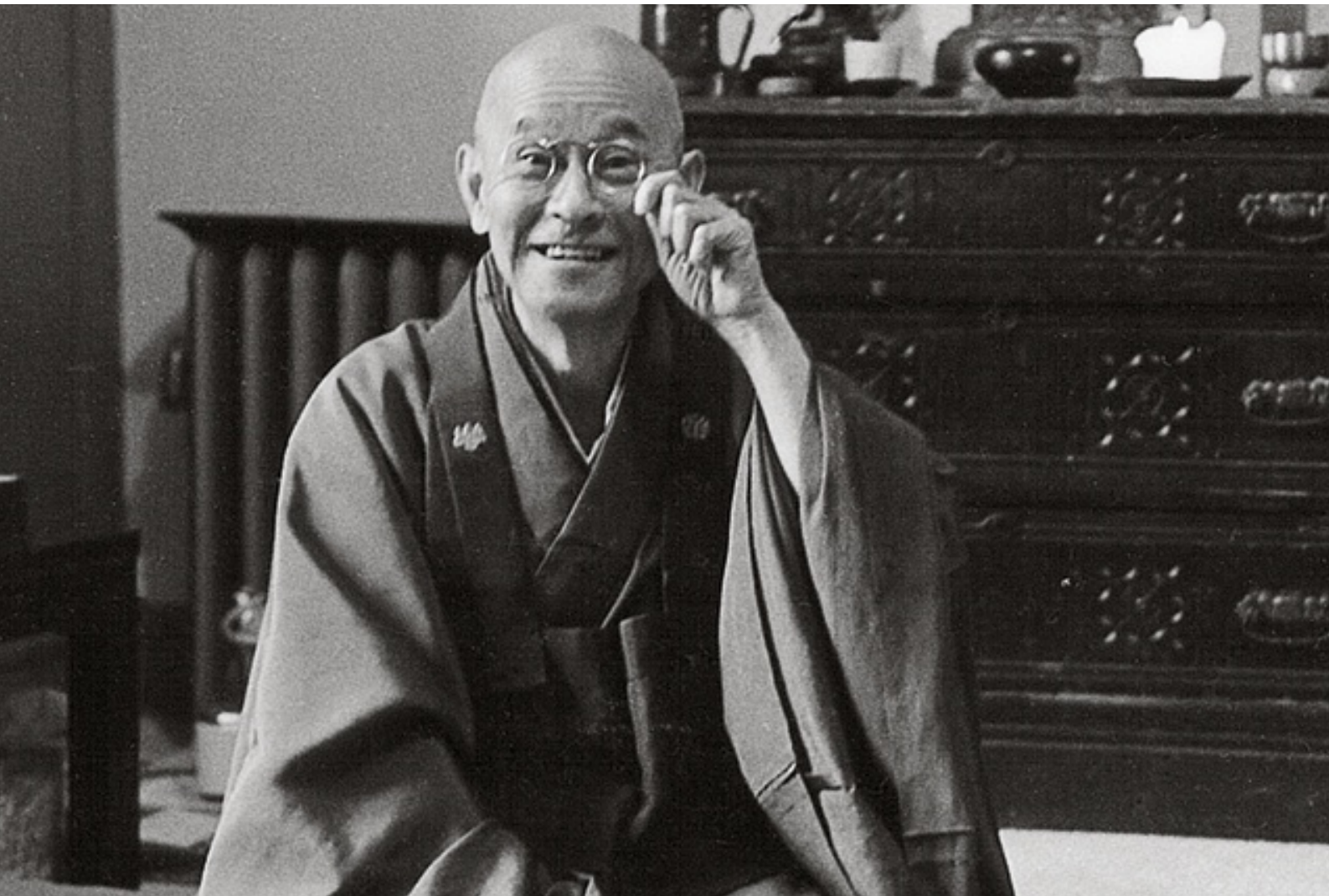


Myōju

Soto Zen Buddhism in Australia



March 2024, Issue 95



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MYOJU QUARTERLY

Editorial

Annual Theme: Pursuit of Truth

In the relentless pursuit of truth, the sub-theme 'Beginner's Mind' for Myoju 95 emerges as a guiding light, casting its illumination upon the path to enlightenment. Grounded in the spirit of curiosity and unburdened by preconceived notions, this mindset transforms the journey into a profound exploration. Much like a novice approaching a new endeavour with eagerness, embracing the Beginner's Mind opens doors to fresh insights and genuine understanding. By shedding the weight of assumptions, one rediscovers the beauty of innocence in each moment. It is a conscious choice to navigate the labyrinth of existence with humility and openness.

The pursuit of truth becomes a dance between curiosity and revelation, where simplicity fosters profound wisdom. On the canvas of life, Beginner's Mind paints a portrait of continual discovery, inviting us to uncover universal truths with the wonder and openness of a beginner.

Ekai Korematsu – Editor

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Upcoming Myoju 96 — June 2024

Myoju 96 is scheduled to be released around the solstice in June 2024. We warmly welcome contributions aligned with our practice and training ethos. This includes a diverse array of content: articles, literary or online resource reviews, dialogues, reflection, poetic expressions, artistic creations, and compelling photography. Please be aware that the deadline for content submissions is April 20, 2024. The theme for the upcoming edition will be '**Pursuit of Truth: Right Practice**'. We look forward to your contributions

Welcome to Jikishoan

Jikishoan is a Zen Buddhist community based in Melbourne, Australia. Ekai Korematsu Osho established Jikishoan in Melbourne in 1999 and introduced an active learning program called Zen and Integrated Buddhist Studies (IBS) in 2010.

