



THE PRACTICE OF COMPASSION



The Abbots' Cemetery, Toshōji Temple, Okayakama Prefecture, JAPAN.

Photograph: Rev Seishin Nicholls

IN THIS ISSUE

In this issue Ekai Osho's Dharma Talk is about connecting practice and study to compassion and wisdom; Seishin Nicholls tells an inspiring story of compassionate action; Naomi Richards considers what we see and what we choose not to; Azhar Abidi re-

flects on what he learnt being Myoju Co-ordinator; Nicky Coles takes a night bicycle ride; Diana Liu asks some profound questions after her first retreat; Karen Threlfall discovers the joy of quinces; Ronan McShane and Ariella Schreiner have fun at the Sangha Picnic.

MYOJU IS A PUBLICATION OF JIKISHOAN ZEN BUDDHIST COMMUNITY INC

Editorial

Welcome to this Winter edition of Myoju with the theme 'The Practice of Compassion'. The days are short, the nights are long and the air is cold; a perfect time for going inside.

Ekai Osho's Dharma talk emphasises the need for both study and training to cultivate compassion in action in the world. He says, 'Settling down to original nature is a good thing. You still have to stand up and go outside and speak to others.'

Seishin Nicholl's and Naomi Richard's articles both comment on how compassion can sometimes be expressed in ways that are unexpected or apparently strange. Azhar Abidi, who was the Myoju Co-ordinator for the past five issues, notes in his student talk the necessity of compassion for oneself.

Ekai Osho has spoken of Lineage as the theme for Jikishoan in 2015. It is a great pleasure to have Seishin's article as she edited the first issue of Myoju in Spring 2000. Christine Maingard and Karen Threlfall, both previous coordinators, have been active with this issue. So the Myoju lineage is very present in these pages.

This is my first issue as Myoju Co-ordinator. I would like to thank Ekai Osho and the Editorial Committee for their support and encouragement, Jikishoan members and friends for their contributions, and the printer for his careful attention.

Robin Laurie

On behalf of Ekai Korematsu Osho
and the Jikishoan Publications Committee

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Myoju

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The views expressed in Myoju are not necessarily those of the Jikishoan Zen Buddhist Community or its Abbott, Ekai Korematsu Osho.

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Next Issue

The next issue of Myoju will be posted around the Spring Equinox in September 2015.

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 **Sunday 26 July 2015** and the theme is 'Lineage in Practice.'

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

For article contributions, please use the template and the advice in the style guide that will be sent by return email.

Right: Ekai Osho sits next to George Duckett and Shudo Hannah on Foundation Day, posing for a group photograph, after receiving his 15-striped Sangha Okesa.

Photograph: Vincent Vuu



Abbot's News

'Compassion is not an emotion—it is an appropriate response to suffering.' Ekai Korematsu Osho

OPENING OUR DOORS TO EVERYONE

This issue of Myoju is focussed on the theme of the Practice of Compassion. The twin practices of wisdom and compassion are carried by the vehicle of our zazen practice. Ekai Osho has continued in his own compassionate practice by providing Transformative Buddhist Learning, Experience and Cultivation for Everyone—in three ways: Buddhist Teachings, Providing Structures and Cultivating Practice.

- **Buddhist Teachings:** Ekai Osho is working with the coordinators and students in refining the Integrated Buddhist Studies program in order to provide practice and training for all—regardless of their personal circumstances and finances. There is opportunity within Jikishoan's activities for anyone who wishes to experience the teachings. We open our doors to everyone.
- **Providing Structures:** Osho-sama is encouraging the community and committee to provide a solid physical base for supporting the practice of zazen—hence his great interest in the on-going Building Project and the establishment of a sound fiscally responsible organisation.
- **Cultivating Practice:** And with his own example of steady 'come what may' practice, he provides us with a real living model—not just words.

In the first part of 2015, Ekai Osho has been working with the Committee and IBS coordinators to start the year with energy and to refine the IBS program. Hence the Main Course A classes are all well supported, and the Sunday and Thursday Sanzenkai are enjoying good attendance along with Osho's presence. At the Easter Retreat, Ekai Osho gave six Teisho talks on Gakudo Yojinshu (Points to Note On Practising the Way) by Zen Master Dogen. Before the Easter Retreat, Ekai Osho held a number of inter-

views, mainly with Main Course C students, so that their plans for the year were clear and sustainable for them before they attended the first retreat.

FOUNDATION DAY—A SENSE OF LINEAGE IN OUR TRADITION

Ekai Osho's work is directed towards providing us with a model of a healthy Zen community, which will be able to thrive well into the future. We celebrated our 16th Foundation Day on Sunday, 26 April. On this occasion he was presented with the fifteen-striped Sangha Okesa made by the community for him, and then conducted a precept ceremony.

Ekai Osho has also been active with other Buddhist organisations. Already this year he has taught as a guest Teacher at the Melbourne Buddhist Summer School and gave a Public Talk at the Tibetan Buddhist Society Autumn Festival. In May and June he is travelling to the United States to renew old acquaintances and make new connections at San Francisco Zen Center, the Yellow Springs Dharma Center, and the Zen Mountain Monastery. Accompanied by the President, Katherine Yeo, Ekai Osho is also looking at how other Zen centres embrace, sustain and develop their communities.

We wish Ekai Osho and Katherine Shuzan a safe journey and look forward to hearing about their activities on their return.

Shudo Hannah Forsyth

'According to the roots the leaves spread forth...'
From Sandokai by Zen Master Sekito Kisen

Shudo Hannah Forsyth has been appointed as the first Jikishoan Assistant Teacher Trainee. This is a very significant moment for Jikishoan. It is the first step in creating a teaching lineage. Ekai Osho points out that this role requires more than intellectual knowledge. It requires being present and being an admirable model.

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Committee News

The dream of having our own temple has long been a part of Jikishoan's vision. In the ten-year plan Ekai Osho presented to the preliminary Committee of Management in 1999, a physical home for the Jikishoan community was at the top of his list.

