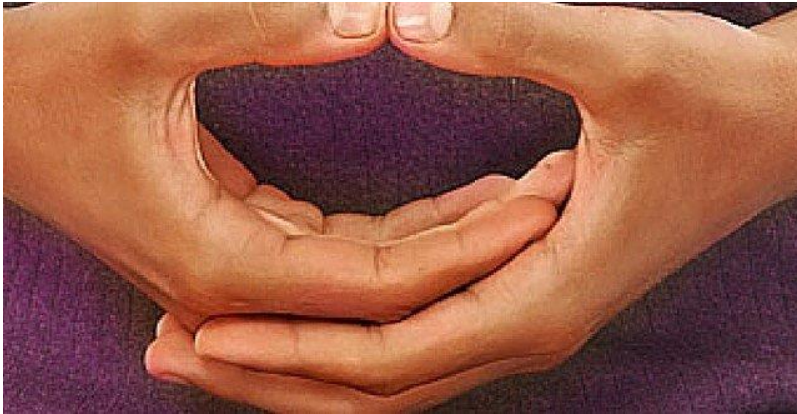
Master Gensha Shibi once expressed the Truth by saying, "The whole universe in the ten directions is one bright pearl."

"One day, a monk approached Master Gensha and inquired, "I have heard your words about the universe being a single bright pearl. How should we interpret this?" The Master responded, "The whole universe in the ten directions is indeed one bright pearl. What purpose does understanding serve? Later, the Master asked the monk, "How do you understand this?" The monk replied, "The whole universe in the ten directions is one bright pearl. What use is understanding?" Hearing this, the Master remarked, "I perceive that you are struggling to enter a demon's cave in a black mountain. Even speculation and worry are inseparable from the bright pearl. Every action and thought arises from the bright pearl alone. Therefore, advancing or retreating within a demon's dark mountain cave is none other than the manifestation of the one bright pearl itself."

*This passage is excerpted from Zen Master Dogen's Shobogenzo, specifically from the chapter titled "Ikka-no-Myoju" or "One Bright Pearl."*

# The Power of Contribution: Being a Member

Ekai Korematsu Osho



*As we approach the 25th Annual General Meeting of the Jikishoan Zen Buddhist Community, it is an opportune time to explore the profound theme of contribution and the significant role of being a member in our vibrant community. At its core, contribution is the act of giving or sharing one's resources, skills, time, or expertise for the betterment of a cause or a group. It is a selfless endeavour that goes beyond mere participation; it demands active engagement, dedication, and a commitment to create positive change. Whether it is within the workplace, a social community, or a family setting, the power of contribution lies in its capacity to foster a profound sense of belonging and purpose.*

## **Embracing the Essence of Being a Member**

Being a member of our Buddhist community (the Sangha) surpasses mere association with a group; it represents a deep connection to a shared identity and a sense of belonging. It is a role that carries responsibilities, privileges, and the potential to influence outcomes. Embracing the role of being a member is a humble acknowledgment of our integral part in the collective's journey.

## **The Benefits of Being a Contributing Member**

### **Sense of purpose**

As contributing members, we experience a profound sense of purpose and direction. This fulfilment arises as we channel our passions and talents towards common goals, knowing that our actions contribute to the greater good.

### **Building strong relationships**

Contribution often involves collaboration and cooperation with others, nurturing deep and meaningful relationships that form a robust support system within our community.

### **Personal growth and learning**

Actively engaging with others and participating in group dynamics open the door to new ideas, perspectives, and experiences. This continuous learning journey fosters personal growth and development.

### **Enhanced empathy and understanding**

Being a contributing member requires us to understand the needs and concerns of others, cultivating essential qualities of empathy and compassion that nurture a harmonious and supportive community.

### **Collective Progress**

When each member contributes their unique strengths, the collective becomes stronger and more resilient. Our combined efforts enable progress and success in ways that might be unattainable for individuals working alone.

### **Celebration of Diversity**

Our community thrives on diversity. As members with different backgrounds, experiences, and cultures, our contributions enrich the group with a tapestry of perspectives, sparking creativity and innovation.

### **Addressing Challenges and Overcoming Obstacles**

Being a contributing member comes with challenges, but with perseverance, we can overcome them:

#### **Time Management**

Balancing personal commitments with community contributions can be demanding. Effective time management and setting priorities are essential to ensure a fulfilling and harmonious engagement.

#### **Conflict Resolution**

Differing opinions and approaches may lead to conflicts within the group. Learning effective communication and conflict resolution skills can foster a spirit of collaboration and understanding.

#### **Overcoming Self-Doubt**

Some individuals may hesitate to contribute due to self-doubt or fear of rejection. Creating an inclusive and supportive environment empowers individuals to embrace their unique abilities.

### **Conclusion**

Contribution is an integral aspect of human nature that, when harnessed effectively, can lead to transformative changes within groups and society as a whole. As we embrace the role of being a Jikishoan member and actively participate in the betterment of our communities, the potential for personal growth and collective progress becomes boundless. Let us recognize the immense power of contribution and wholeheartedly embrace the responsibilities and rewards of being a contributing member in the beautiful tapestry of life we weave together.

