Myōju

Soto Zen Buddhism in Australia

December 2016, Issue 66

CULTIVATING FAITH: LETTING GO

ABBOT'S NEWS
Hannah Forsyth

WHAT ARE YOU SEEKING?
Ekai Korematsu Osho

THANK YOU ISSHIN-SAN
Robin Laurie

SIT: FILM REVIEW
Jessica Cummins

HOMAGE TO RYOKAN
Dan Carter

COMMITTEE NEWS
Shona Innes

MY FAITH
Azhar Abidi

TENZO RETREAT PLANNING
Karen Threlfall

RETREAT, MAY, 2015
Lorraine Collishaw

SOTO KITCHEN
Karen Threlfall

MYOJU IS A PUBLICATION OF JIKISHOAN ZEN BUDDHIST COMMUNITY INC

Editorial

'A self is what an Old Buddha prefers not holding on to. Do not selfishly begrudge this very moment and fail to transform your own self into the Mind of an Old Buddha.'

—Dogen Zenji, *Shobogenzo Kobusshin: On What the Mind of an Old Buddha Is*

Welcome to the final issue in the series on Cultivating Faith. It is a great honour to be taking over as Myoju Coordinator. I would like to thank Robin Laurie for her training, and I hope to contribute to the continuation of a magazine which brings to light the beauty of the Jikishoan Sangha.

The theme for this issue is 'Cultivating Faith: Letting Go'. I was reminded of the above quote, when participating in a discussion led by Shudo Hannah at Main Course A. We were discussing different aspects of faith, and whether or not Zen Buddhism requires a 'leap of faith', as such. For me, the above quote indicates that it does: as we engage in continuous practice, our faith blossoms. But although it blossoms, how can it come to fruition if we are caught up in the self that is practicing?

In this issue, Ekai Osho talks of the self connected with reality, and quotes Dogen Zenji in telling us that "The way is originally perfect and all pervading"... This is what we must have faith in, letting go of ourselves as we seek reality.

Dan Carter
On behalf of Ekai Korematsu Osho—Editor
and the Jikishoan Publications Committee

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Myoju

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Next Issue

The next issue of Myoju will be posted around the Autumn Equinox in March.

Contributions that support our practice are most welcome, including articles, reviews of books or online materials, interviews, personal reflections, artwork and photographs.

The content deadline is **January 29 2016** and the theme is **Dreams and Visions.**

If you would like to contribute or advertise in the next issue of Myoju, email publications @ jikishoan.org.au.

Abbot's News

When Ekai Osho was instructed by his Teacher, Daigen Ikko Narasaki, to visit the source of Buddhism in India, he had no idea what he would find and no idea that he would still be visiting and teaching 20 years later. In October this year, Ekai Osho made his annual pilgrimage to Bodh Gaya to teach at the Carleton-Antioch University International School. This was his 21st visit to India, and his 20th year as a Teacher for the Carleton-Antioch program. I was fortunate to accompany him on this occasion along with five fellow Jikishoan students. The weather was very hot and humid as we caught the end of the monsoon season – but Ekai Osho was in a very comfortable element with the climate and the business of teaching the eager minds of the American students – 34 of them all around 20 years old. The Zen instruction is part of a program where they study Theravada, Zen and Tibetan traditions. Ekai Osho's obvious rapport with Arthur McKeown, the Director of the program, the young people and the local people was a lesson in itself.

Ekai Osho spent time with Indian friends he has made over the last 20 years – with Siddhartha Kumar, who runs an orphanage and school, with Suresh Prasad who is a local businessman and who many years ago started programs with Ekai Osho to provide community water pumps. He is now involved in projects to build public toilets for the poorest. The sincerity and generosity of these people was an inspiration. We saw another side to the Teacher – careening around Bodh Gaya in a flimsy rickshaw in order to give custom and money to the poorest – and dealing with the famous Indian tailors. There were orders for 10 robes, 7 jubans, monks' bags, monks' clothes, 30 zafu cases and 30 zabuton cases – the Bodh Gaya tailors were kept very busy.

Over recent years Ekai Osho had conserved his energy for his teaching commitments and did not take part in the trips to historical sites, but this time he seemed to have enough energy for teaching and also visiting sites. He joined us in the trips to Mahakala Caves, and to Vulture Peak and Nirlanda University. We were also joined by Mr Singh, a much-respected retired guide whose knowledge of Vulture Peak and Nirlanda University is immense. Leaving our home, the Burmese Vihar, at 4am in a mini-bus we went 20 minutes down the road, turned into a dark and empty petrol station, and stopped. Mr Singh continued to instruct, the drivers disappeared – and eventually we realised we were abandoned. The drivers were searching for petrol. "This is just India," said Osho Sama, and we waited until petrol was found and then took off again 40 minutes later.

Osho Sama in India. Photograph: Vincent Vuu.