In that same year when Jikishoan became an incorporated entity the objectives included:

- v) To conduct Zen Buddhist ceremonies, social functions and fund raising activities to support Jikishoan's members and to further Jikishoan's Aims and Objectives.
- vi) To plan, acquire, provide, maintain and dispose of property, facilities, ceremonial instruments and practice-related items as necessary to meet the requirements of Jikishoan's teaching programs, practice programs and other community activities.

In March 2000, a dedicated bank account was opened for the Building Project. This fund was refined when in December 2008 Jikishoan received Donor Gift Recipient status from the ATO for a Building Fund.

More recently, Ekai Osho invigorated the vision of purchasing a building with the formation of the Building Project team, informally named The Abbot's Pet Project. The team, with great support from the broad Jikishoan community, has worked to raise money such that we currently have approximately \$185,000 available for a building. It is estimated that we need a further \$170,000 to be in a position to get a bank loan and we are soon to embark on a new round of fundraising to reach this goal.

At this juncture, Ekai Osho has suggested that we form a Building Sub-Committee of the Committee of Management. To this end we have drafted Terms of Reference to give this group a structure and direction in their work. At the Community Workshop on 3 May we presented these Terms of Reference and discussed with the community the future of the Building Project in light of our past and current efforts. The Building Project team will continue as a ryo group working on the many different tasks that are required to raise funds and purchase a property.

Naomi Sonen Richards
Treasurer

Announcements

NEPAL EARTHQUAKE APPEAL

Jikishoan is raising funds to help those affected by the earthquake through the Jikishoan Relief Fund – Nepal Earthquake Appeal. The Appeal will run for three months from 1 May–31 July 2015. Details about making contributions are available on the website – www.jikishoan.org.au.

All of us are aware of the devastating earthquake that has hit Nepal and beyond. Our hearts and minds go out to the many people affected. In urgent response committee members unanimously decided to raise funds with spirit of prayer for Nepal and all those affected. Enquiries: jikishoantreasurer@gmail.com.

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Jikishoan Zen Buddhist Community Inc. A0037927K

The Seventeenth Annual General Meeting of Jikishoan Zen Buddhist Community Inc. will be held on **Sunday, 6 September 2015, at the Australian Shiatsu College, 103 Evans Street, Brunswick**, immediately after Sunday Sanzenkai Service. Full details will be provided in agenda papers, which will be sent to the Members of Jikishoan closer to the date. Members, IBS Students and Friends are warmly invited to attend.

As part of the proceedings, the Abbot, Ekai Korematsu Osho, and the President, Katherine Yeo will report about Jikishoan's activities, its growth in membership over the past year, and the goals for the coming year.

The term of office of existing Committee members expires at the Annual General Meeting. Members (Practice) are invited to nominate for the Committee of Management, consisting of four Office Bearer positions (President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer), and up to five ordinary committee members.

For further information, please contact Christine Maingard on 0430 599 430.

Christine Maingard
Secretary

Right: A portrait of Bodaidaruma Daiocho hanging on the wall of the zendo in Brunswick.

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.

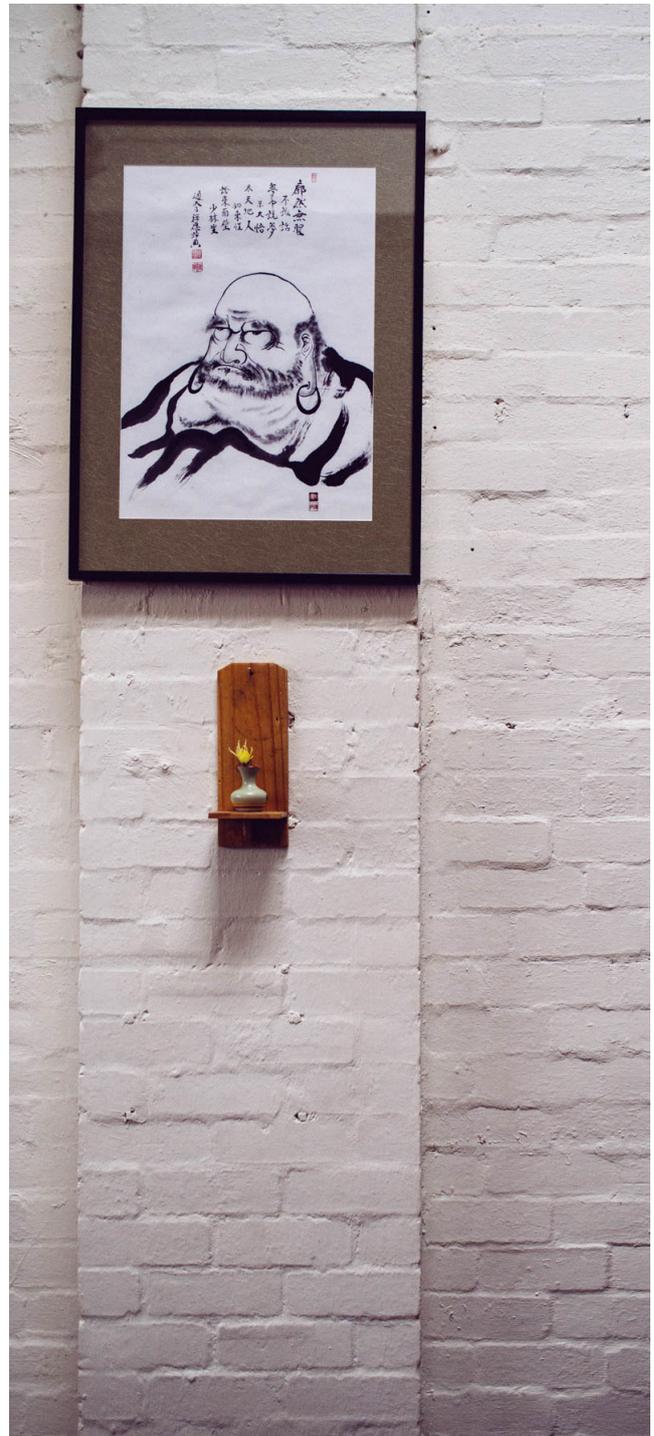
The name of the community encapsulates its spirit: 'Jiki' means straightforward or direct; 'sho' means proof or satori; and 'an' means hut. The practice is the proof—there is no proof separate from that. The proof, satori or awakening does not come after you've finished—it is direct, here and now.