Tokozan Jikishoan 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.

The name Jikishoan reflects the spirit of our community. *Jiki* means straightforward or direct, *sho* means proof or realisation, and *an* means a 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 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’.

Pursuit for the Truth: Beginner's Mind

Peter Esan Brammer

In the beginner's mind the truth is already there

Because you came to zazen to pursuit for the truth in Zen classes

Satori meaning the truth or a sudden moment of awakening

After sitting for some time chanting sutras and listening to talks

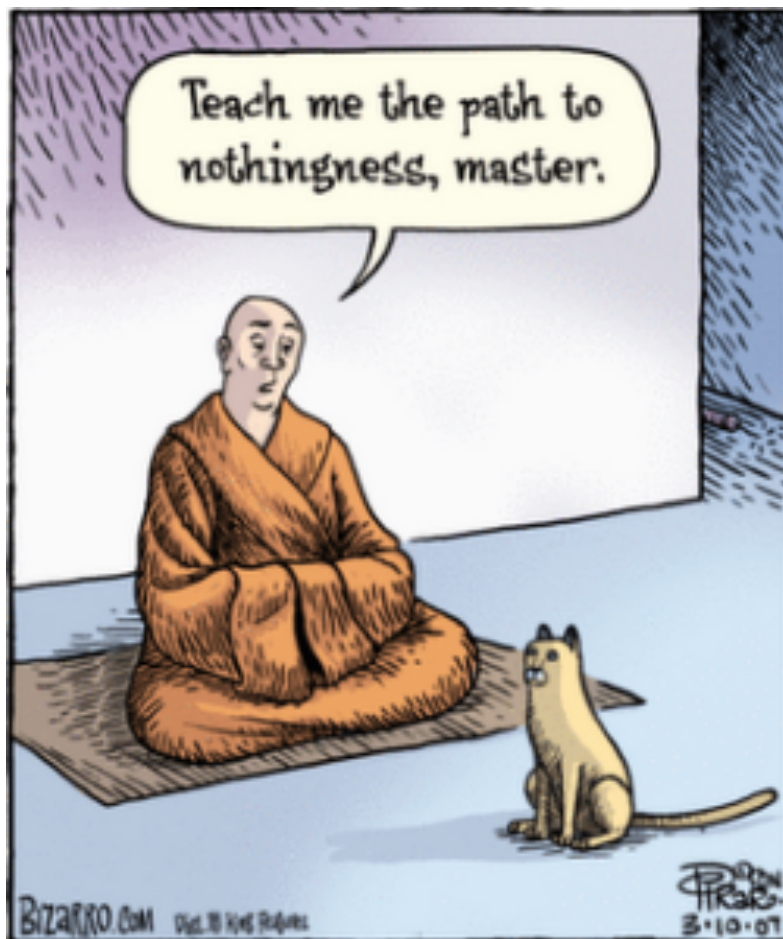
The realisation or the truth is in the present moment.

Open your mind while you have the opportunity.

Thereby gaining the treasures of wisdom.

Which in turn you can share abundantly with others and bring them happiness.

DOGEN ZENJI



Is There Such a Thing?

Teishin Shona

If I name something, it immediately becomes 'a thing'. To become aware of this process, that my thinking has created a thing called 'Beginner's Mind', is part of the journey to awakening to what it refers to. Like a word, Beginner's Mind is something and nothing at the same time.

Naming implies 'existence'. Existence implies 'thingness'. But Beginner's Mind cannot really be understood through the mechanism of language and intellectual thinking. Rather than being attached to the label and to the object called 'Beginner's Mind', it seems necessary to give up the idea of it altogether. So how to do this?

Thankfully Zen practice offers something towards this apparent conundrum. Zen says, 'just do' and don't give rise to thoughts. Through action, going beyond language—freeing the action and freeing the word.

The conventions and utility of language are there to use, but we need to see how human language functions and what it is used for. 'Beginner's Mind', as a pointer or indicator, frees the words to point clearly. Understanding the expression, reveals that there is no such independent 'thing' that goes by that name.

Shunryu Suzuki Roshi's skill in bringing this expression to Western students gives both a place to start and a Way to proceed moment by moment—releasing our attachments and finding ourselves 'in the world of actual practice'. *

* Shunryu Suzuki, 'Traditional Zen Spirit', *Zen Mind Beginner's Mind*, Weatherhill, 2004, p. 102.

From the Simple to the Subtle or the Complicated

Katherine Yeo

In the inaugural Main Course A class of 2010, I was introduced to the concept of 'Beginner's Mind'. The first week of MCA emphasises 'Right Practice', and the assigned reading is the Prologue of the book *Zen Mind, Beginner's Mind*. Each week, the designated topic and reading serve as a compass, guiding the study and discussion within the class.

Within the context of my MCA experience, I am prompted to respond to an instruction requesting an article on 'Beginner's Mind'. Having delved into and studied this chapter for over fourteen years perhaps grants me the qualification, or even imposes upon me the obligation, to share my insights.