"This is just India." We saw the great beauty of the Indian countryside. We saw the historical places where Buddha sat, meditated and awakened to reality. We saw the same things Buddha saw – incredible poverty, sickness, old age and death – and felt overwhelmed. The entire Carleton-Antioch community met twice daily for morning zazen at the Vihar, and evening zazen in the Japanese temple the other side of town. The Jikishoan team also met for tea and discussion with Ekai Osho each day at 12 noon. Reading chapters from 'Zen Mind, Beginners Mind' as a basis for discussion with Ekai Osho about what we were finding was familiar and reassuring in the face of the crazy intensity of the experience.

Osho Sama honours both his late Teacher and all of us with his steady example and message of "This is just India – this is just reality – this is just Buddhism."

Hannah Forsyth

Committee News

COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT

The 18th Committee of Management (CoM) is now into its second quarter of activity and our newest Ordinary Members Marisha Rothman and John Hickey are settling into their roles.

In December 2016, Jikishoan Treasurer Naomi Richards has taken a well-earned rest from her role as Treasurer to go on an overseas holiday. This has been an opportunity for the Committee members, the President Shona Innes and Vice-President Katherine Yeo to learn more about the day to day running of the treasury with strong involvement also from Ann Alexander and Katrina Woodland who are now part of the newly formed Fusu Ryo.

The Fusu Ryo has been the result of Ekai Osho's encouragement and guidance in creating a project-based training platform for members interested in practicing within the finance area of Jikishoan's activities. The practice and training structure within the ryo has been designed by Naomi and leads participants from stage to stage as their interest and practice needs dictate. We encourage members to involve themselves in this ryo practice to bring about a fuller experience of what Mahayana practice means.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Following suggestions from members and because the 2017 calendar allows it, Ekai Osho has been able to adjust the dates for 2017 so that the Sangha Picnic and Foundation Day will not fall on public holiday long weekends. We hope this will make it possible for more members to attend both of these events: Picnic on Sunday 5th March, and Foundation Day on 7th May.

If you would like to look at the Jikishoan Events Calendar for 2017 (full year) please refer to the Members' Handbook or be in touch with the President or Secretary Christine Maingard and we will send you an electronic copy.

The Committee of Management wishes you a very happy summer holiday and a wonderful start to the New Year. We look forward to seeing you in 2017.

Gassho,
Shona Innes
President, 18th Committee of Management

Committee member Shudo Hannah Forsyth arrives at a publications (Myoju) meeting before Sunday Sanzenkai.

Photograph: Vincent Vuu

Welcome to Jikishoan

Jikishoan Zen Buddhist Community is a growing community of people learning and practising Zen meditation under the guidance of Ekai Korematsu Osho. Ekai Osho has practised and taught Zen Buddhism in Japan, the United States and India for over 30 years.

The name of the community encapsulates its spirit: 'Jiki' means straightforward or direct; 'sho' means proof or satori; and 'an' means hut. The practice is the proof—there is no proof separate from that. The proof, satori or awakening does not come after you've finished—it is direct, here and now.

Jikishoan runs a range of programmes throughout the year, which are conducted in the spirit of Bendoho—the original way of practice prescribed by Dogen Zenji in the 13th century.

More information about courses, one-day workshops, retreats and weekly meditation sessions can be found in the teaching schedule of this magazine and on the website at jikishoan.org.au. We warmly welcome anyone who would like to know more about Zen Buddhism to attend any of these activities.

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Bright Pearl

A note on the title of this magazine.

Master Gensa Shibi said as an expression of the truth, 'The whole universe in the ten directions is one bright pearl.' One day a monk asked Master Gensa, 'I have heard your words that the whole universe in the ten directions is one bright pearl. How should we understand this?' The Master answered, 'The whole universe in the ten directions is one bright pearl. What use is understanding?

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?' The Master said, 'I see that you are struggling to get inside a demon's cave in a black mountain ... even surmising and worry is not different from the bright pearl. No action nor any thought has ever been caused by anything other than the bright pearl. Therefore, forward and backward steps in a demon's black-mountain cave are just the one bright pearl itself.'

Excerpted from 'Ikka-no-Myoju' in Dogen Zenji's *Shobogenzo*.

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Dharma Talk

What Are You Seeking?

Ekai Korematsu Osho

Calligraphy by Seido Suzuki Roshi, Abbot of Toshoji. It says, 'muichimotsu chu mujinzo,' which can be translated as, 'In nothingness is limitlessness stored'.

Photograph taken by Dan Carter in Japan.

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‘So, what are you looking for? That is the question. Within your question there is the answer. You need to turn inward. What I am asking you – you need to question that. What are you looking for, seeking?’

The daylight is getting a little longer and I enjoy coming here to sit. Towards the end of the day when it’s getting dark, that period is very conducive to the meditative state of mind. The mind generally settles because of the rhythm of the day. When we live in a big city like Melbourne we lose touch with nature’s rhythm and the day’s cycle, but when we come here and sit, we become very connected with the environment; we become aware. Of course if your mind is too busy you don’t have that.