Thank you for your attention, and may our united efforts continue to make a positive impact on our community and beyond.

**Ekai Korematsu**

Abbot & Teacher



# Sesshin Sessho

Ekai Korematsu Osho

***From Zen Master Dogen's Shobogenzo — Teisho Talk number 1 on 16 July 2023***



## ***(Part 1)***

Good afternoon, everyone, and welcome to this online retreat period. As you all know, we have had several online retreats since the onset of COVID, which disrupted our ability to engage in physical activities. During the pandemic, we had to adapt and transition to online programs, including retreats. I still remember our first online retreat, which lasted twelve weeks—quite a long duration (laughter). However, over time, we learned to adjust, and we have now settled on a five-week period for our online retreats, which seems to work well.

As the impact of COVID has subsided, physical retreats are back in session, making the need for online retreats somewhat less significant. Nevertheless, the online format still serves a purpose, especially for those unable to attend physical retreats or Jikishoan's various teaching activities. It offers an opportunity to focus on practice over a specific period, even though it may have its limitations.

This time, I asked for suggestions for the text we should delve into during the retreat, and the members, particularly the IBS faculty, suggested three texts. From those suggestions, we collectively chose 'Sesshin Sessho' from the *Shobogenzo*. This text holds great importance, but it's not one that provides quick or straightforward answers. It delves into the concept of walking the Buddha's path, exploring the true meaning of attaining the Buddha's Way.

This text is not about reaching a particular state of mind instantaneously, be it the highest or the lowest. Instead, it emphasises the continuous journey of walking the path of the Buddha, which characterises the essence of the Soto School. In the Soto School, it's not about merely achieving enlightenment or transitioning from an unenlightened to an enlightened state. The focus lies in walking the path of the Buddhas. Taking the first step on this journey signifies walking the Buddha's Way, irrespective of whether one is enlightened or not. The path goes beyond the labels of enlightenment or unenlightenment; it transcends such fixed notions. The Zen Master Dogen's Dharma embodies this philosophy, encouraging practitioners to move beyond notions of enlightenment and continue the path.

However, this doesn't imply that having authentic and proper experiences holds no value. On the contrary, such experiences are crucial, but they require maturity.

So, Zen Master Dogen approaches the teaching of Buddhism in an authentic and complete manner. It encompasses the nature of Buddhism, which involves the interaction between mind and nature—the essence of Buddhism itself. It's not a vague concept; rather, it requires understanding the relationship between one's mind and the true nature of things.

In this context, 'mind' is not an abstract notion, but holds substance, like one's intent or will. This intent leads us to inquire into the Buddha's truth, and as we express that intent, our true nature is revealed.

In this translation, 'mind' is equated with 'intent,' indicating that the essence is inseparable from the mind. The fundamental topic of Buddhism revolves around understanding true nature, and the study of Buddhism falls into this framework. Zen Master Dogen uses mind and nature as a platform to describe this. Just like the Heart Sutra's emphasis on form and emptiness, mind refers to something concrete — form — which supports mind consciousness

The mind recognises particular objects, but these objects are transient. The nature of the mind is to be unattached to any of these passing phenomena. Mind and the nature of the mind are not separate entities; they are intertwined. However, without proper study and clarity, we become fixated on the objects of the mind, neglecting its essence.

Zen Master Dogen addresses this issue on various levels —during zazen practice, for example. There are two aspects: thinking and not thinking. In thinking, there is an object of the mind. In not thinking, there is no object, but one might fall into delusion or fantasy. Balancing these aspects is the path.

In practice, intent plays a crucial role. The intention is to awaken to the truth the Buddha realised. When this intention is put into action through zazen, the two aspects—mind and nature—come together. Initially, due to lack of experience and training, attachment to one way or rejection of another may cause difficulties. However, making efforts to realise the Buddha's Way, and returning everything to its proper place are essential aspects of zazen, seated meditation.

Zen Master Dogen addresses the practical aspects of the mind and the nature of the mind in the *Fukanzazengi's* teachings. The method that needs to be emphasised is zazen, which is universally applicable, providing a broad platform for inquiry. 'Sesshin Sessho', in this context, becomes an exploration of one's own practice and approach to life. Once the intention becomes clear, making a resolve to study and practise the Buddha Way, the first step on the path of the Buddha Way is actualised and embodied. This journey has nothing to do with being enlightened or not; it is about walking the path of the Buddha Way as a whole.

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This initial stage is referred to as 'giving rise to the mind of enlightenment' or 'shoshin' —the beginner's mind, the beginning of the Bodhi mind. It holds crucial importance, as the authenticity of this mind determines the speed and depth of one's cultivation. Even a slight deviation can lead one astray, and the farther one goes, the more off course they become. Having the support of teachers, spiritual companions, and spiritual texts allows for reflection and correction. Realising one's habitual patterns and correcting them is a great realisation and an enriching process. Habits are powerful and can lead one down a certain path, but with awareness, gradual correction is possible.