Is it possible to articulate the essence of Beginner's Mind without contrasting it with what it is not? Words can attempt to capture its essence in both mental states.

However, in doing so, we inadvertently objectify and scrutinise it; when viewed externally, Beginner's Mind transforms into something to reach for.

A shared experience among many students, including myself, is the frequent occurrence of reading the chapter 'Prologue: Beginner's Mind' and others in the book, leading to a realisation of something 'new'. In those moments, while immersed in familiar text, there's an awareness of an interpretation distinct from a previous one, or a previously overlooked sentence.

Could this moment of realisation be a manifestation of Beginner's Mind? It doesn't involve actively seeking something 'new', but rather the ability to 'see' what is already there. How does it happen? Once the desire to replicate or understand 'how to do' Beginner's Mind emerges, the dominance of thinking tends to take over.

Beginner's Mind: Unlocking Infinite Possibilities

By Brett Taiun Hope



'Shoshin, Beginner's Mind'
by Shunryu Suzuki.

'In the beginner's mind there are many possibilities, but in the expert's, there are few.'

As each year commences, this sentence is read by Jikishoan's Main Course A students. This sentence is read in the first class of every term. These words invite us to reflect on what it means to be a beginner and how this relates to our practice.

We are invited to appreciate a mind that is open, curious and eager to learn – a mind without judgment, preconceptions or expectations.

In the Prologue to *Zen Mind, Beginner's Mind* by Shunryu Suzuki Roshi, from which the quotation above has been taken, we are provided with practical guidance on how we can maintain Beginner's Mind.

'You should not lose your self-sufficient state of mind. This does not mean a closed mind, but actually an empty mind and a ready mind. If your mind is empty, it is always ready for anything; it is open to everything.'

I am reminded here of the importance of being present in my practice, ensuring that I have an open mind to everything that I am receiving. It is important to focus on the process rather than the outcome, take things slowly and appreciate everything that arises. By keeping an open and ready mind I ensure that I have the ability to appreciate all things that come my way. When reading, this means taking in each word as though it was read for the first time. When listening to our practice instructions, it means giving attention to them, taking in the details and following them intently. When interacting with others, it means being present with them, listening to them without judgement or preconceived ideas.

'If you discriminate too much, you limit yourself.'

Frequently, we find ourselves entangled in our preferences and aversions. Shunryu Suzuki Roshi wisely advises us that maintaining a discriminating mind can hinder us, shutting us off from valuable experiences and restricting our connection with our beginner's mind and others. Letting go of this discriminating mindset allows us to embrace openness, curiosity, and a keen eagerness to observe and learn. Discrimination blinds us, preventing us from seeing things as they truly are. It imposes our biases and constrains our capacity for growth.

'In the beginner's mind there is no thought, "I have attained something".'

Too often in life we are caught up in achievements, focusing on the end result. We are reminded here that being present allows us to focus on the journey that we are going on, rather than focusing on what we attain. By having no thought of attainment, we ensure that we are ready for anything that comes our way, moment by moment. If we are focused on what we are achieving, we can miss the beauty of what may be right in front of our eyes. Our practice provides an opportunity for us to return to the present and sit.

So, as this year commences, I am once again reminded of the importance of keeping my Beginner's Mind. After five years of study in Main Course A, I am moving into Main Course B, providing me with a wonderful opportunity to embrace the mind of a beginner. As Shunryu Suzuki Roshi says:

'So the most difficult thing is always to keep your beginner's mind.'

As I embark on my Zen studies and practice for the year, I bring attention to keeping an open and ready mind that does not discriminate, nor focus on attainment.

Reflective Journey through A Course Training

Naomi Richards

‘Our understanding at the same time is its own expression, *is* the practice itself.’

Shunryu Suzuki, *Zen Mind, Beginner’s Mind*, Weatherhill, 2004, p.102.

For the mid-year, Main Course A review meeting between the Course A co-ordinator and the three class co-ordinators, Ekai Osho suggested we review material we had written or presented about our Main Course A training. This didn’t actually occur for that meeting, but the suggestion planted a seed.

When I was asked to do a student talk on 15 October, my strategy was to look at all I had written about my Main Course A training. It was interesting to reflect on the different pre-occupations and perspectives that each piece expressed. One of my earliest experiences and reflections about participating in Main Course A was the trouble I had with speaking about the Buddhist concepts and texts we were studying. Over the course of the last three years this problem has seemingly vanished, but as Shunryu Suzuki says, ‘But even though you vanish, something which is existent cannot be non-existent.’

Osho-sama often speaks about words ‘pointing to something’. Part of the discomfort I used to experience in Main Course A was the feeling that I had no idea what these words were pointing to. I might grasp one sentence or another but there were many passages where the words seemed to flow by untethered; describing something unfathomable or beyond my experience. Frequently I hear students new to MCA make this statement. ‘I don’t really know what to say. I can’t understand what he is getting at.’ The state of not knowing is an interesting phenomenon. It can provoke a range of emotions. It used to conjure feelings of shame or panic. Now it conjures feelings of excitement and wonder—wonder that I can finally see the edges of my habits, preoccupations and experience.

The other common problem of expression is the inability to find words for the phenomena one experiences. There seem to be no words for some experiences or ideas, as if the words refuse to

assemble and point at certain phenomena. Given our reliance on words this becomes a difficult situation to overcome. Just as we engage with words, we need to be equally comfortable not engaging with words; to give them a rest, to be content with what we can say today, stop speaking and thinking and engage in another activity.