Environment becoming very clear means the five senses have started to work. Work means a ready state. When we settle into seated meditation, body and mind are at rest with the form and you simply breathe; so all the functions become ready. In other words, you become connected to the nature of reality; you become sensitive – unless you are working in your head.

Student: I have read about a term called Satori. What is that experience and what is the difference between that and zazen – sitting?

Ekai Osho: Oh, it’s interesting. Satori... We have many ways – at least three different ways – to express one thing. The original term is bodhi, a Sanskrit term, and when that is realised in person it becomes Satori and that is actualised in form – as a kind of proof – that is sho – Jikishoan’s ‘sho’ – that is bodhi.

Another meaning is ‘to awaken.’ To awaken is to become aware – a realisation, a sudden awareness, a noticing that you are such a person. After you have finished something, you realize, ‘I have done it – I did it very well’. That is Satori – realisation. But the so-called proof is not self-oriented.

The written character for Satori is heart; the radical has two parts, heart and me, so when you say Satori it is a person. Jikishoan’s ‘sho’ can also be read as Satori. So it’s not me, it’s an action or actualised. Another term is *mezameru*, simply ‘awakened’.

Awakened is a state where all the senses are working, are in a state of readiness. Not busy, just ready. So the source of our activity is this *mezameru* or ‘awake’. The person who has realised deeply, greatly, has great Satori, has no other choice but to practise, to actualise it.

What are you looking for? Do you just want to find out the meaning of the word?

Student: No. I didn’t understand what it was.

Ekai Osho: It would be very surprising if you understand. Even I don’t understand.

All together the three aspects imply one thing: connected. Activity connected with reality, not separate: self connected with reality, one with. Body and mind – life is fully functioning - and it points to that. It is often translated in English as enlightenment. This often creates a problem I think, a language problem.

Everything as it is. Are we aware of it? When you are confused, simply confused, when you are deluded, deluded. No more than that, no less than that. When you are kind, you are simply kind, no more than that. At that moment – keep up with it!

And our practice. Buddhism is the practice of Satori. If you haven’t got realization, you emulate the Buddha’s example; we borrow Buddha’s Satori, realisation as a model. When you copy the Buddha’s model, you may not have realisation yourself; you haven’t practised long enough or you haven’t reflected deeply enough, the chance hasn’t arrived. But right away it’s actualised: another side of Satori comes in. To do that is very auspicious because you need faith or trust or even curiosity. What the Buddha said – I’m curious – try out or something like that. At least, show an interest.

Student: In America we have a saying that you remind me of. We say ‘fake it till you make it’. So this is similar. You don’t really know what it is but you can emulate it and sometimes that meditation is productive.

Ekai Osho: Hopefully you have a good model. Genuineness or authenticity is important. So often...faith is...you need to cultivate it. The first stage is the ability to accept; if you don’t accept – nothing. When you receive instruction, you need to accept and put it into practice, ongoing practice, to maintain it. How you interpret doesn’t matter, just maintaining it, the way of it. You call it ‘faking it’.

Student: Can you please explain Dharma mind. This idea of

Illustrations by Sally Richmond

'When we settle into seated meditation, body and mind are at rest with the form and you simply breathe. So, all the functions become ready. In other words, you become connected to the nature of reality; you become sensitive.'

Buddha mind and Dharma mind.

Ekai Osho: Where did you get that idea?

Student: From a book about Zen.

Ekai Osho: It becomes complete if you study dharma mind in the context of dharma heart, dharma body. Dharma mind alone doesn't get you anywhere, it's intellectual. Mind is the other side – surface – of the heart, dharma heart. Heart rests in the body.

So try not to get caught up with interpretation or definition of dharma mind. That kind of study is pervasive – defining things. Dharma mind is not separate from dharma heart.

Mind implies faculty, heart implies directness, includes emotion, heart is much deeper. Western culture and education too in a sense are very much mind oriented, dry, too much structure – logic and things like that. Where is the heart? We need music to sing. Those two rest in the body. If you haven't got a body, it's nothing. Talking about mind, heart – where is it? Such a thing doesn't exist actually.

It is interesting – that's the kind of thing we try to express in the culture, particularly in our English way. It is very dualistic; certain vocabulary is not there in the English language. It's all good and bad. Opposite terms. There is no non-dualistic language. Heart and mind are two different things in English, there is no word to express both.

The Chinese culture and Japanese culture has both. Shin or kokoro is the mind and heart. We say Heart Sutra, right? We don't say mind sutra. When you say Heart Sutra, mind is within it. When you recite the Heart Sutra it is very complicated. Where is the word 'heart' in that sutra? So in English the meaning of the Heart Sutra isn't conveyed. If you say mind sutra it's very funny too. And Zen mind too. Zen Mind, Beginners Mind... Zen Heart (laughs). In the West the mind is more appealing, right? But it's the heart.

These two oftentimes characterise two groups of people, mind person and heart person. Very logical, intellectual person or emotional person. They are one. Okay?

Student: Osho Sama, 'way seeking mind', in what way is it not a gaining idea?