People often become attached to meditation for the sense of peace and tranquillity it brings. However, as they delve deeper into their practice and study, they may discover the other side, where conditions change and

thinking becomes necessary. Clear thinking is essential to navigate through such changes. Fixation on a single way of thinking can be restrictive; letting go of some notions opens the path to clear thinking.

*‘Thinking represents the mind, non-  
thinking embodies nature.  
When you stop thinking, the true  
nature reveals itself’*

The meditator’s tendency to find peace in their familiar practice can be limiting. They may prefer to sit quietly rather than engage in reading and study. Yet, with time, they realise the importance of thinking and discernment when conditions change. Meditation may not always provide the same sense of peace when external circumstances fluctuate. Thus, incorporating clear thinking becomes crucial to adjust and understand the ever-changing nature of life.

When your mind is in disarray, it may seem like numerous problems are overwhelming you. The thoughts get entangled, but the key lies in training your thinking. Focus on the actual issue at hand, the concrete thing that requires your attention in this very moment. This is the purpose of thinking. Your mind is meant to attend to the specific matter, not to wander aimlessly through various thoughts. Discover and attend to the essential, letting go of any unnecessary clutter, and latch onto the intent—the very essence of things. This training necessitates thinking; it won’t come naturally. If you merely follow patterns and refrain from thinking, it won’t lead you to the essential understanding.

Now, let’s explore two fundamental aspects: Form and Essence. The Heart Sutra embodies the essence of the mind, revealing the profound connection between form and essence. When these two aspects come together, mastery is achieved. Form itself is essence, and essence itself is form. In every moment, whatever you are doing holds immense significance, and the next moment is no different. True mastery is achieved when there is no extra clutter, allowing a clearer understanding of the nature of the mind, the nature of the self, and the nature of things. This understanding shapes how we live each moment, free from being stuck in our thoughts.

Reaching this level of mastery requires traversing a long path filled with mistakes and realisations. You may grab onto things that don’t work and need to let go repeatedly while keeping your intention clear on the path. In the context of Zen Master Dogen’s zazen, mastery involves understanding what appears as dualism. However, it’s crucial to recognise that it is actually two aspects of one thing. Form and emptiness, seemingly separate, converge to demonstrate mastery. The practice of zazen is the essential art of zazen, encompassing thinking, not thinking, and non-thinking. These are the central themes of ‘Sesshin Sessho’.

Thinking represents the mind, non-thinking embodies nature. When you stop thinking, the true nature reveals itself, whether you are alive or dead (laughs). You cannot help but encounter it. By engaging in this practice and discovering the relative side – the truth – through thinking, you may stumble, but you learn and evolve. Absolute truth lies in non-thinking, and accepting it is essential. As you go back and forth, making mistakes and learning, incorporate the Bodhi Mind, the beginner’s mind, into your practice, and mastery will follow. Non-thinking is the pinnacle of mastery – akin to walking, where there is no duality. The left foot and the right foot are in perfect union, allowing you to move forward. Non-thinking simply is, encompassing the relative and the absolute.

—Adapted from a transcript by Margaret Lynch



# Feeding the Fire

Teishin Shona Innes

## ***A Journey of Practice and Discovery***



*Greetings,  
I am delighted to share my  
recent return from Toshoji  
Senmon Sodo in Japan, where  
I practised during the  
summer Ango from April 10  
to July 2. Reflecting on this  
comprehensive and  
meaningful experience, I find  
it challenging to pinpoint its  
exact meaning. However, one  
aspect stands out  
prominently—the continuous  
and devoted practice of  
Abbot Seido Suzuki Roshi,  
who, through the monastic  
tradition, facilitates the  
transmission of the Buddha’s  
practice and enlightenment.*

*Toshoji, an international  
training monastery, provides  
a large scope for Suzuki  
Roshi’s vision. Throughout my  
stay, I had the pleasure of  
encountering monks and  
nuns from Germany, France,  
Brazil, Colombia, USA,  
Slovenia, and Australia, as  
well as Japanese monks,  
forming a diverse and vibrant  
community.*

On my second day at Toshoji, I received the Bodhisattva Precepts from Suzuki Roshi through the Shukke Tokudo (monastic ordination) ceremony. With limited time for preparation, I was guided by Tenmyo in role of the Koso (Novice mentor) with occasional prompts from Suzuki Roshi. Following the ceremony, a sense of joy filled the air, marking a memorable occasion where I connected with Docho Roshi (Abbot) for the first time since my arrival. We captured the moment in a group photograph before resuming our daily schedule.

In the initial three days, I sensed a process of orientation, gradually transitioning into a beginning phase. During this period, my focus shifted to basic aspects of practice and learning to embody them.

As I progressed, each passing period—three days, ten days, two weeks, three weeks—brought an internal shift in attention, settling, and familiarity. By early June, after six weeks, I observed that the daily schedule had become more than just a mental activity

The first month revolved around fundamental practices: adhering to the schedule, punctuality, mastering the art of wearing the formal robes and Buddha’s robe (O-kesa), memorizing daily verses, and engaging in daily samu (work practice).

Wearing the robes correctly proved to be an ongoing challenge that continued even after returning to Melbourne. Despite frequent opportunities to practice (changing from formal robes to work attire 5-6 times a day), it remains still a work in progress. Wearing the robes became a practice in itself, encompassing discipline and growth.