‘Hofuku did not give his friend an answer, because it is impossible to give a verbal interpretation of our way. Nevertheless, as a part of their practice these two good friends discussed the Bodhisattva’s way, even though they did not expect to find a new interpretation.’

It is often very moving and profound to listen to students discuss the weekly topic. They sometimes struggle with the words, but their effort to understand them and relate to them honestly is inspiring. What I have come to appreciate in all of us is the effort to understand not the words but what the words are pointing at. Each person expresses this in a slightly different way and as the discussion unfolds a multifaceted jewel is revealed. For sure, there can be flaws in the stone and the cutting is often rough and imprecise but at its best Main Course A hones a jewel worthy of the title of treasure.

I was facilitating A1 class, and the statement arose, ‘I have no words for this.’ I encouraged the student to say something. I talked about the reasons I had hesitated to express myself in the past; how words can feel inadequate or imprecise, how the formulation of the words can be foggy and vague. But whether we speak or not, our understanding is expressed, so I have come to the place where I am grateful to speak the words and to listen to what comes out. It gives me a measure of where I am at. It is the practice itself.

‘To think, “Because it is possible, we will do it,” is not Buddhism. Even though it is impossible, we must do it because our true nature wants us to.’

— from the IBS Paper 2023

On Beginner's Mind

Tony Goshin Crivelli

One of the most enduring expressions and powerful pointers to the Pursuit of the Truth in the Zen Buddhist tradition is *shoshin*, 'Beginner's Mind'. When I first read the Prologue to *Zen Mind, Beginner's Mind* many years ago, it evoked the image of a young child, possibly an infant, who is enjoying looking at what he is seeing and hearing, just experiencing 'things as they are' without 'thought of self'. I realised that I was far from being like that innocent child and 'Beginner's Mind' was more of an aspiration than an actual experience.

Since that first reading of the Prologue and after many more readings, each time that expression has produced new insights, and its meaning has become more intimate and experiential in the context of a regular and constant zazen practice.

One major insight is that 'Beginner's Mind' is not my mind or an individual's mind.

It is, as we hear Shunryu Suzuki say throughout his talks, *Daishin*, Big Mind, Original Mind, One Mind. Each of those expressions is also a 'finger pointing to the Moon'. Beginner's Mind directs us 'not to be dualistic. Our original mind includes everything within itself.'

When I relate it to zazen practice, Beginner's Mind is *shikantaza*: the practice of:

Do not think good or bad. Do not judge true or false. Give up the operations of mind, intellect, and consciousness; stop measuring with thoughts, ideas, and views. Have no designs on becoming a Buddha.¹

Shikantaza is where we resume 'our boundless original mind' and appreciate that 'it is the secret of Zen practice.'

Everything Changes

Robin Laurie

*For years we sat Sanzen-kai
on Sunday evenings
watching the light change
seasons turn visitors come and go
the space an old factory building
become a Shiatsu College
transformed into a Sunday evening zendo*

*We sat backs straight breathing in and out
cultivating not thinking
the space breathing with us
we settled into familiarity
space and practice, practice and space
after we'd sit in the kitchen
eating talking and laughing*

*Then for several years
we sat on Sunday evenings in the ether
on zoom—sights and sounds no touch no smell
we sat with our home altar
in our personal spaces
their cosy comfort their social distractions
insulated from a threatening world*

*Now in 2023 moved on by vagaries of development
we sit Chosan on Sunday morning in a
Roman Catholic primary school hall
stacks of grey plastic chairs in the corner
tatami covering the polished square of dance floor
still zafus and zabutons, tans and altar,
keisu and rin, green tea
we settle in to the familiarities of cultivating
Buddha Nature
no dust can settle on the clarity of our purpose*

*The shift to a morning sit requires adjustment
travel needs planning the day unfolds backwards
we eat lunch together in the middle of the day
talking laughing
the new space watches to see how we are
we await familiarity with the space*

Dharma is everywhere nothing stays the same.

¹ Quote from Fukanzazengi by Zen Master Dogen

A Tale of Safe Travel with Health Considerations in Bodhgaya

Isabelle Myoko Henry



Making the decision to travel to Bodhgaya in India requires some thought. Travelling safely to India if you have health issues with consequences not just for the individual but the group, is potentially serious.

I have such an issue, unable to acquire travel insurance because of it. Taking full responsibility for managing my health in Australia, but especially in a country such as India, is difficult. Having made the decision, embracing it in a balanced way is the reality. Food is central.

Our 'Scoot' flight from Melbourne to Singapore did not instil confidence, poor food requiring payment. That flight set the bar low. The improvement beyond that flight was remarkable on Singapore Airlines to Kolkata and beyond.

In Kolkata the Astor Hotel provided a smorgasbord breakfast on our first day. Being able to select appropriate food gives me confidence I could manage. Lunch at a nearby authentic vegan/vegetarian restaurant and the narrative of our guides (two of the staff from the teaching faculty who travelled from Bodhgaya to meet us) set the scene that nutrition is important. They tuned me into a healthy gut.

The humidity of Kolkata provoked the senses. Greenery forming creative cover for the many stalls selling tasty morsels, tempting us to partake, amongst the endless honking of passing tuk tuks and cars and the slower pace of pedestrians and cows.