Ekai Osho: What are you seeking? The Way is the way of Buddhism, the way of reality. It's a direction – which way? So that is why I ask what are you seeking? Which way? Are you looking for the interpretation? Are you enquiring into what is truthful in our tradition, in Buddhism? Or are you caught up with interpreting it? Interpretation doesn't help.

So what are you looking for? That is the question. Within your question there is the answer. You need to turn inward. What I am asking you – you need to question that. What are you looking for, seeking? Otherwise it's too general.

Reality is a good term. Whatever you do, seeking is not outside of the reality. So each particular person is in reality themselves. Let that be not separate. What is that? What are you looking for, that is my question. Interpretation?

Student: Yes (laughs).

Ekai Osho: So in other words you don't know what you're looking for. It's often like that, you're circling around it. That's what it is, intellectual discussion, abstract, talking about it, sophistications. There is no, let's say, 'Way seeking mind'. In your role as the Jiso, there is the reality. It puts everything into context. The thing is, you don't get any straight answers, because it's not about that. It will be different when you go to the United States. There the teacher will give you all kinds of answers. I'm not a lecturer. I simply encourage your practice and reflection; give you an opportunity to reflect.

Way seeking – the Way is the answer – it's the Buddha Way. Don't take it for granted. Buddha Way seeking mind. Are you seeking that? Or the way that makes you feel good. Is that what you are seeking here? You need to question. There is nothing wrong with that. Let's put it into perspective. Do you come here to feel good so you can then go back, charged up or something?

The Way is a very important term and often *Do* or Buddha Way is used. It is a theme in Buddhism. Like in Fukanzazengi:

> The Way is originally perfect and all-pervading.
>
> How could it be contingent on practice and realisation?
>
> The true vehicle is self-sufficient.
>
> What need is there for special effort?
>
> Indeed the whole body is free from dust.
>
> Who could believe in a means to brush it clean?
>
> It is never apart from this very place; what is the use of travelling around to practise?
>
> And yet, if there is a hairsbreadth deviation, it is like the gap between heaven and earth.
>
> If the least like or dislike arises, the mind is lost in confusion.
>
> Suppose you are confident in your understanding and rich in enlightenment, gaining the wisdom that knows at a glance, attaining the Way and clarifying the mind, arousing an aspiration to reach for the heavens.
>
> You are playing in the entranceway, but you still are short of the vital path of emancipation.

This is the introduction to Zen Master Dogen's Fukanzazengi – Universal Recommendations for Seated Meditation. It is good. You can recite and reflect again and again. The Way, you need to seek the Way even though it is everywhere. Reality is everywhere, we need to seek, otherwise it's nowhere; reality is nowhere. All we have is me, me, me. I like or I don't like, I do this, you do that.

The Way – the Buddha Way. You can say the 'Way of the Buddha', so the Buddha is connected with reality, with the nature of reality. So reality is originally perfect and all-pervading. Reality, you never separate. Delusion makes you feel separate, ignorant. Reality is never separate, you need to seek for the Way. If the Way is perfect and all-pervading, if reality is everywhere, why do we have to practise? That is the fundamental question Zen Master Dogen pointed to.

Is that okay?

Thank you very much for listening.

Talk given at Sunday Sanzenkai, 31 July 2016. Transcribed and edited by Margaret Kokyo Lynch.

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JIKISHOAN GOES TO INDIA. PHOTOS AND CAPTIONS: VINCENT VUU.

Osho Sama leading chosan with Jikishoan students Liam (on the phone), Iris, Sally (holding a gift of chocolates), Bill and Hannah (making tea) in the Burmese Vihar, Bodh Gaya on the date of his 68th birthday.

Rebecca (a student in the Carleton-Antioch programme), Osho Sama, Shibuya-san, Kawashima-san, Vincent and Hannah at the rear of Nippon-ji in Bodh Gaya. Shibuya-san (a pure land monk) and Kawashima-san (a rinzai-zen monk) are Japanese monks sent to India to look after Nippon-ji.

Siddhartha Kumar, the director of the Niranjana Public Welfare Trust and friend of Osho Sama's led Jikishoan students through Sujata on a tour of his charity's work in the village. Siddhartha very sincerely asked Osho Sama a kind of koan - 'Who is Ekai?' The answer I cannot tell you but Osho Sama was very impressed by the question.

Bill, Iris and Hannah (in the background) on a rickshaw ride across the river from Bodh Gaya to Sujata village.

Osho Sama and the group wait for a 4 AM train at Gaya station for Kolkata.

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PUBLICATIONS AND PRECEPTS

Darren Chaitman needing a haircut at a Publications (Myoju) meeting in September. Photograph: Vincent Vuu

Julie Martindale and Robin Laurie at her last Myoju meeting as Coordinator. Photograph: Vincent Vuu

John Chadderton at Sanzenkai before taking precepts. Photograph: Vincent Vuu

Nicky Coles at Sanzenkai before taking precepts. Photograph: Vincent Vuu

Vincent Vuu, John Chadderton, and Nicky Coles after their precepts (Jukai) ceremony in September. They are pictured here with with special guest Yuiko Hirata and Hannah Forsyth.