Toshoji offered a refreshing perspective on mistakes. It became evident that mistakes were an integral part of the experience, with the understanding that they are bound to happen. The focus was not on feeling good or bad about making mistakes, but rather on everyone's sincere effort and continuous improvement.

Corrections were given without judgment, fostering a nurturing environment conducive to learning, enjoyment, and the cultivation of confidence.

During my time at Toshoji, I had the opportunity to stoke the wood heater for the communal bathhouse—an that served as an analogy for the training and educational process at the monastery.

Just as building a fire requires a structured approach, starting with small components and allowing for air to create a strong, spreading flame, the practice I received followed a similar structure. Step by step, I familiarized myself with wearing the monastic clothes, using the oryoki set, adhering to the daily schedule, and engaging in cleaning, sweeping, weeding, and kitchen tasks.

Once the underlying structure of the fire is established and coals begin to form, anything placed on top can quickly catch alight. Similarly, once the foundation of monastic routine and manner of practice is established, every experience becomes fuel for the fire of transformation.

The presence of the Abbott at Toshoji was profound, shifting the atmosphere and illuminating the purpose of action, even when words fell short. It created a sense of readiness—to act, to listen, to observe. I had the privilege of attending memorial services at Entsuji, a neighboring temple, honouring individuals who had recently passed away. These ceremonies not only provided an opportunity to participate but also offered cultural education, highlighting how life and death are integral aspects of Japanese society.

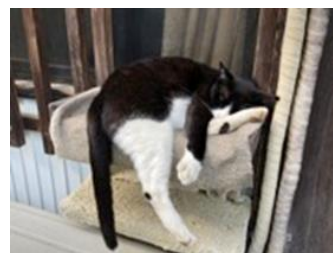
The beauty of stillness, movement, and formality unfolded during Chosan (morning tea with the Abbot and Sangha), where we delved into chapters from Master Dogen's Shobogenzo Zuimonki. Buddhist teachings often offer moments where the words act as medicine, perfectly tailored to the present moment. Zuimonki's simple and concise passages often provided profound insights.

In the final weeks at Toshoji, I attended and participated in two Hossenshiki ceremonies (Head Student's Dharma Combat). The chosen koan, the story of Shakyamuni Buddha holding up the udumbara flower and Makakasho smiling, was presented in both Japanese and English. The scripted nature of the event allowed for repetition and gradually unfolded the deeper meaning, reminiscent of working on a play by Shakespeare where repetition and enactment reveal the beauty and profound layers of language.

I extend my heartfelt appreciation to Seido Suzuki Roshi, visiting teachers, and the nuns and monks of the Toshoji sangha for their practice and support during my learning experience. It is truly a collective effort. I also want to express my gratitude to Ekai Roshi and the Jikishoan Community for their practice in Australia, which enabled me to embark on this extended journey. Without the

support of the Jikishoan Community, I doubt I would have found the strength to undertake this endeavour. May our collective efforts unlock our full potential for the benefit of all beings.

With deepest gratitude and Gassho



#### TOSHOJI GATHA

*When I see the Abbot pick up  
the three-legged cat  
I vow that all sentient beings  
Will not be misled by appearances  
And see equality in all things.*

*Teishin Shona Innes*



The young pine sapling,  
a tribute to Teishin's ordination  
into monastic life.

# The History of Thursday Sanzen-kai

Karen Tokuren Threlfall

***Edited talk given by Karen  
at Sunday Sanzen-kai on 7 May 2023.***



*Photo by: Karen Tokuren Threlfall*

*Hello, everyone! I'm Karen Threlfall, a member of Jikishoan since 1999, and I coordinate the B2 Sanzen-kai on Thursday nights at Quang Minh Temple in Braybrook. Today, I'd like to share the history of our Thursday practice.*

*On 4 May, we joyously celebrated 16 years of continuous practice, though not without challenges.*

*There was a pause at one point, but fortunately, it resumed and has continued till now. I'm deeply grateful to all the members who have been part of this remarkable journey, and I'll talk more about them later.*

In 1998, Jikishoan began without a formal temple, and Ekai Osho built a small zendo in his garage in Pascoe Vale, accommodating only ten people at that time. It was during this period that the fundamental practice of zazen became an integral part of Zen practice.

On 24 April 1999, the organization was officially incorporated and has since offered various programs, including Sunday Sanzen-kai, weekend workshops, and three annual retreats, all of which hold a special place in my heart.

To balance the administrative workload, Ekai Osho encouraged the introduction of Thursday night practice, organized and run by the members. The Thursday practice quickly gained popularity, with the Zendo often filled to capacity. After a few moves, the Korematsu family settled in Moonee Ponds, creating a beautiful practice space from a garage.

Hannah Forsyth, a dedicated member, generously offered her home for practice when they had to move again. Thursday Sanzen-kai continued for a few years, but unfortunately, it had to be closed due to lack of attendance.