A warm bond between our group of seven formed swiftly on the train to Gaya. We settled on our bunks after rice and dahl was enjoyed by us all as we hurtled very comfortably towards our destination.

The Tenzo for our three weeks in Bodhgaya was a young woman with strong support from the Buddhist Studies administration. Over three weeks, breakfast and lunches every day provided variety and balance, tasty, delicious food, well thought out, so that planning for us to enjoy a good balanced diet for that time was evident. Our health was paramount.

Silent breakfasts following morning sitting provided the opportunity to sit quietly and eat slowly, digesting our food at a rate to ensure we ate just the right amount. Those with 'hollow legs' could have their fill and the more delicate appetites enjoyed adequate nutrition.

Our thali sets were generously filled to our liking twice daily with food we chose from the table at the Vihar dining room. I remember well my first breakfast—my choice was vegan rice, egg, banana, and bread. My gut was feeling good. A relief, none of the food even close to my usual selection. The scene was set to safely enjoy the carefully and nutritiously prepared meals.

Leaving Bodhgaya marked a transition from complete immersion in a specific experience to its sudden absence. It was truly a blessing to share the Bodhgaya experience with the Jikishoan group, American students, teaching faculty (including Indian and Nepalese teachers). Special appreciation goes to the delightful kitchen staff at the Vihar who nurtured and cared for us.

— from the IBS Paper 2023

Meditating in the Heartbeat of India

John Bolton



The Burmese Vihar, Bodhgaya is quiet at 5 am. Each morning, I pass a monk and we gassho as he quits the Buddha Hall to make way for our Zendo set-up and preparation for zazen. As students take their zafus at 5.20 we hear the odd human exclamation and sounds of the occasional tuk tuk from outside the walls, and by 6 am it is a cacophony of beeping cars and tuk tuks, blaring truck horns and buses that warn and bully by playing raucous three-note tunes. There is much calling and shouting.

In the afternoons we walk to the Japanese Temple on the other side of town. It's quieter here as we set up in the sombre Zendo, laying out zafus and copies of the Heart Sutra, opening up the side doors to let what breeze there is shift the warm air of day's end. As we begin to sit, a group of pilgrims/tourists enter behind us and chat as they take photos of the temple, of us, and themselves. There are calls, bells, and chants from other temples nearby and sometimes a politician or other person with a message announces it through a tinny speaker on the top of a passing car. After kinhin we walk outside, three times around the Buddha Hall. In front of the main entrance, pilgrims/tourists wait for us to pass or nip between us, in and out of the temple. Occasionally someone will join us sitting and walking.

One Sunday I arrive at the Mahabodhi Temple at 5.30 am to find Katherine practising zazen on a step facing a distant relative of the Bodhi tree under which Shakyamuni sat.

I take my position close to her. Isabelle arrives and the three of us are spread out along the top step. Hundreds of monks and students are practising seated meditation, walking meditation, prostrations, and chanting in this great park. People walk beneath us, within our sight, some stop to take a photo. I hear talk and laughter behind us and then a beautiful chant starts. At least thirty voices are in unison, an aural backdrop to our sitting. I never know who the voices belong to.

In Australia we are used to practising zazen in a quiet and still setting. People are asked not to talk when close to the Zendo, traffic is far away, the kitchen is far away, we go to places on retreat particularly because the sounds of nature—of wind, creatures, and rainfall—are the only sounds. It is almost a foundation of our practice. As a member of the Ino Ryo, I have been a vigilant and enthusiastic policeman of these rules. But this is India, the noise is as intrinsic as the smells and sights and is no more distracting than a gurgling river or a bird call. There is a robustness to this sitting, it is less precious and less pressured than usual. Perfection of conditions isn't even an aspiration. This is it and it is already perfect. None of which is to say that we should thoughtlessly talk on retreat, but when we do, nothing is broken, and nothing is hindered.

— from the IBS Paper 2023

IBS India Study 2023



Ekai Osho and Prof. Arthur McKeown with the IBS students of 2023 India Study Group



Lunch at vegetarian restaurant



Last Zazen at Maha Bodhi Temple

74th Retreat



75th Retreat Participants at Casa Pallotti

The Gathas from Retreat #74

'Deep gratitude'

Swinging Door
Creaky, rusty, automatic.
Appreciation of this way of life.
Wondrous flavours, sounds and teachings.

Candace Scheiner
25.11.2023

Chanting Moth

Servers chanting 'Maka Hannya Haramitta...'
Grey moth sits still on sutra page
An old Abbot?
Servers chant Fueko

Tony Crivelli
26.11.2023

Virtual Fox
If cause by fox
will come and get me
listen... What Does the Fox Say?
Meme me meme me... Meme me meme...

Saleh Date
26.11.2023

A Story

Dokusan and Jesus
The Apple and the Fox
500 lives in a single day
5am, Laughing Kookaburra in Eden

Teishin Shona
25.11.2023

Returning

bright moon
floating clouds
'say something to turn me around...'
the evening bell

Margaret Kokyu Lynch
25.11.2023

The Slowest Horse: A Zen Journey of Patience and Transformation

Louise Smith



For over ten years I have been attending Saturday class with Jikishoan, sometimes in the morning, sometimes in the afternoon. In the earlier days my attendance was patchy, with some long pauses. In this essay I will explain how Jikishoan and persistence with A1 class has helped me to overcome my struggles with attention, fatigue and patience in my life, and how grateful I am for being allowed to become a full year student and fledgling Ordinary Member of the Jikishoan Committee of Management.