Darren Chaitman, John Hickey and Dan Carter after their precepts (Jukai) ceremony in June.

OPEN BASKET: SANGHA NEWS

My Faith

BY AZHAR ABIDI

What does faith mean to me?
I'm not sure. I don't know what it means. It's just a word that represents an idea and I don't know what that idea is. Nor do I care.

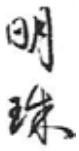
Yet, faith does mean something to me.
It means being comfortable in my skin. Being comfortable in my skin means being comfortable with life – not just my life but with all of life, with the experience of life.

Life is suffering.
The first noble truth. Yes, absolutely. When I'm angry, I'm angry. When I'm happy, I'm happy and when I'm sad, I'm sad. There's no way out.

Seeing things as they are.
The first of the Eightfold Path. Do I see things as they are? Sometimes I do and sometimes I don't. That's how it is. I have no complaints.

Donald Trump, Syria, every 'bad' thing out there and every 'good' thing out there is all one bright pearl.

Is there anything that is not the Buddha?



Thank You Isshin-San

BY ROBIN LAURIE

I have had an artificial hip for 6 years. It's a great relief from the previous constant pain and I can do just about everything I used to. At the hospital, after the operation, the thing they terrify you about is dislocating the hip, popping it out of its socket. I have odd twinges and discomforts, good days and bad days, but nothing that doesn't usually go away. After a while I even got used to the idea of having a big lump of titanium inside my leg. I tell myself I'm bionic!

Yesterday I was putting a net over the fig tree to keep off the annually increasing family of ringtail possums, so cute, so voracious, so infuriating. Heaving the net over the tree with the broom, my leg suddenly twisted. My artificial hip felt like it jumped out of its socket. It hadn't but it was quite painful. I moved very carefully the rest of the afternoon.

The next day the hip socket, the thigh muscles and calf muscles were still uncomfortable and tender. I was fearful, anxious. 'I've damaged my hip. I'll need another operation. It's supposed to last at least 15 years. I'm a fool, I push too hard, I try and do too much, I think I'm invincible.' On and on.

Then I remembered Isshin-san. I was very fortunate she was in my IBS A class for the first year I was a Jikishoan student. Isshin-san has a neuropathic condition of the feet which often makes it hard for her to walk. Some days her progress across the zendo was very slow, deliberate. She used to tell how she came to be able to live with it. Rather than trying to avoid the pain she would say, 'I am pain.'

I worked in a physically demanding job and I've been knocked off my bike. I've had a range of major and minor injuries. I know the patience, the physical and emotional transformations that are required. Sometimes, in my impatience and ignorance, I used to wish Isshin-san would tell us something more. 'Is that all? It's too simple. There must be more to it.'

Today, wracked with self-pity, full of terrors, I remembered Isshin-san and I thought, 'I am pain. There is no escape. This is what I am now, today. Attend to the pain.' Instant shift of consciousness, of focus, of feelings. I am pain. Pain somehow recedes. I adapt. I go on. I am pain. It's a wonder! It is simple. Will I remember?

•

PS. *18 months after I wrote this I described this experience to Isshin-san outside the Shiatsu College. She tells me, 'It's Dependent Origination. Its what Buddha says: something arises, something seems to disappear.' Ah. Thus come, thus go.*

Thank you Isshin.

Tenzo Retreat Planning

BY KAREN THRELFALL

'Put your awakened mind to work, making a constant effort to serve meals that are full of variety, that are appropriate to the need and the occasion, and that will enable everyone to practice with their bodies and minds with the least hindrance.'

—Zen Master Dogen, *Instructions for the Zen Cook*

On 17 October 2016, Tenzo ryo members James, Toshi, Isabelle, Katherine and myself gathered together at James' lovely home to plan for the upcoming November retreat.

Tenzo Ryo meetings are held 3 times a year around 6 weeks before each retreat, to discuss the menu, make refinements from the previous retreat and allocate the numerous tasks.

Before the planning meeting we all enjoyed a pot luck dinner with each dish being so delicious in its own right that one had to stop for a moment to really savour and taste just how good it was. After dinner, we were very fortunate to have Lee-Anne join us via the use of Skype. The six of us then got down to the business of the night. It was wonderful to see the experience and expertise of everyone shine during the meeting. There was even a memorable 'laugh til you cry' moment popping up for James and myself.

After the meeting, Katherine gave a cooking demonstration of Lotus Root Kimpara with James, myself and Lee-Anne watching on. Lee-Anne of course, watching in her Tiger onesie from home with James holding the laptop over the stove at times so she could see how Katherine's stir-frying of the Lotus Roots was looking. The cooking demonstration assisted with refining the Lotus Root Kimpara recipe and quite naturally required extensive taste testing once it was completed.

It was a very productive, memorable and enjoyable evening.