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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Opposite: Toshiro Shutoku Hirano took precepts on Foundation Day. He also sewed his own rakusu for the occasion. Shudo Hannah Forsyth mentors people who sew their rakusus, she is also the new Jikishoan Assistant Teacher Trainee.

Photograph: Vincent Vuu

Dharma Talk

WE ARE ALL BUDDHAS

EKAI KOREMATSU OSHO

*Talk given at
Sunday Sanzenkai,
22 February 2015*

*Edited by Robin Laurie and
Christine Maingard*

Transcribed by Robin Laurie

We set up this space for the purpose of meditation and it resembles the traditional monastery set-up a little bit. The layout of how you are sitting is like a mandala form. In a mandala there is a Buddhist relationship, sometimes there is symbolism with images of buddhas and bodhisatvas. That's the form of mandala we are used to—the picture.

The mandala is also oneself. Mandala means that each and every person in a place shares the same essence, they are absolutely equal and they manifest in unique ways. That is the essence of the mandala. The many buddhas and bodhisatvas are manifestations of uniqueness. So the mandala is usually drawn, then the essence is viewed before it is internalised.

But Zen doesn't go through that process. You yourself are it! You are! That's in a sense the Buddhist view of the world in the light of Zen practice. Everyone is different but supported by the same essence. Everyone is sitting the same essence. Each person is a unique, different manifestation, but absolutely equal, and that can be kind of confusing! That is the Buddhist view of the human activity in this room and that view corresponds to the enlightened view and how the enlightened view occurs. It's not that this causes enlightenment. It's that this is uniquely who you are.

So in a sense it happens in a very personal place. But it's not separated. In essence, it's embedded in those kinds of views and practice and cultivation which happen through this practice and training. It's prajna. Anyone know what prajna means? [Student answers, then:] Yes that's a very good description – it cuts through the net, through the delusions, and finds common ground.

Ordinary mind operates in those delusional levels, unfortunately. That's a human characteristic you have to acknowledge. And you cannot avoid being delusional once you start using language. You cannot find anything really true with language, you cannot really describe it with words. Buddhist study is often preoccupied with things like shunyata, emptiness, and the intellectual method of study can use language that never gets it quite right.

In this room what you are practising is being in a place that the intellectual process does not, cannot, reach. But that



doesn't mean this place doesn't exist. You are drinking tea, bowing, prostrating; everything is happening. Practising in an enlightened way is like that. If you start to explain it, it's something else. What happens is you have a concept and you squeeze the practice into a conceptual framework. Conventionally we do this. We feel comfortable in this. It's the scientific way the brain works. But you don't get to the place words cannot reach. You need to drop trying to conceive certain ideas of enlightenment. You are stagnating if you are practising in that way. Trying to achieve doesn't lead there. Compassion and wisdom, kindness – those are things we do.

We need to touch the place that is the source of everything, of all things in the world. We need to cultivate it. This place here in the zendo is a very intimate place in that way and, simply speaking, you may say you feel one with everyone. Ordinarily it's not possible, you feel different from others, you feel like and dislike. In this place division drops away and you just are. You may be experienced in practice, you may be new – it doesn't matter. This is a place where your feet are on the ground, universal ground. It's a place where everything can simply appear, before discrimination, before good and bad and right and wrong. It cuts to that place through the practice.

It's why when you come back to practice again and again, you start connecting to that place and to a certain faith. It's not a faith based on an intellectual idea and doctrines. You find peace with yourself as you are and peace with everything around without needing to be propped up by pick-and-choose, I like this but not that. That's the ordinary way, experienced through emotions, that's how our mind works. It's not very nice. It doesn't touch anything fundamental, essential, in yourself. It's all dramatic stuff and traps you in it while you operate that way. But this place here stops all those things. It's you as you are, uniquely different, one of a kind, very special, each and every person. But it's also not like, 'I am very special!'

Here you let go of all the differences, discriminations, all of that, and find peace with yourself and others. That is the cultivation aspect. You might say this is cultivation of self-nature. You become clear about the fundamental nature, Buddha nature. The format of the zendo for practice actualises this quality and you put yourself in that space

as a kind of Buddha in your mind and it becomes slowly refined. Deepening practice is one way of saying it and knowing about wisdom nature is another way of saying it.

It's not an analytic, intellectual or scientific investigation of object and subject, but it's putting yourself out there, again and again, clearer and clearer, until fundamentally you find composure, with yourself, and with others. And even if you get caught up in something that feels very negative or positive, you can slowly do away with pick-and-choose, bit by bit. Without this cultivation it's impossible. You haven't grounded yourself. You are always looking for something better, comparing something, right?! Even this idea that each time you come to Zen meditation you will improve, that's not the way.

In this meditation hall you do this in a very simple direct way; in the concrete forms of sitting, standing, drinking tea, the stillness or movement aspect of the practice. So this hall is primarily for the cultivation aspect, not for the study aspect. The Dharma talk is there to inspire study and to inspire practice. The zendo is the cultivation of wisdom, the very basic essential prajna to cut through the discriminative sense.

In the light of that, outside of the Buddhist hall is not very different. It is just delivered in different ways. It is helpful to study to know how to deliver it outside the hall. The study hall in the traditional monastery is called the shuryo shingi and that's where you study the teachings, the sutras, the rules and the standard way of the practice. The traditional shuryo format is almost identical with the zendo. There is a platform and a shelf around the wall where you can put sutra books and study.