I may have been a person who attended to everything in my life with half faith only and struggled to finish things. Just ask my childhood piano teacher, who loved to tell me my talent meant nothing in the face of my laziness. As we get older, we often think back to those who challenged us in our sullen youth and realise they knew us very well. You could say Zen practice is a bit like that stern piano teacher. Zen practice and study know us, sees us, and anticipates our struggles before we have even consciously acknowledged what those struggles are.

Of course, I don't think Zen practice is much like learning the piano. The fact is that the three forms of walking, sitting and bowing are not like anything else I have ever done or will ever do, no matter how many years I live, university classes I take, special interests I cultivate, or interesting diseases I acquire. Zen is unique. It makes a singularly unique demand on us. The longer I practise, the more I realise just how not normal are these things we do, over and over with little hope of success or completion. And we do them over and over again. To sit with no purpose, except the purpose of sitting properly.

Sometimes I find myself explaining to someone what I 'do' at the Zendo. 'I see,' they say knowingly, and I think, 'No you don't!' I prefer when they act non-plussed or knit their brow—at least that's honest. And occasionally the rational part of me will rattle its cage as I settle into position on the cushion, serve the tea, read the same reading, and bow and bow and bow again. 'This is stupid,' it whispers. 'Stop wasting time'. The voice is quiet now, I don't even need to shush it anymore. It goes away on its own. A tiny sense of accomplishment. I'll allow it.

But this is the same voice that has held me back my entire life, stymied my learning, affected my relationship with my intellect, spoiled my patience and affected my ability to finish and accomplish things. It turns out that being easily bored, constantly distracted and discontent was cutting me off from my own life. To paraphrase Shantideva, it was battering out my life of happy destiny! Who knows how things would have turned out if I hadn't become a Zen student. I don't like to think about it. And now that voice is finally being pacified, I can get on with things.

Time has passed and I am now a full year student with Jikishoan. I have a daily practice and am eager to contribute to the Committee of Management. Not just for the rest of the Committee, who work so hard, or for the Jikishoan community, who are my sangha and my spiritual community, but for myself as well. I am very grateful for that.

— from the IBS Paper 2023

New Year's Eve Zazen at Tokoizan Temple

Karen Tokuren Threlfall

New Years Eve Zazen was observed at Tokoizan Home Temple on Sunday, December 31, 2023. Amid the New Year's festivities in Melbourne, this serene celebration allowed Jikishoan members to engage in three practice sessions, ushering in the new year with mindfulness.

The day commenced with Hoji Zazen and Temple Clean-up at 3:20 pm, followed by Kokon Zazen at 7 pm, and the New Year's Eve Zazen, which commenced at 10 pm and concluded at midnight after the 108th strike of the bell.

Among the community members in attendance were Osho Sama, Teishin Shona Innes, Katherine Yeo, John Hickey, Sally Wain, Naomi Richards, Marisha Rothman, Rohan Harrington, Peter Brammer, Jessica Cummins, Annie Bolitho, Erdal Uyük, Phil Frasca, Robyn Cairns, and myself.

Notably, many new participants joined in ringing the 108 bells before midnight. New Year's Zazen offered Jikishoan members an opportunity to start the year by cultivating a beginner's mind.



Jessica Zuiho Cummins participates in the 108 bell strikes.

Abbot's News

Katherine Yeo



Over the past three months, Ekai Osho has consistently participated in Gyoten Zazen, weekly administration meetings, Practice meetings, and the monthly Committee of Management meeting as an Honorary member. He continues to provide guidance as a mentor to the Treasurer.

To conclude 2023, Ekai Osho conducted exit ceremonies for Main Course B and Final Reviews for Main Course C. On New Year's Eve, Osho-sama led the Temple cleaning (Osoji), kokon zazen, and New Year's Eve zazen (Joya) at Tokozan, culminating in the ringing of the 108th bell at midnight.

The beginning of 2024 introduced the annual guiding theme offered by Ekai Osho to the Community—'The Pursuit of Truth'. The sub-theme for the first quarter is 'The Pursuit of Truth: Beginner's Mind'.

For the 24th consecutive year, Ekai Osho taught at E-Vam Institute's Buddhist Summer School in mid-January, focusing on Dogen Zenji's 'Gakudo Yojin-shu: Teachings on Learning the Way with an Earnest Mind'.

During a session on January 14, Ekai Osho shared a profound perspective: 'Temporary is all we have. Bring Buddha Dharma into temporary: Tathagata—thus come, thus gone. Point in the direction you want to go; seek, discover, and realise the authentic Truth in "temporary". What makes that authenticity? Your Buddha Mind!' He illustrated this with a reflection on the meticulous details of a waiter's arrangement during a meal.

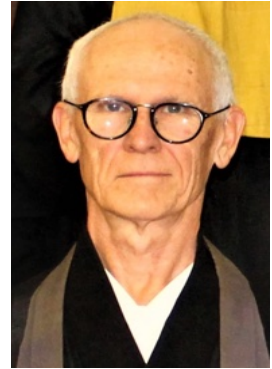
At the Public Forum that initiated the Buddhist Summer, Ekai Osho asserted, 'Yes! AI can be our teacher. AI has no self and hence has no self-interest; it just takes in information without discrimination.' The topic discussed was 'Can AI Be Our Teacher?' on January 13, 2024.