Katherine demonstrates cooking Lotus Root Kimpara as Leanne watches via Skype. Photographs: Karen Threlfall

Sit

A FILM REVIEW BY JESSICA CUMMINS

Yoko Okumura is a filmmaker and the daughter of Shohaku Okumura, whose translation of the Genjokoan appears in Jikishoan's sutra book. She describes `Sit' as `a film about purpose in life, seen through the eyes of a Buddhist monk and his son'. At just twelve minutes duration this short but beautifully produced documentary is a revealing and intimate portrait of the relationship between her father and brother, and a skilful exploration of the dynamics of a family in which Zen practice plays a central role.

Shohaku Okumura is an embodiment of refined practice. He describes his decision to become a monk against his family's wishes; from an early age his path was clear. In contrast his son, Masaki, is still living at home as a young adult, uncertain and fearful about his future. Although his father observes that, 'to love is to give a space to grow,' it is clear that Masaki inhabits this space with great insecurity.

As a filmmaker his sister skilfully explores the convergence of the refinement and formalism of her parent's Zen practice and their practice as parents. In a poignant scene brother and sister discuss the style of parenting they have received; 'Sometimes I felt like I could use a little expectation,' Yoko wryly observes. The film seems to suggest, that unlike the prescribed forms of Zen, parenting is a far less certain practice, whose forms are hidden and never clear. Through beautifully observed scenes of family life, on-screen interviews and family footage, we witness moments of great intimacy but also disconnection and vulnerability. The film raises questions about how parenting informs a child's ability to eventually walk in the world, 'to live as a bird just flies, and a fish just swims.' It highlights with great sensitivity that for parents, determining the breadth of this practice, the scope of love, may come down to knowing how and when to let go. The family dynamics revealed in `Sit' also raise the question of how our personal practice informs our relationships, that most fundamental of all human practices.

I highly recommend this film; don't miss the Genjokoan-themed joke at the end!

→ *'Sit' is available to view online at this link: https://vimeo.com/176520042*

Left to right: Filmmaker Yoko Okumura; her mother Yuko; her father, Zen teacher Shohaku Okumura; and her brother Masaki.

Retreat, May, 2015

BY LORRAINE COLLISHAW

The hall is hushed. Take one silent step inside and quietly walk to the vacant cushion. In the dim candlelight I can see the dark outlines of twenty other people sitting straight backed, cross legged, facing the wall. Ekai Osho sits silent and present at the front of the hall. The stillness is profound. The candlelight flickers and incense wafts hazily in the morning air. It is 4.30am and the meditation retreat has begun.

I sit on my cushion and swing my legs around to face the wall. I will know this piece of wall intimately at the end of five days. Sway to and fro to find my centre and tap into the core of my being. The silence is peaceful and I feel at home. This is my Buddhist community to which I have belonged for fourteen years and I have a deep sense of fitting into a place that is for me. A place where I can belong and feel completely safe. All I have to do is be here, and pay attention to The Practice. I have learned much in fourteen years – I have moved from a raw beginner knowing nothing of Buddhist teaching and begun taking small, but treasured, steps on the path.

I settle my body comfortably: straight back, eyes relaxed, open, hands in peaceful mudra and quietly breathe in and out. Here I am; this is me - nothing more, nothing less. Hopefully in time, my mind will follow my body and become still. Not such an easy task, as my Western mind has been trained and schooled to be active and productive. As a child I was called a "day dreamer" and it was not a compliment. In the Western world we are taught to think, think and think again.

And so I sit in the stillness before the dawn and try to quieten my feral mind. "Monkey mind", some Buddhists call it, and boy oh boy are my monkeys alive and well. Think about all and sundry – what colour shall I paint the house, will I take that holiday, should I enrol for the French class, wonder what time it is? On and on it goes. Come back, again and again and again. Back to the cushion, to the straight back, the silent breath – nothing more – nothing less. So simple, yet not so easy.

Quiet now, just sitting, just breathing. The person next to me blows his nose; in the distance I hear a dog bark. In the room, a quiet sigh and a lazy fly wakes up and begins to drone. These little sounds are more noticeable now, but the sound of silence prevails.

Crossed legs are beginning to hurt, knees starting to ache, shoulders cramping and lower back feels tired. Come on, don't stress, just breathe, straighten the posture. Time slips by, illusions and delusions drop away, and I sit in the blissful awareness of nothingness. How long does this last? One minute? Ten minutes? A lifetime?

Soon the beautiful resonance of the bell hums through the air. We stretch and stand and yawn and breathe. Now we begin our walking meditation. One behind the other, the slow procession shuffles around the hall. Five AM the hint of dawn brings the first bird call. Soon the chorus is in full voice – kookaburras, magpies, currawongs and the beautiful shrike thrush all welcome the new day in the Australian bush.

Sitting again now after ten minutes walking, settling myself back on the cushion, my eyes find the familiar little dot on the wall and the crack that in the dim light looks horribly like a spider. I stare at the dot and I swear it moves but maybe my eyes are playing tricks. My legs are hurting and I think I should have gone out in the break, but too late now, try and settle. Try to regain the bliss of nothingness.