But why then do you study? It is to be able to deliver teachings in various circumstances for the benefit of others. Practice here in the zendo is for cultivation, to be prepared. So there is shuryo activity and zendo activity. These are the two wheels of activity. Settling down to original nature is a good thing. You still have to stand up and go outside and speak to others – 'Hello, how are you? Anything I can do?' You cannot just help yourself and just come to sit. The person who does that hasn't any clue about the study of Buddhism which is how to act for the benefit of others. In shuryo this preparation takes place. The essence

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'Your practice needs to be supported by wisdom and cultivation of self, by absolute equality with everyone else. That's where compassion lies.'

of that is very clear – it's how to draw out compassion. It's not for yourself, it's for the benefit of others. The symbol is Avalokiteshvara and it is like the mandala for shuryo. It's everyone without exception, the manifestation of compassion in various forms. We can draw the mandala form in such a way but we don't just do a drawing, we act on it, in practice.

This time, every time, you come here to the zendo to sit, to settle. You come here with a clear objective. You are not trying to get something outside yourself. So practice is very simple: seated meditation and walking and bowing, and in these forms you have the opportunity to settle in a unique place, dropping all extra stuff. The settling process is interesting. Habits appear – 'I like this, I don't like that', 'I am physically uncomfortable' – all that crap comes in. That's part of what the training in this practice generally offers.

It's not improvement, it's that you are refining something like that. Everyone is refining in that way. It's the nature of the practice of sitting in the zendo – at once, starting from the beginning, you are the Buddha as you are. As involvement becomes clearer, you become you, as you are. So in that respect you cannot copy anything from others. Don't get confused. Some things you use as a format and some things you use as the spirit of the practice.

But if you want to become beneficial for others, you need to study and do training to cultivate compassion. Compassion is the key question. Your practice needs to be

supported by wisdom and cultivation of self, by absolute equality with everyone else. That's where compassion lies. Compassion is not separate from wisdom. No separation. It's very difficult when you sit and think, 'I am much better than them' [laughs], 'I feel sorry for one who is suffering with back pain'. That's hardly compassion! Compassion is – 'I suffer because of that, I went through that, I am no different'. So how does this point of view work? Compassion without the cultivation of wisdom is not compassion. It's an emotional trick you make because you can't stand other people's suffering because you suffer! You suffer because you are confused. It's the other way around. Try to find out the way. Study and share for the benefit of others and make no separation from wisdom. It's not helping others; it's helping yourself actually. It's the same thing!

So the two aspects of what I can say are: What we are doing here is fundamental to the Buddhist tradition and connected to what we mean by enlightenment in Buddhism. It's not my enlightenment, it's not my happiness; it's not about my psychology or the delusion that I have a different psychology. The difference is cultivation so we can function very well in the world. Not just sitting and practising here to be myself; and to practise in the day-to-day world we really need to study and to practise attention to detail appropriately.

Thank you very much for listening and the message is we are all buddhas! Some kind of buddhas! (lots of laughing) It's a good thought! Utilise it! (more laughing). Thank you.

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Right: Shudo Hannah
steps with the right foot
forward.

Photograph:
Vincent Vuu



Features

THE PRACTICE OF COMPASSION

*REV. SEISHIN NICHOLLS**

My name is Seishin Nicholls. I received Tokudo from my master, Suzuki Seido Docho Roshi in April 2009. It didn't take long after that for me to discover two things. The first is that 'the monastery is everywhere' and the second is that 'practice is everything'. You can slip in and out of monk's robes, but never out of your monk's skin. You can come to the other side of the world from your master, as I have now, but you are not separated from him by one step.

Right now I am staying in the Bega Valley in New South Wales and often get a lift in my friend's car to go from the farm to the coast and back. During these journeys we sometimes pass by a dead wombat, wallaby or fox left beside the road. Each time I see the body of one of these animals, I am reminded of something Roshi told me about the Abbot of Chosenji, a small temple a few kilometres from Toshoji.

Members of Jikishoan who have been to Toshoji will have met the present Abbot of Chosenji. Roshi's anecdote, however, was about the previous Abbot. He was renowned for collecting road-kill from the side of the road and taking it back to his temple where he would perform funeral rites, offering incense and chanting for the cat, dog, tanuki or other wild creature he had found.

Most Zen koans and stories arise from the compassionate response of a realised monk or person to the suffering of all beings. This simple anecdote is the same. It says everything needed about the quality of that Abbot's vow and compassion. And everyone, then or now, who has heard of his actions, is also the recipient of his compassion. Awareness of death is central to Buddha's message. We will all become road-kill one day, whether it is disease or war or some other circumstance that runs us down.

On the Mahayana Path, the more diligently we practise, the kinder and more compassionate we naturally become. However, the practice of compassion in Zen may not fit our common understanding of what compassion is, and can be misinterpreted as being strange or unkind.

The Abbot of Chosenji's actions could be seen as strange. And I have heard senior monks confirm the difficult tests they experienced on, and after, arrival at their training monastery. The head monk at Daitokuji Rinzai Monastery explained it this way: 'If you really want to come in, you must leave your self outside, and then you will have no difficulty in the training. But if you bring your self inside, you will have nothing but difficulties yourself, and make difficulties for the community.' (The Zen Way: Tuttle, 1987)

I reflect on my own entry into the monastery, which was not like this, and some of my wilful behaviour within the community, despite the strict guidance and compassion of my master, day in and day out, much of which I misunderstood at the time. But the monastic system, of its nature, is transformational and the difficult and reactionary self becomes less and less present in a place where gratitude for what is becomes the only solid ground left to stand on.

The Abbot of Chosenji cared for and chanted for the animals that died on the road. At Toshoji, I love to visit the former Abbots' cemetery and the Kaisando (the Founder's Hall). I haven't asked my friends to stop the car and take the road-kill home. But I have offered incense and chanted for all past and future road kill and in gratitude for my master's compassion, for the monastery and the Zen Way.