Commencing the Jikishoan year, Ekai Osho facilitated entry ceremonies for member of Jikishoan and Zen and Integrated Buddhist Study at Sunday Sanzen-kai on 28 January 2024. He conducted Initial Interviews with students who enrolled in Main Course C.

As the Abbot and Teacher of Jikishoan, Ekai Osho graciously accommodates external requests. On February 3, Osho-sama conducted the third-year memorial for a Japanese family at Tokozan Temple.

On March 3, Ekai Osho officiated at the Annual Sangha Picnic held at Darebin Parklands. It was a joyful day for the members and friends of Jikishoan who attended.

Committee News



Dear Jikishoan Members,

I hope this message finds you well. As we navigate through the beginning of the year, I am pleased to share some updates and important announcements.

The three-month orientation period for new committee members and those transitioning into different roles has successfully concluded. Teishin Shona is continuing her training with the finance team, under the guidance of Ekai Osho and John Hickey, in her journey to become our fully-fledged Treasurer. I am delighted to announce that Brett Hope has embraced his new role as Secretary with enthusiasm. Currently, he is diligently working on a revamped list of members, which will be published in our upcoming handbook.

In addition, Jessica Cummins is undergoing training to take on the role of Jikido for Committee meetings, contributing to the smooth functioning of our community. Moreover, Louise Smith has crafted a compelling and thought-provoking article for this *Myoju*.

At present, there is a vacancy for the Vice President role. If any current member is interested in nominating themselves for this position or the Committee assistant position, please reach out to me at your earliest convenience. Your involvement and commitment to the Committee are highly valued, and I look forward to your contributions to the Jikishoan community.

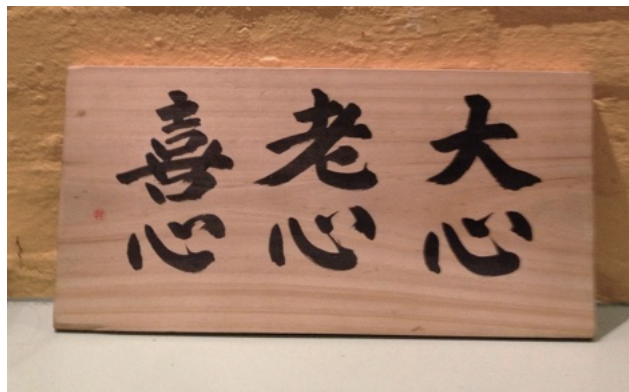
I would also like to draw your attention to an important date. Please mark your calendars for Sunday, May 5, as we plan to celebrate Jikishoan's 25th Anniversary event, commemorating its incorporation. Your presence and contributions to the silent auction will be greatly appreciated.

The Committee hopes that 2024 will be a year filled with peace, joy, and meaningful experiences for each of you. Thank you for your ongoing support and dedication to the Jikishoan community.

Warm regards,
John Bolton

President
On behalf of the 25th Committee of Management

Soto Zen Kitchen: “Cultivating the Three Hearts”



This life we lead is one of rejoicing, and our bodies are vessels of joy, capable of presenting offerings to the Three Jewels. This existence is the result of merits accumulated over countless eons, and by utilising our bodies in this way, the merit extends boundlessly. I encourage you to work and cook with this joy, a culmination of numerous lifetimes, to generate limitless benefits for countless beings. Recognising this opportunity brings a ‘joyous heart’, as even if one were born a ruler of the world, the merit of actions would dissipate like foam or sparks.

A ‘motherly heart’ is akin to a parent’s care for a child, maintaining the Three Jewels with deep love, irrespective of poverty or challenges. Such a heart is incomprehensible to others; only a parent can truly understand it. A parent prioritises the well-being of their child, shielding them from heat or cold before considering their own comfort. This level of care can be comprehended only by those who have experienced it and realised only by those who practise it. To extend this carefully, treat water and rice as though they were your own children.

The Great Master Sakyamuni dedicated the final twenty years of his life to protect us during these declining days. This exemplifies the essence of a ‘parental heart’, an act not motivated by personal gain but driven solely by generosity.

A ‘vast heart’ resembles an expansive ocean or towering mountain, observing everything from the most comprehensive perspective.

It does not perceive a gram as too light or five kilos as too heavy. Unaffected by the sounds of spring or the colours of autumn, it sees the changing seasons as one continuous movement, understanding light and heavy in relation to each other within an all-encompassing view. When studying the character ‘vast’, grasp its meaning in this context.

Without understanding the concept of ‘vast’, the tenzo at Jiashan wouldn’t have awakened Elder Fu through laughter. Zen Master Guishan wouldn’t have blown on dead firewood three times, and the monk Dongshan couldn’t have conveyed the meaning of ‘Three pounds of flax’.

Throughout history, great masters delved into the essence of ‘vast’ or ‘great’ not only through words but also through the events and activities of their lives. They lived as a resounding shout of freedom by presenting the Great Matter, probing the Great Question, training exceptional disciples, and thus bringing it all forth to us.

The abbot, senior officers, staff, and all monks should consistently uphold these three hearts or understandings.