But trying doesn't work! Too hard, the mind won't give up – the monkeys are in full swing now, clambering about, swinging and chattering and causing chaos. Eventually, I hear the kitchen staff in the outer room as they prepare for breakfast. Ah, respite is coming. An inordinately long ten minutes passes and the breakfast duet begins. The beautiful ring of metal against metal and the clunk of wood against wood chimes through the forest and we commence our morning chant. Ah, the bliss of Retreat.

Homage to Ryokan

BY DAN CARTER

I want to ask you: in this whole world
What is the most profound
most wonderful thing?
Sit erect and meditate right to the end
As you meditate, you'll find a clue
And everything will naturally become clear
Keep your concentration
don't miss your chance
After a while, your mind will be pure
your wisdom ripe
Then you won't have to fool yourself anymore.

—**Ryokan** (1758-1831)

Face set at a decisive angle
I and the myriad dharmas
Continue to cling
To this body
Sustained by a beating heart.

Returning with decisive aim
The myriad things
Free of self-existence
Universe full

—**Dan Carter,** December 2015

Soto Kitchen

BY KAREN THRELFALL

With the season of summer upon us, it is a time of heightened activity, expansion, growth, and brightness. During the warmest season we naturally turn to lighter and more cooling foods. When cooking it is advisable to steam, simmer or use high heat for a very short time. Also take full advantage of the abundance of cooling, fresh foods; in particular sprouts such as mung, soy and alfalfa, and fruits such as apples, watermelons, lemons and limes. Mung beans are particularly indicated during the summer months and used extensively in the Chinese culture to clear summer heat and rebalance the body.

PUMPKIN, MUNG BEAN, CELERY AND CORIANDER SOUP FOR THE SLOW COOKER

Original recipe by Karen Threlfall

Ingredients	Quantity
Japanese pumpkin, peeled and chopped	1/2
Celery and leaves, chopped and washed	2 cups
Mung beans, washed	2 stems plus leaves and stalks (approx. 2 cups)
Vegetable stock	2 to 4 cups

Method

1. Put rice or olive oil in fry pan or select 'sear' button of pressure/slow cooker and brown pumpkin for 7 minutes
2. Add mung beans, cilantro, celery and stock
3. Slow cook for 2 hours

Serve as a soup along side a bowl of brown rice cooked with quinoa; or ladle the cooked vegetables without liquid over a bed of sticky white rice and serve alongside lightly steamed greens of your choice with a touch of soy sauce. (Use minimal salt for summer cooking.)

CELERY, APPLE AND CUCUMBER SALAD WITH LIME DRESSING

Slightly modified from the original recipe at *http://foreverfit.tv/celery-apple-cucumber-salad-lime-dressing/*

Ingredients	Quantity
Large stalks of celery	4
Green apple	1 (large)
Parsley	1 handful
Medium cucumber	1
Lime (or lemon) juice	1/2 cup
Avocado oil	1/2 cup
Sesame seeds	2 tbsp (approx.)

Method

1. Cut celery in half, then quarters, then slice into 1cm pieces
2. Do the same for cucumber and apple
3. Add all vegetables to a bowl
4. Place lime and avocado oil in a bowl and stir to combine
5. Pour dressing over salad and sprinkle sesame seeds just before serving

Celery, apple and cucumber salad with lime dressing.

Photograph: Karen Threlfall

Calendar of Events

January – March 2017

WEEKLY ACTIVITIES

DAY	DATE	TIME	ACTIVITY	LOCATION	CONTACT
Sundays	Weekly	5:30–7:45 PM	Sanzenkai	Brunswick	Liam/Shona
		7:45–8:30 PM	Supper		James/Karen
Thursdays	Weekly	7:00–9:00 PM	Sanzenkai	Footscray	Hannah/Phil Frasca

JANUARY

Sunday	8 January	5:30–7:30 PM	Sanzenkai resumes	Brunswick	Liam/Shona
Tuesday	17 January	7:00–9:30 PM	Committee Meeting #222	Footscray	Shona
Sunday	29 January	5:30-7:30PM	Bansan – entering	Brunswick	Liam/Shona

FEBRUARY

Tuesday	14 February	7:00–9:30 PM	Committee Meeting #223	Footscray	Shona

MARCH

Sunday	5 March	12:00–3 PM	Annual Sangha Picnic	Darebin Parklands (Melways Map31 C9)	Liam/Shona
Tuesday	14 March	7:00–9:30 PM	Committee Meeting #224	Footscray	Shona
Sunday	26 March	9:00 AM –12 PM	Autumn Committee Workshop #18	Footscray	Shona

ADDRESSES

Brunswick
Australian Shiatsu College
103 Evans St
Brunswick VIC 3056

Footscray
On application.