In 2007, two members, Mark Summers and Oscar Roos, approached Ekai Osho to resume Thursday practice with specific conditions, including regular attendance by a growing Sangha. It took a year to establish the foundation, and on 3 May 2007, the new Thursday Sanzen-kai commenced with nine members.

In January 2010, the Jikishoan's Buddhist Studies (IBS) was introduced and integrated the Sanzen-kai into part of Main Course program. Thursday Sanzen-kai formally become a B2-Course base. In January 2010, Shogoin Temple, named in 2018, became the host for this practice, providing a beautiful setting for weekly sessions.

The Covid-19 pandemic in 2020 prompted the practice to go virtual and it continued online using Zoom, a remarkable achievement during challenging times.

Hannah Forsyth, who is one of the founding members of Jikishoan, played a significant role in hosting many programs, eventually had to step down, and I took on the role of coordinator in September 2020. Later, Thursday Sanzen-kai was moved to Quang Minh Buddhist Temple, where we have been conducting our weekly sessions since December 2020.

Over the years, many individuals have contributed to Thursday Sanzen-kai, from Ekai Osho and the early members at Essendon and Moonee Ponds to dedicated coordinators like Mark Summers, Oscar Roos, and Hannah Forsyth.

Ekai Osho has highlighted the value of community practice, and the dedicated core members ensure that the administrative aspects are well taken care of. Despite the challenges, B2 Thursday Sanzen-kai has endured, promoting the cultivation of spirit and practice for all who attend.

In closing, I hope B2 Thursday Sanzen-kai continues to provide a nurturing space for members and those who are interested, to cultivate their own spirit and practice.

**Nights at the 'direct realisation hut'**  
*Report on Tuesday and Thursday night practice at the new Moonee Ponds zendo  
by Hannah Forsyth*

I love this poem by Takeno Jo-o which was apparently much appreciated by his pupil, the great Tea master, Sen no Rikyu:

*As I look about,  
Neither flowers nor autumn  
tinted leaves  
Near the grass-thatched hut  
That stands alone by the  
shore.  
The autumn dusk.*

Our hut is not grass-thatched and stands not by the shore but in the garden at the back of the Korematsu family home in St James St, Essendon. The zendo is the most comfortable and intimate setting for our practice at dusk on Tuesday and Thursday evenings. For those of



JIKISHOAN VISIONS

*Thursday Night practice from Myoju 15<sup>th</sup> Issue, 2004*

# Canberra Zen Community Update

Tony Goshin Crivelli



Photo by: Tony Goshin Crivelli

***The Canberra Soto Zen Group,  
affiliated with the Melbourne Jikishoan Zen Buddhist Community,  
has been practicing in the Soto School tradition since 2012.***

With the warm support of Ekai Osho, the group functions as an extension of the Melbourne Sangha. This report aims to provide the Jikishoan community with an update on the activities and progress of the Canberra Zen practitioners, but it is also relevant to the theme of Contribution: 'Being a Member'.

As a Jikishoan practice member, I serve as a 'bridge' between the Jikishoan events led by Ekai Osho and the weekly practice sessions that have been held in Canberra during the last 11 years. I see this role as a direct contribution to extending and maintaining this time-proven practice in another locality within Australia.

Our primary practice event is the Sunday Zazen-kai, held from 2:30 to 4:30 p.m. at the Sakyamuni Buddhist Centre, a Vietnamese temple and monastery. This session includes 'returning to silence,' a tea ceremony, readings, and chants, primarily based

on Shunryu Suzuki's talks from 'Zen Mind Beginner's Mind'. On average, eight people attend in person, with a few others joining online. Throughout the year, we organize one-day extended Zazen-kais at venues outside Canberra, attracting around 12 participants. Additionally, we hold short online formal practice sessions on Thursday evenings, including zazen, kinhin, and recitation of the Heart Sutra.

The Canberra Soto Zen Group functions through a small Committee comprising four long-term members who meet every three months to plan yearly events and ensure smooth community functioning, despite not being an incorporated association.

As an example of the contribution a practice member can make, the Canberra group over the years has welcomed numerous individuals, who found us through our website and Facebook page. Some have become dedicated regular practitioners, while others have engaged for shorter periods before departing for various reasons.

Currently, our email list includes over 30 recipients, highlighting the growing interest and involvement in Zen practice within the Canberra community. The Canberra Soto Zen Group demonstrates profound dedication to Zen practice, with some members attending residential retreats and participating in early morning Gyoten practice. This sincerity reflects a genuine quest for truth and wisdom through regular practice. The timeless wisdom from the talks in 'Zen Mind Beginner's Mind' remains deeply ingrained in our hearts and minds, reminding us that wisdom is found through seeking it.

The Canberra Zen Community continues to flourish, providing a space for dedicated practitioners to come together and explore Zen teachings. We express our gratitude for the ongoing support from the Melbourne Jikishoan Zen Buddhist Community and Ekai Osho. As we progress, we aspire to deepen our understanding of Zen practice and foster compassion and mindfulness within ourselves and the broader community.