*Rev. Seishin Nicholls and Myoju

In September 2000, when she was a Jikishoan Committee member, Georgia Nicholls (Seishin) produced the inaugural issue of Myoju single-handedly. She set a high bench-mark for Myoju publication for the many years to come with the quality and artistic presentation of her Myoju production. —Ekai Osho

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AVALOKITESHVARA: BODHISATTVA OF COMPASSION

NAOMI SONEN RICHARDS

It has been a great source of joy, recently, to have on my bedroom wall a beautiful image of the Bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara. I bought this thangka painting in India in 2013 and it sat rolled up in a piece of plastic Indian water pipe until January this year when I finally had it framed. For this reason, it was the image of Avalokiteshvara that came to mind when Ekai Osho, prompted by Lee-Anne's question, spoke at Sunday Sanzenkai about the practice of compassion.

In my painting, as in many depictions of Avalokiteshvara, the Bodhisattva appears with one thousand arms outstretched. In the palm of each hand is an eye. Avalokiteshvara is also known as the hearer of the world's cries. It seems that for the practice of compassion to arise one must first perceive the world's sufferings. This seemingly obvious point is one that we all miss every day, probably because it is such an unpleasant experience.

People had prepared me, before my visit to India, for the great poverty that I would witness. Thus prepared, I was probably not as shocked as I could have been at the experience of malnourished and scantily clothed children and beggars pressing up against me in the streets beseeching me for some help in their plight. What shocked me more, on my return from India, was the visibility of the beggars in Melbourne. It is incredible how efficiently we filter our experience to perceive what we want to, to exclude what is difficult to see.

We all know intellectually that our practice of zazen is 'to awaken to reality' and 'see things as they really are', but frequently our experience of this reality is quite ephemeral. At retreat recently, Master Dogen's chastisement resonated when he said, 'You dislike reality and seek after illusions.'⁸

This everyday avoidance of reality is highlighted when gross human neglect is reflected upon. On the Tuesday after Osho spoke at Sunday Sanzenkai, I was listening to a quite inspiring interview by Dr Anne Summers with Lieutenant General David Morrison, Australia's Chief of Army. David Morrison came to Australia's attention when he posted on YouTube a message to the Army that he would not tolerate discriminative behaviour in the Australian Armed Forces. During the question-and-answer time following the interview, a woman asked him how he could not possibly have seen the extent of discrimination within the army prior to the time of the YouTube posting. His answer was honest and instructive. For it was not until he sat with a mother of a victim of harassment who said to him, 'I gave you the person I loved most in the world and this is how you've treated her', that he truly 'saw' the situation. At that point, he described the experience as becoming 'personal'. To David Morrison's credit, this inspiration has been followed by an ongoing commitment to deal with the problem of discrimination in the Army, or 'your army' as he liked to describe it in the interview. Just as he didn't think of discrimination in the army as his problem until confronted by that mother, I wonder how many of us get up in the morning thinking about the activities of 'our army' today.

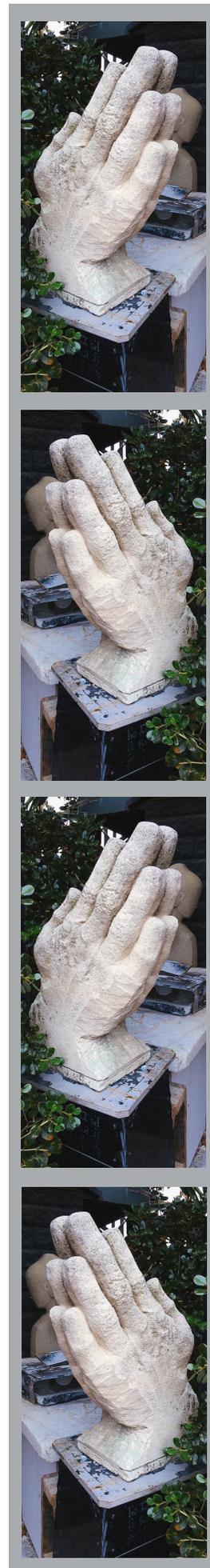
It is incredible how efficiently we filter our experience to perceive what we want to, to exclude what is difficult to see.

When I asked a question of Osho at that Sunday Sanzenkai, he spoke of the Bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara becoming one with another. Again this was reinforced by our reading of Master Dogen at retreat, 'The old master Shakyamuni said, "When Kanon (Avalokitesvara) pushed back the stream of discriminating consciousness, the sound heard and hearer were both forgotten."'* Most days my practice falls far short of this openness and lack of discrimination but it is a noble goal and steadfast guide.

It is also a reminder of the strength of perception needed prior to taking action. Osho's next question, 'Is it more compassionate to smile or to slap?', resonated with me as one who has often shirked the slapping in favour of the smile. One explanation for this avoidance is personality but I think it can equally be accounted for as a lack of true awakening to reality. The feelings we often identify as compassion, I suspect, come from an incomplete perception or embrace of the situation. For myself, the uncomfortable feelings awakened by suffering frequently override an accurate perception of the situation, and the ability to see that a slap is more appropriate than a smile.

At this juncture, Osho introduced the need for wisdom in the practice of compassion. I am happy to say that the thangka of Manjusri, with his flaming sword to cut away delusion in one hand and a book of sutras in the other, also has a place on the wall beside Avalokiteshvara.

*Both starred references are from Dogen Zenji's *Gakudo-Yojinshu* (Points to Watch in Practicing the Way).



Photograph: James Watt

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Student Talk

Repetition: The Practice of Being Myoju Coordinator

AZHAR ABIDI

Edited by Myoe Julie Martindale

Transcribed by Vaughan Daisen Behncke

Good evening everyone. As this is a student talk please don't take it too seriously. Certainly don't expect any wisdom from me. Thank you Osho-sama for the opportunity to reflect on my experience as Myoju Coordinator for the past year-and-a-half. This was a personal experience; so if you can relate to it that is wonderful. You will see things that I cannot see.

The talk is about the practice of repetition in producing Myoju and what this has taught me. Repetition as talked about in Zen Mind, Beginner's Mind, is important in any kind of Buddhist practice. Repetition allows us to begin to understand ourselves and has taught me about the relationship of the first, the second and the third person self.