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Publications (*Shuppan*)
publications @ jikishoan.org.au
webmaster @ jikishoan.org.au

CONTACT

General Enquiries
Hannah Forsyth
03 8307 0600
contact @ jikishoan.org.au

Sunday Sanzenkai
Zendo Coordinators
Liam D'hondt
0497 988 612

Shona Innes
0421 285 338

Kitchen
James Watt (Tenzo)
0425 737 608

Karen Threlfall (Roster)
0418 342 337

Thursday Sanzenkai
Hannah Forsyth
03 8307 0600

Phil Frasca
0457 523 337

COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT 2016 – 2017

President
Shona Innes
0421 285 338

Vice President (*Kan'in*)(and **Membership Coordinator**)
Katherine Yeo
0422 407 870

Finance (*Fusu*)
Naomi Richards
0407 839 890

Secretary (*Shoji*)
Christine Maingard
0430 599 430

Assistant Committee Member
Julie Martindale
0403 184 153

Ordinary Committee Members:

Hannah Forsyth
03 8307 0600

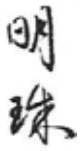
Iris Dillow
03 5359 3616

Isabelle Henry
0423 982 947

John Hickey
0400 873 698

Marisha Rothman
0435 939 485

Myoju
Dan Carter
0422 498 902



JIKISHOAN 直証庵
zen buddhist community

Teaching Schedule, January–March 2017

Teachings are given personally by Ekai Korematsu Osho. Brochures providing more information are available. Please check the website or contact one of the IBS coordinators listed below.

SANZENKAI

Brunswick (5.30–7.45pm Sundays, from 8 January)

Zazen (sitting meditation), kinhin (walking meditation), tea ceremony, chanting service and Dharma talk (by the teacher or an experienced member). For beginners, members and friends.

Newcomers, please arrive by 5.15pm. Attendance by donation (according to one's means). Participants are welcome to stay for an informal supper.

Bansan (Entering Ceremony): 29 January.

Footscray (7–9pm Thursdays)

Zazen, kinhin meditation, tea ceremony, chanting service and reading. Attendance by donation.

Bansan (Entering Ceremony): 2 February.

INTEGRATED BUDDHIST STUDIES

Main Course A1 - Jikishoan Zendo, Footscray
Ten classes, 9 - 11 AM Saturdays
Term one: 28 January - 1 April

Main Course A2 - Australian Shiatsu College, Brunswick
Ten classes, 5.30 - 7.30 PM Saturdays
Term one: 28 January - 1 April

Main Course A3 - Australian Shiatsu College, Brunswick
Ten classes, 7 - 9 PM Wednesdays
Term one: 1 February - 5 April

Cost is $60 admission fee, $545 per year (4 terms, 40 classes), $170 per term (10 classes) or $90 for 5 classes (casual). Members by donation for casual classes.

Main Course B1 (5:30–7.45pm Sundays, Brunswick)
Semester 1, 2017: 29 January 2016 to 25 June
Commences with Bansan on 29 January
Venue: Australian Shiatsu College, Brunswick

Main Course B2 (7–9pm Thursdays, Footscray)
Semester 1, 2017: 2 February to 22 June
Commences with Bansan on 2 February 2016
Venue: Jikishoan Zendo Footscray

Cost is $240 per year (2 semesters) or $170 per semester.

Main Course C

Retreats and overseas study. Jikishoan holds three seven-day retreats per year.

For 2017: 13 – 20 April, 18 – 25 August, 17 – 24 November.

Cost: $1365 / 3 retreats 2016, or $3780 / 9 retreats 2017 – 2019

ONE DAY WORKSHOPS: INTRODUCING ZEN MEDITATION

An intensive orientation workshop for beginners as well as for those who have some experience. All workshops are held at the Footscray zendo. Includes morning and afternoon teas and lunch.

Sundays 5 February, 2 April.

Non-members $90. Members and IBS students by donation.

EASTER BENDOHO RETREAT

A seven-day intensive residential Zen experience, including daily Chosan (morning tea), Dokusan (interview with the Teacher), Teaching and Teisho (afternoon Dharma talk). Cost depends on the number of days attended and includes meals and accommodation.

6pm Thursday 13 April – 2pm Thursday 25.

Venue: Adekate Fellowship Centre, Creswick

MELBOURNE BUDDHIST SUMMER SCHOOL

The annual Melbourne Buddhist Summer School run by the Kagyu E Vam Institute at Maitripa Centre in Healesville will run from 14 – 17 January. Ekai Osho will take part in the forum on Saturday 14 and give teachings on 14 – 15 January on the topic 'On a Vision Within a Vision and a Dream Within a Dream' (Muchu Setsumu) and on January 16 – 17 will present an introduction to the essentials of Zen Meditation and Practice.

IBS COORDINATORS

General Enquiry and Main Course C:
Hannah Forsyth: ph. 8307 0600 / contact @ jikishoan.org.au

IBS Student Secretary and Main Course B:
Shona Innes: 0421 285 338 / shona.innes @ gmail.com

Main Course A:
Katherine Yeo: 0422 407 870 / katherinelianyeo @ gmail.com

GENERAL ENQUIRY, BOOKING and ENROLMENT
Phone 03 8307 0600 or email: contact @ jikishoan.org.au