# Contributing at a Distance

Helen Shoko O'Shea

*Online Sunday Sanzen-kai was a brilliant innovation of the early days of the pandemic, allowing us all to continue as active participants. Following the days of lockdown, the continuation of B1, B2, Retreat and meetings in a hybrid format has similarly drawn together those of us living at a distance from Melbourne, or unable for a variety of reasons to take part face-to-face.*



While the rest of the world has resumed life 'after' Covid, I am continuing a regime of protection and isolation, due to my relocation to regional Victoria and a medical issue. That hasn't stopped me from continuing my participation in Jikishoan, due to the gift of online participation. As a full-year B Course student, I have felt both a part of Jikishoan through attending lectures and Sunday Sanzen-kai online, while at the same time being aware of the separation from practising with others face-to-face.

The themes for this semester — Contribution: Giving and Receiving and Contribution: Material and Non-material— have offered the opportunity to consider the kinds of contribution I make, at a time when it seems I make very little. As Ekai Osho has emphasised in his talks at Sunday Sanzen-kai, participation itself is a contribution to the community, and I have been able to do this each Sunday, sitting in front of my home altar and my computer.

I have also been able to make a more active contribution as Zoom Co-host, managing the sound-check, recording, and attendance for online participants. Starting training in this role from scratch, I am still developing the necessary skills and focus for these tasks.

Other opportunities for participation and contribution have been in an ongoing role as proof-reader-at-large, making myself available to check various documents, including *Myoju*. I have also continued to monitor emails sent via the website to Jikishoan's contact address, forwarding those that might be of relevance.

While the only material contributions I have made are through dana and writing for *Myoju*, I think that I can now see that the small parcel of responsibilities I have outlined above do make a contribution to the workload of the Jikishoan community, from which I receive so many gifts.

# Acting President's Reflection

By Brett Taiun Hope

*"Our understanding of Buddhism is not just an intellectual understanding. Our understanding at the same time is its own expression, is the practice itself."*



Brett Hope—Acting President  
April-July 2023

Opportunities often come unexpectedly, and my journey with the Jikishoan Zen Buddhist Community has been no exception. Over the years, my practice has evolved in various forms. It began casually, attending sessions on Thursday evenings in Footscray, and later I formally enrolled as a student, continuing until today. With time, I became a Practice Member, took precepts, and actively participated in various Jikishoan activities.

A few years ago, I had the honor of serving my first term on the Jikishoan Committee of Management. After a brief break, I returned for a second term, driven by the significance of the number three in our community's teachings. However, it wasn't until April this year, when Teishin Shona departed for ordination and further training at Toshoji Monastery in Japan, that I was asked to step into the role of Acting President of Jikishoan. Daunting? Yes! Filling Teishin Shona's large, sturdy, and well-trained shoes seemed like an enormous responsibility. Nevertheless, I embraced the opportunity to be Acting President for a period three months with excitement.

Practice has always been central to our community, and I find inspiration in the words from Shunryu Suzuki's "Zen Mind, Beginner's Mind," particularly the idea of following the truth without egoistic intentions. Taking on the role of Acting President was, for me, a form of practicing Zen Buddhism. I likened the position to that of a ship's Captain, realizing that leading the community requires collaboration and support from the Committee of Management members, each playing crucial roles to keep the ship on course.

As the Captain, I had important tasks to fulfill, particularly serving as the Chair of the Committee of Management meetings and weekly Office Bearers Meetings. These administrative gatherings are essential, as they decide on matters concerning our members and the community's overall welfare. I took this responsibility seriously, recognizing the significance of good governance, administration, and transparency, ensuring we maintained the trust our members placed in us.

Among the enjoyable aspects was coordinating this year's Foundation Day, which featured engaging activities like the silent auction and entertainment segment. Witnessing members performing their skits, songs, and poems, and ensuring a successful and enjoyable event for everyone, including myself, was truly fulfilling. Being Acting President became an integral part of my daily practice, akin to sitting on a cushion and attending to matters within the community through emails and interactions.

Contribution has been a constant theme in my journey with Jikishoan. Embracing the community's vision of offering transformative Buddhist learning, experience, and cultivation for everyone, I saw my role as Acting President as an opportunity to actively contribute to this vision. It involved steering the ship, ensuring that the community continued to progress with a strong focus on administrative and governance aspects.

Contributing to Jikishoan has taken on various forms, and I was grateful for the chance to share my knowledge, skills, and experiences with fellow members, IBS members, guests, and friends to enrich the activities we offer. This experience has allowed me to cultivate my practice further. I gained a deeper appreciation for the efforts and contributions of countless individuals across our community. Undertaking this role taught me that our practice extends to every aspect of life, from zazen to writing emails, chairing meetings, and organizing events.

As I finish my role as Acting President, I extend my heartfelt gratitude to Ekai Osho for providing this opportunity and ensuring the smooth sailing of our ship. My thanks also go to all the Committee of Management members for their unwavering commitment to our practice, and to Teishin Shona for this wonderful opportunity.

This experience has been enriching, teaching me valuable lessons about our organization, myself, and others. I eagerly look forward to whatever opportunities lie ahead as I continue to deepen my practice at Jikishoan.