First a few things about the process of co-ordinating Myoju. Coordinating is not done in isolation by an individual. Right from the beginning, when the edition is being prepared, it is an interactive process, done in conjunction with the Editorial Committee and involving the community at each step.

The Committee is also consulted so that they are aware of the theme and the content of the next edition. After each issue, everyone involved in publications meets with the co-ordinator and the production team to discuss the production. We talk about everything from the formatting, the content, to the mix of pictures and text. Were there too many flowers and not enough pictures of people? This is a valid point to consider because after all this is a community newsletter and if we don't have any pictures of people at all we don't know who we are. Each person involved in the production reflects on the experience and what they felt could have been better. We might make slight changes and try to improve things in the next issue.

For the next issue, the coordinator receives contributions from people and may also contact people directly, to encourage them to write about certain things or invite them to edit certain articles. Once a contribution has been received, the coordinator acknowledges receipt of the contribution and later, any editorial or proofing changes that

may have been made. The coordinator asks the author, 'Is this okay?' This is a very subtle point. It is easy to ignore this and just say to oneself, 'Okay. I'll just make changes and put the article in the next issue.'

There is infinite room for refinement in the practice. Responding to someone who has made the effort to contribute an article for the first time is important; to acknowledge them, to show appreciation for their contribution and not to take it for granted. Whether it is a one-line note or an abrupt email or nothing at all can make a big difference. If it is nothing at all people might wonder, 'Did my contribution just go into empty space?' If the article comes out differently to what they wrote, they might wonder, 'Where did that come from? I didn't approve that.' You have to take people along with you on the journey and make them feel part of the newsletter. You develop a relationship with a person and with encouragement they may want to write more.

Once the contributions are received, they are put together in one document which is sent to the Editorial Committee for comments and approval. It is very important to see how the Editorial Committee responds, whether changes are approved or not. An example of where this process was a bit unclear was the current issue where there were some changes to the design and layout that I wasn't aware of. Sometimes you can't control it at all. In this case, all I could do was stay with it. Once I saw that the design was changing, it was important to be in touch with the Editorial Committee and get as much of their input as possible. The last part of production is quite hectic – emails going back and forth, different people saying different things. You try to consult as widely as you can, but in the end the coordinator has to make the final decisions.

I will talk a bit more about refinement. Practice must be a process of repetition, in the same way you commit to sitting regularly. Osho-sama said that if anyone has a desire to commit to a role they should actually commit to it. It should not be done casually. With Myoju coordination you actually need to commit for three, four or five issues.



Above: Peter Farley and Karen Tokuren Threlfall over the Foundation Day pot luck lunch spread.

Photograph: Vincent Vuu

That commitment gives the practice a level of intensity that brings out ‘stuff’ which is really the interesting part – the meat of the practice. Once you are repeating practice, the level of refinement is infinite and there are endless opportunities in practising with this.

I would read Myoju three times from front to back, every time finding errors and taking them out. Karen told me that there are actually three forms of dashes, which I never knew. You apply them in different ways for different situations. I tried to consistently change the dashes for a number of issues. It was very hard but the level of refinement taught me many things.

Repetition has highlighted my intention to practise, so when I repeat some practice, I understand that without repetition there can be a problem. It took repetition over a number of years to actually see all the extra stuff I was bringing to the practice, which was why I came to Zen practice in the first place.

Repetition has also taught me that Myoju coordination is nothing special; it is just interacting with people, showing them respect, kindness. There is certainly nothing beneficial to being Myoju coordinator. But when I started, I brought lots of my intentions with me and I also sat for many years with expectations and hopes and desires of where sitting would lead me. So to reflect on what intentions we bring to practice helps us to start connecting deeply with our emotions and fears. The only way we can become aware of these intentions is through repetition and consistent practice.

When I first came to Zen practice, on the first retreat I tearfully expressed to Hannah that ‘I want to be happy’. That is what I brought to practice. I felt that there was some deep emotional need in me, some fears, and longing for contentment and happiness. Obviously I could then add a lot of extra things and I did: enlightenment, wanting to be a kind and generous person, wanting to be a good Buddhist, thinking if I sit long enough I will clear my mind. Certainly I can and do intellectualise about my intentions and I can write about my intentions.

What I mean by intentions is not actually that. Intention actually lies below our level of awareness. We are generally not aware of our intentions because we are always caught up in our thinking and in the way our mind works. To have an intention is a realisation ‘Oh, I am doing this.’ It is almost seeing yourself as a separate entity, almost as a witness. Little by little you can become clear about your intentions and see how they drive your behaviour and your thinking.

Finally, what I have discovered through the practice of being Myoju coordinator is compassion for myself. And not just compassion for ‘me, me, me’, but also compassion for the second person self. How I see my wife, my children, my family, my friends. How these relationships work together and sometimes don’t work. All topsy-turvy, all upside down, but that’s life. Compassion to me is to be with it because that is all there is. I am very grateful for having been Myoju co-ordinator. It has enabled me to see and keep learning through to this very day.

Thank you very much. Are there any reflections and final comments?

Student: I just wondered if you are going to take on another role or get involved in some other aspect of the practice?

Azhar: Not for the time being. This is because when I made the decision to step down I felt I had started to see all the extra stuff that I was bringing into these roles. It was nothing to do with the roles themselves – it was something to do with me and my conditioned habitual patterns with anything I do. Which sometimes makes it hard for me to do anything. I want to have some compassion for myself because I know that my tendency is to beat myself up about everything. If I take on another role I will start doing the same thing again because I cannot help it.

Thank you.

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Open Basket: Sangha News

The Jikishoan Annual Sangha Picnic



Happy Picnickers. Photograph: James Watt

Our Annual Sangha Picnic took place on Sunday 8 May at Darebin Parklands.

It was a beautiful, sunny day, and a wonderful opportunity for Jikishoan members to interact and meet each other's families and friends in an informal setting. 67 people and two dogs, on leads, attended. There was delicious food, good conversation, and Ann Alexander led the making of an ephemeral cubby house from branches and wool with the children.