Penned in the spring of 1237 for the upcoming generations practising the Way, by Dogen, abbot of Kosho-(Horin-)ji.

— Excerpt from *Tenzo Kyokun* by Zen Master Dogen

Calendar of Events

April — June 2024

DAY	DATE	TIME	ACTIVITY	LOCATION	CONTACT
Weekday		5.20–7.10 am	Gyoten Zazen and Service	Online and Tokoazan	Tony Crivelli
Weekends		6.20–8.10 am	Gyoten Zazen and Service	Online and Tokoazan	

WEEKLY ACTIVITIES

Sunday	Weekly	9.50 am–12 pm	Sanzen-kai	St. Pius X School Hall Heidelberg West	Brett Hope
Thursday	Weekly	6.20–9 pm	Sanzen-kai	Quang Minh Temple Braybrook	Karen Threlfall

APRIL

Tuesday	9 Apr	7–9.30 pm	Committee Meeting #315	Online	John Bolton / Brett Hope
Sundays	14–21 Apr	7 days	Retreat 75	Casa Pallotti	Tony Crivelli

MAY

Sunday	5 May	10 am–3 pm	Foundation Day 25	St. Pius X School Hall Heidelberg West	John Bolton / Brett Hope
Tuesday	14 May	7–9.30 pm	Committee Meeting #316	Online	John Bolton / Brett Hope

JUNE

Tuesday	11 June	7–9.30 pm	Committee Meeting #317	Online	John Bolton / Brett Hope
Sunday	16 June	10 am–3 pm	One Day Workshop #2	St. Pius X School Hall Heidelberg West	Katherine Yeo / Ekai Osho
Sunday	23 June	10 am–12 pm	B1 Chosan: Member's Day and Exit Ceremony		Brett Hope/Teishin
Thursday	27 June	6.20–9 pm	B2 Bansan (Exit Ceremony)	Quang Minh Temple Braybrook	Karen Threlfall

COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT 2023–2024

Honorary Member:

Ekai Korematsu Osho

President:

John Bolton
0428 188 220

Vice-President:

vacant

Treasurer:

Teishin Shona Innes
0421 285 338

Secretary:

Brett Hope
0433 859 339

Ordinary Members:

Katherine Yeo
0422 407 870
Caleb Mortensen
0412 966 167
John Hickey
(Treasury Assistant)
0435 939 485

Jessica Cummins
0422 968 947

Louise Smith
0408 210 432

Assistant Members:

Marisha Rothman
0400 873 698



Teaching Schedule April – June 2024

SANZEN-KAI

Sunday Sanzen-kai: (10 am–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 9.50 am.
Chosan (Exit Ceremony): 23 June

Thursday Sanzen-kai: (6.20–9 pm)

Zazen (sitting meditation), kinhin (walking meditation), incense and tea offering, chanting service and reading.
Bansan (Exit Ceremony): 27 June
By donation.

INTEGRATED BUDDHIST STUDIES

Main Course A

A1 Class: Tokoizan zendo and online
Ten classes 10 am–12 pm Saturdays
Term 2: 13 April–22 June

A2 Class: Tokoizan Zendo and online
Ten classes 5–7 pm Saturdays
Term 2: 13 April–22 June

A3 Online Class:
Ten classes 7–9 pm Wednesdays
Term 2: 24 April–26 June

Cost: \$125 Annual Student membership,
\$755 per year (4 terms, 40 classes),
\$235 per term (10 classes)
or \$130 for 5 classes (returning students only)
Members by donation for casual attendance.

Main Course B

B1 Sanzen-kai: 9.50 am–12 noon Sundays
Semester 1, 2024: 21 January–23 June
Chosan (Entering Ceremony): 28 January
Venue: St. Pius X Primary School and online

B2 Sanzen-kai: 6.20–9 pm Thursdays
Semester 1, 2024: 25 January–27 June
Bansan (Entering Ceremony): 1 February
Venue: Quang Minh Temple, Braybrook and online

Cost: \$340 per year (2 semesters)
or \$235 per semester.

Main Course C

Retreat study: Three retreats per year

R75: 14–21 April 2024

R76: 11–18 August 2024

R77: 17–24 November 2024

For further information see IBS Outline 2024 on website www.jikishoan.org.au

ONE DAY WORKSHOP

Three workshops are open to all and are scheduled for 18 February, 16 June, 27 October.

Note: Teaching Schedule is subject to change and updates. 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 Secretary and Main Course B

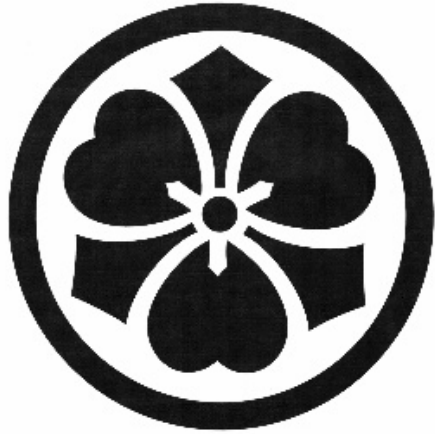
Teishin Shona: 0421 285 338

B-course@jikishoan.org.au

Main Course A

Katherine Yeo: 0422 407 870

A-course@jikishoan.org.au



Jikishoan Zen Buddhist Community Inc.
www.jikishoan.org