# Abbot's News

Katherine Yeo

*June – August 2023*



*Tokozan Zendo at 25.08.2023*

In this quarter, Ekai Osho was remarkably active, participating in 230 scheduled events spanning the five daily time periods: gyoten (4–7am), soshin (8–10am), guchu (10am–12 noon), saiha (1–3pm), hoji (3–5pm), and kokon (5–9pm).

A notable achievement by Ekai Osho occurred in June, where he enhanced the rejuvenated One Day Workshop. This workshop focused on the fundamental integration that underpins the Main Course. Osho-sama skillfully led the workshop, providing participants with a concise orientation. The workshop included interactive sanzen-kai sessions, a communal lunch, and an afternoon dedicated to zazen, kinhin, and engaging Q&A discussions.

In July, Ekai Osho was deeply involved in a variety of activities. Osho-sama presided over the entrance ceremonies for MC-B Semester 2 and Retreat Online 73. Each day of the retreat began with gyoten zazen.

The pivotal day featured a structured itinerary, including gyoten zazen, instructional sessions, and culminating with kokon zazen in the evening.

During the saiha zazen session in the early afternoon, Ekai Osho delivered a profound teisho discourse. The chosen theme, "Sesshin Sessho" (Expressing One's True Nature by Expressing One's Intent), was drawn from Zen Master Dogen's Shobogenzo. This discourse was also presented at the Zen Winter Lectures held on four consecutive Friday evenings—an annual tradition initiated by Traleg Rimpoche IX of E-Vam Institute since 2001.

The extensive repair work for fire damage at Tokozan Zendo was completed on July 24th. Since then, Ekai Osho dedicated substantial time to prepare Tokozan for its reopening event on September 3rd. He also arranged the altar, placing the Manjusri statue prominently. The sitting platforms, cushions, mats, and instruments were carefully arranged back in the zendo.



# Soto Kitchen

Bean Soup with kale and pesto

Marisha Rothman



*I have made this soup a number of times at Sunday Sanzen-kai.  
It comes from "The fast 800" recipe book.*



Serves 4-6

## Ingredients:

2 tbsp olive oil  
1 medium onion, peeled and roughly chopped  
1 celery stick, cut into roughly 1cm chunks  
2 medium carrots, trimmed and cut into roughly 1cm chunks  
1 medium zucchini, trimmed, halved lengthways 1cm chunks  
1 medium zucchini, trimmed, halved lengthways and cut into roughly 1 cm slices  
1 x 400g can of cannellini beans drained.  
1 x 400g can borlotti or kidney beans  
1 vegetable or chicken stock cube  
75g kale or silver-beet thickly sliced and tough stalks then ladle into warmed bowls and top with a teaspoon of 60g fresh basil pesto or jarred kind (I use jarred)

## Method:

1. Heat the oil in a large saucepan, add the onion.
2. Tip the beans into the pan, add the stock cube and 1.2 litres water and stir to dissolve. Add the kale or greens. and bring to a simmer. Cook for 5—7 minutes stirring occasionally, until the vegetables are tender.
3. Season with sea salt and ground black pepper to taste, then ladle into warmed bowls and top with a teaspoon of discarded pesto.

# Calendar of Events

October – December 2023

DAY	DATE	TIME	ACTIVITY	LOCATION	CONTACT
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## WEEKLY ACTIVITIES

Sunday	Weekly	9.50am – 12pm	Sanzen-kai	St. Pius X School Hall Heidelberg West	Teishin Shona
Thursday	Weekly	6.20 – 9pm	Sanzen-kai	Quang Minh Temple	Karen Threlfall
Sundays	22/10 – 03/12		Online Retreat R74	Online	Tony Crivelli

## OCTOBER

Tuesday	10 Oct	7 – 9.30pm	Committee Meeting #309	Online	Teishin Shona
Sunday	15 Oct	10am – 4pm	ODW		cancelled

## NOVEMBER

Tuesday	14 Nov	7 – 9.30pm	Committee Meeting #310	Online	Teishin Shona
Sunday	19 – 26 Nov	7 days	Residential Retreat 74	Casa Pallotti, Wesburn, VIC	Tony Crivelli

## DECEMBER

Sunday	10 Dec	9.50 am – 12pm	Chosan: Exit B1 Sanzen-kai	St Pius X School	Teishin Shona
Tuesday	12 Dec	7 – 9.30pm	Committee Meeting #311	Online	Teishin Shona
Thursday	14 Dec	6.20 – 9pm	Bansan: Exit B2 Sanzen-kai	Quang Minh Temple	Karen Threlfall

## ADDRESSES

### Heidelberg West

St.Pius X Primary School Hall  
419 Waterdale Rd., Heidelberg  
West VIC 3081

### Post

JZBC Inc.  
PO Box 196, Heidelberg West  
VIC 3081, Australia.