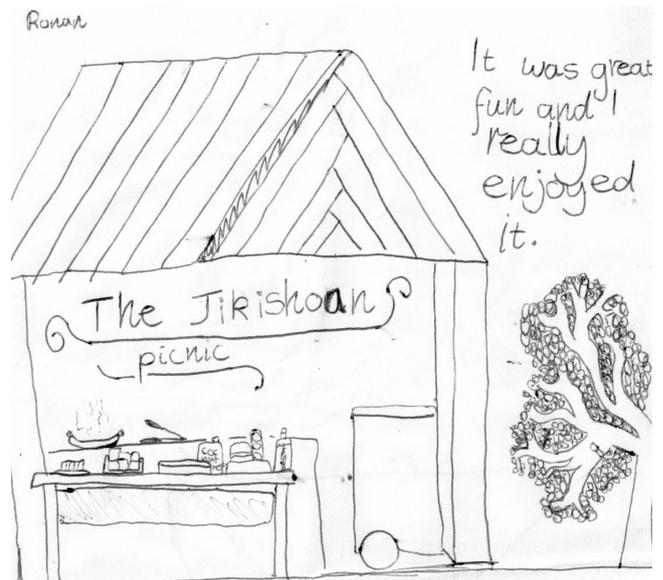
Picnic & Cubby House

I liked going to the picnic and being in the Zen photo.
 I loved meeting new people, especially the children.
 I loved making the cubby house out of sticks and wool,
 it had a cool web in the middle which could fit a spider.
 I will never forget making the cubby house.

Words and illustration (below) by Ariella Schreiner.



Right: 'The Jikishoan Picnic' by Ronan McShane.
 Below: Jacqueline Giffin (foreground) and Angeline Maingard (background) playing in the cubby house.



Photograph: James Watt

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VALE

CHERRY YUKO TENNANT

5.2.1938–31.3.2015

Cherry Tennant was a member of Jikishoan from 2008. She was also a member of the Castlemaine Zen Group. This poem was written and read by Peter Renfrew at her memorial service in Castlemaine on Wednesday, 15 April 2015, and sent in by Georgina Duckett.

Cherry tree in the childhood garden,
Her name a reminder of home.
Early work in London, travel to Greece and Rome.
Relationship, a younger husband, but ending alone.
Remarried to Peter, living in the Middle East and USA.
Yankee education, university, Frakenthaler the artistic way.

Travelled to Australia with spouse's career.
Ended the marriage, but found her spiritual home.
Nomad in a motor home, homestead tutor, again alone.
Nurtured by Frank, an introduction, the love of her life.
Artist, teacher, poet and gardener, but strokes bring strife.
No regrets, no desires—embracing Zen.
Transient, but life fulfilled, complete, an end.



Questions

BY DIANA LIU

Inhale, exhale,
Inhale, exhale;
Who is travelling through the swinging doors?

Right foot, left foot,
Right, left;
What is not moving when marking the floor?

Pick up the bowl, put down the bowl,
Pick up, put down;
What has been picked up?
What has not been put down?

I came with one question and went home with many;

Am I living in the question?
Or is the question living in me?

Can question possibly be the answer?

Can journey possibly be the goal?

The last question for Tom's grandma:

Can I possibly be part of you?*

** During Teisho on the Easter retreat Tom Vincent told a story about his grandmother who used to say 'we are all part of each other'.*



Dharma Bike

BY NICKY COLES

Riding home from Brunswick
 Moon and I play hide-and-see.
 ‘Now you see me now you don’t!’
 Shiny ball bounces along rooftops
 sneaks behind chimneys
 winks through leaves and branches
 brazenly floats clear.
 Two-wheeling human swoops downhill
 leans into corners
 changes gear and pedals hard—just makes it!
 Stops at red light.
 Moon, unconstrained, waits to resume the game.
 When moon is absent wind comes out to play.
 And rain.
 Four-wheeling humans are cautiously invited.
 ‘Slow down! This is not a contact sport!’
 Some courteously give way while others zoom
 missing out on fun:
 boom-gates, tram bells, screeching rails;
 swish of tyres on smooth tarred road;
 leadlights glowing welcome from doors along the way.
 Underneath all this the primal pull of gravity.
 Inertia.
 The homeward ride from Brunswick is never lonely.

*Illustration above:
 Taken from the inaugural issue of Myoju (Spring 2000).*

Soto Kitchen

BY KAREN TOKUREN THRELFALL

In this edition of Soto Kitchen, a recent visit to the Chatham Street zendo provided a wonderful introduction to the joys of quinces. Shudo Hannah Forsyth, upon receiving a large amount of quinces from a friend, passed some of them on, advising that they can be ‘chopped, quartered and googled!’

The following recipes are well worth trying as the flavours are delicious. Please enjoy the ‘googled’ recipe for ‘Poached Quinces’, and for a terrific treat, the ‘Jikishoan Apple Crumble’ which can be combined with the quince recipes. Thank you Shudo Hannah for sharing the bounty of the Autumn Harvest as we head into the cold winter months.

POACHED QUINCES

Ingredients (Serves 4-6)	Quantity
Water	1 litre
Caster Sugar	1 cup (220g)
Vanilla Beans	1 (or 1 teaspoon of essence)
Lemon, cut in half	1
Cloves	2
Quinces	4
Cream or yoghurt	to serve

Method

1. Prepare poaching liquid by placing water, sugar, vanilla, lemon and cloves in a large heavy-based saucepan.
2. Bring liquid to a rolling boil.
3. Peel, quarter and core the fruit, adding quinces immediately to poaching liquid to prevent discoloration.
4. Reduce to a simmer, cover and cook for about 1½ hours, or until the quinces are tender and ruby-red.
5. Serve quinces with a little of the warm syrup along with cream or vanilla icecream.

Recipe from SBS Food Online.

APPLE CRUMBLE

Ingredients (serves 4-5)	Quantity
Apples (Granny Smith)	4-5
Cinnamon powder	1/2 teaspoon
Apple juice	1/2 cup
Salt	pinch
Cornflower	1/2 tablespoon
Topping	
Rolled oats	1/2 cup
Flour	1/4 cup
Salt	1/2 teaspoon
Cinnamon	1/2 teaspoon
Brown Sugar	1/4 cup
Vanilla	1/2 teaspoon
Sunglower oil to bind	
Coconut or chopped walnuts	optional
Yoghurt or cream	to serve

Method

1. To make topping, rub all the ingredients into large crumbs. Coconuts or walnuts can be added.
2. Core and slice apples and cook gently until just soft. Remove from heat. (Combine with a portion of the pre-prepared quinces for a delicious variation)
3. Stir in the diluted cornflour.
4. Place in greased baking dish.
5. Place the topping lightly on top of apples.
6. Bake in oven of 180 to 200°C for 15-20 minutes.
7. Serve with yoghurt or cream.

Recipe from Jikishoan Tenzo Recipe Book.

Apples. Photograph: Karen Threlfall



Calendar of Events

July–September 2015

WEEKLY ACTIVITIES

DAY	DATE	TIME	ACTIVITY	LOCATION	CONTACT
Sunday	Weekly	5:30–7:45 PM	Sanzenkai	Brunswick	Liam/Annie
		7:45–8:30 PM	Supper		Michael/Anthony
Thursday	Weekly	7:00–9:00 PM	Sanzenkai	Footscray	Hannah/Phil

JULY

Sunday	12 July 2015	5:30–7:45 PM	Bansan (entering)	Brunswick	Shona/Liam
Tuesday	14 July 2015	7:00–9:30 PM	Committee Meeting #204	Footscray	Katherine/Shona

AUGUST

Tuesday	11 August 2015	7:00–9:30 PM	Committee Meeting #205	Footscray	Katherine/Shona
Friday–Friday	21–28 August 2015		Bendoho Retreat #49	Adekate	Hannah/Julie

SEPTEMBER

Sunday	6 September 2015	7:00–9:00 PM	Annual General Meeting #17	Brunswick	Katherine/Shona
Sunday	13 September 2015	9:00 AM– noon	Committee Orientation Workshop #15	Footscray	President/VP
Tuesday	15 September 2015	7:00–9:30 PM	Committee Meeting #206	Footscray	President/VP

ADDRESSES

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Australian Shiatsu College
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Footscray
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webmaster @ jikishoan.org.au

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Sunday Sanzenkai

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0497 988 612

Annie Bolitho, Roster
(03) 9495 1412

Kitchen
Michael Ewing, Tenzo
0431 947 553

Anthony Wright (Roster)
0412 812 708

COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT 2014–2015

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Shona Innes
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Secretary (Shoji)
Christine Maingard
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Julie Martindale
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Isabelle Henry
0423 982 947

Robin Laurie
(also Myoju Coordinator)
0438 351 458



JKISHOAN 直証庵
zen buddhist community

Teaching Schedule, July–September 2015

Teachings are given personally by Ekai Korematsu Osho. Please see the website for detailed course descriptions or contact one of the IBS co-ordinators listed in the contact information section on the previous page.

SANZENKAI

Brunswick (5.30–7.45pm Sundays)

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 your means). Participants are welcome to stay for an informal supper.

Footscray (7–9pm Thursdays)

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

INTEGRATED BUDDHIST STUDIES

Main Course A Meditation, practice and study in the Jikishoan Zendo. One class a week for ten weeks. Runs three times a week (A1, A2 and A3) with the same teacher and same content. All classes are at the Footscray Zendo.

- **A1: 9:00–11:00AM, Saturday mornings.** Term 3 runs from 11 July 2015 to 19 September 2015.
- **A2: 5:00–7:00PM, Saturday evenings.** Term 3 runs from 11 July 2015 to 19 September 2015.
- **A3: 7:00–9:00PM, Wednesday evenings.** Term 3 runs from 15 July 2015 to 23 September 2015.

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 B Community based practice and Buddhist study in everyday life.

B1 (5–8.30pm Sundays Brunswick)

Semester 2, 2015: 12 July 2015 to 20 December 2015.
Bansan on first and last sanzenkai of the semester.
Venue: Australian Shiatsu College, Brunswick

B2 (7–9pm Thursday Footscray)

Semester 2, 2015: 16 July 2015 to 17 December 2015.
Bansan on first and last sanzenkai of the semester.
Venue: Jikishoan Zendo Footscray

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

Main Course C Retreats and overseas study (see below for Bendocho Retreat). Jikishoan holds three seven-day retreats per year. Cost depends on the number of days you attend the retreat and includes meals and accommodation.

\$1365 / 3 retreats 2015, or \$3780 / 9 retreats 2015–2017.

ONE DAY WORKSHOPS

One Day Workshops are an intensive orientation to Zen practice 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.

9:00am–4:00pm Sundays. 2015 dates are 9 August 2015, 11 October 2015, and 13 December 2015. Non-members \$90, members and IBS students by donation.

WINTER BENDOCHO RETREAT

A seven-day intensive residential Zen experience focussing on zazen and including daily Chosan (morning tea), Dokusan (interview with the Teacher), Teaching and Teisho (afternoon Dharma talk).

Jikishoan holds three seven-day retreats per year. See online for application deadlines and further information. The November Retreat this year will be 10 days to mark the occasion of the 50th Bendocho Retreat.

August Retreat (#49): 21–28 August 2015.

November Retreat (#50): 19–29 November 2015.

Venue: Adekate Fellowship Centre, Dean Victoria

WINTER LECTURES AT KAGYU E-VAM INSTITUTE

By invitation from Kagyu E-Vam Institute, Ekai Osho will give a series of lectures on Friday nights at Kagyu E-Vam Institute during the month of July.

Dates: July 3, 10, 17, 24. Venue: 673 Lygon St. Nth Carlton.

Enquiries: Please contact Kagyu E-Vam Institute on (03) 9387 0422

GENERAL ENQUIRY, BOOKING and ENROLMENT

Please visit our website at www.jikishoan.org.au
Phone 03 8307 0600 or email contact @ jikishoan.org.au