### Online

jikishoan.org.au  
contact@jikishoan.org.au

### Publications

publications@jikishoan.org.au  
webmaster@jikishoan.org.au

## CONTACT

### General Enquiries

0421 285 338  
contact@jikishoan.org.au

### Sunday Sanzen-kai

Zoom Host – Teishin Shona  
MCB Coordinator: Teishin  
Shona/Karen Threlfall  
Ph: 0421 285 338

### Thursday Sanzen-kai

Coordinator:  
Karen Threlfall  
0481 880 027

### Retreat Director:

Tony Crivelli  
Ph: 0408 696 645

### Myoju Coordinator:

Tony Crivelli  
0408 696 645

## 25<sup>th</sup> Committee of Management 2023—2024

*Honorary Member:*  
Ekai Korematsu Osho

*President:*  
John Bolton  
0428 188 220

*Vice-President:*  
Vacant

*Finance:*  
Teishin Shona  
0421 285 338

*Secretary:*  
Brett Hope  
9557 7738

*Membership Secretary:*  
Brett Hope  
0433 859 339

*Ordinary Committee  
Members:*

Katherine Yeo  
0433 859 339

Caleb Mortensen  
0412 966 167

John Hickey  
0435 939 485

Jessica Cummins  
0422 968 947

Louise Smith  
0408 210 432

*Assistant Committee  
Members:*

Naomi Richards

Irwin Rothman

Marisha Rothman



# Teaching Schedule, September – November 2023

## SANZEN-KAI

**Sunday Sanzen-kai:** Zendo in person and online  
(10am – 12 noon)

Zazen (sitting meditation), kinhin (walking meditation), incense and tea offering, chanting service and Dharma talk by teachers or students. For beginners, members and friends. Newcomers, please arrive by 9.30 am.

Donation – Dana Box

Chosan (Exit Ceremony): 10 December

**Thursday Sanzen-kai:** Zendo in-person and online  
(6.20 – 9.00 pm)

Zazen (sitting meditation), kinhin (walking meditation), incense and tea offering, chanting service and reading. Bansan (Exit Ceremony): 14 December

## INTEGRATED BUDDHIST STUDIES

**Main Course A1:** E-Vam Institute and online  
Ten classes 10am – 12pm Saturdays  
Term 4: 30 September – 9 December

**Main Course A2:** E-Vam Institute and online  
Ten classes 5 – 7 pm Saturdays  
Term 4: 30 September – 9 December

**Main Course A3:** Online only  
Ten classes 7 – 9 pm Wednesdays  
Term 4: 4 October – 13 December  
Cost: \$115 Annual Student membership, \$685 per year (4 terms, 40 classes), \$215 per term (10 classes) or \$120 for 5 classes (returning students only).  
Members by donation for casual attendance.

**Main Course B1:** 9.50am – 12 noon Sundays  
Semester 2, 2023: 9 July – 10 December  
Chosan (Exit Ceremony): 10 December  
Venue: St.Pius X Primary School and online

**Main Course B2:** 6.20 – 9 pm Thursdays  
Semester 2 2023: 13 July – 13 December  
Bansan (Exit Ceremony): 13 December  
Venue: Quang Minh Temple, Braybrook and online.  
Cost is \$310 per year (2 semesters) or \$215 per semester.

**Main Course C:** Retreat study  
Three five-week retreats per year

R72, R73, R74 – Home Learning Program online.  
For further information see IBS Outline 2024 on website  
[www.jikishoan.org.au](http://www.jikishoan.org.au)

## ONLINE RETREAT 74

22 October – 3 December 2023

An online/hybrid Zen retreat training including with daily practice with Gyoten and Kokon Zazen along with Main Course teaching events.

**RESIDENTIAL RETREAT 74:** 19 – 26 November,  
Casa Pallotti Retreat Centre, Wesburn, VICTORIA  
a one-week residential practice period, including daily zazen and weekly Chosan, Dokusan (interview with the Teacher), and Teisho (formal teaching of a Dharma text).

## ONE DAY WORKSHOP

For Sanzen-kai and IBS Main Courses Training  
Workshops resume in 2024

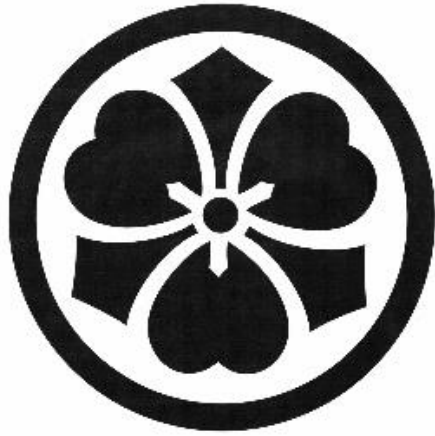
*Note: Teaching Schedule is subject to change and update. Teachings are directed by Ekai Korematsu Osho. Please check the website or contact one of the IBS coordinators listed below for further enquiry.*

## IBS COORDINATORS

General enquiry and Main Course C:  
Tony Crivelli: 0408 696 645  
C-course@jikishoan.org.au

IBS Student Secretary and Main Course B:  
Teishin Shona : 0421 285 338  
B-course@jikishoan.org.au

Main Course A:  
Katherine Yeo: 0422 407 870  
[A-course@jikishoan.org.au](mailto:A-course@jikishoan.org.au)



**Jikishoan Zen Buddhist Community Inc.**

**[www.jikishoan.org](http://www.jikishoan.org)**