



## Compassion and Feeling Stuffed

A dharma talk given by Ekai Korematsu Osho, in answer to a question arising at Deepening B class, August 22, 2007.

*Transcribed by Nicole Thomas and Johann Montet and edited by Katherine Yeo*

[ "I have a question about compassion fatigue." ]

Ekai:

Can I give you a counter question? Can you define it? I am not talking about the definition from a book. But your own. Questioning yourself is important. You have used a word, "compassion fatigue". The question is, "what does that mean to you"? You need to define it, yes. You don't need to look in the dictionary or something like that. You need to define it yourself.

Without that work, within yourself, meaning doesn't come clearly because you haven't positioned yourself, yes; finding some definition, even a temporary framework, to reflect that quality of it. [Without that work], you've put yourself in a spot. Often without positioning yourself, words start to flow and you try to find the meaning. It's not very productive in a sense, doesn't leave its mark.

When a question arises, search within. That is the real work. That is how to overcome, how to manage.



I could just throw around the words "stuffed" and "burned out". It is an easy way to do. It is something we can relate to. Easy. "You're stuffed." If you play on words, nice name you know, - "compassion fatigue". Less sophisticated - "you're stuffed". It's a condition. It is something; "just too much".



It could be anything. I think you have come to the right practice. Questioning yourself is important. Yes. I think people who are "stuffed" generally receive enough and enough, and their capacity (to accommodate) is gone, losing flexibility. It happens particularly with the counselling business and psychotherapy. How to manage that? Yes.

I had experience working with those people in the eighties, mid-eighties in the United States.

### **In This Issue**

*Compassion Fatigue; A Day at Daijōji Temple; Integrated Buddhist Studies; Reflections on August Retreat; AGM; Building Fund; Staring at the Sun...*

An American woman, Helen Palmer, a psychologist, developed a certain kind of method called enneagram and she provided activities to work with it. The method makes people understand their personality type. There are nine types, yes. For all those people who are stuffed, working in counselling and psychotherapy, she recommended Zen practice. She invited me to teach her students.

I did this for three years. She wanted me to teach meditation that people could find useful. She was not interested in inviting me to teach Zen Buddhism. She had invited me to teach them how to empty the mind, their stuff. She offered me the American mind. American mind is very active. And they need to keep speaking, through the emptying process. But the counsellor, the psychotherapist takes the other position; the listening one. Naturally if you do that, listening, listening, you become "stuffed". She did not want me to teach Zen. She wanted me to lead the meditation and respond to their questions because they are "stuffed" and have a lot of questions.

It was very good. I did not need to prepare anything. I just taught them, encouraged them to sit and meditate. Then there were lots of questions, letting their questions out. But whatever the answer was, it was not actually the real answer to overcoming their problems. The answer is to practice again, again and again, the meditation.

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***It was interesting, the first year when I started to teach. There were a lot of questions. And so, I was just responding and relating and bringing their attention to practice. The third year students did not have many questions.***

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They wanted to hear what I had to say. It was very funny when they said, "Ekai, you don't talk enough! You trouble me!".  
That is very funny.

Those are my experiences and stories; how students come to Zen practice. And you start listening, just listen, you cannot sort. You try to formulate ideas, stowing in your own brain. We have our opinion about lots of things, ideas about things. We take it all in, stowing it and gradually that storage capacity builds up. Stuffed again ! That is human nature actually.

By continuous practice, doing it again and again, we develop the capacity even though our human condition is unfavourable. As soon as you sit down, you are able, slowly able to free that kind of feeling. I think that after five sessions, four sessions, you must have some understanding, sense of what I am talking about. You come here to meditate, and when meditation finishes, you go home; don't you feel better?

And counselling is demanding; it is like being overpowered by talking problems and whatever. But, actually, they are not talking a lot. It seems like a lot of things are going on. They may produce a lot of noise. Actually there is very little; just caught up with psychological things. The important thing is for you to register, to develop a kind of hearing, to be able to get a sense of what is beneath all that overpowering stuff. And you become clearer, yes, slowly, in order not to be stuffed. But if you don't listen, if you just reject, then you're not performing your own job.

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***Real work is when the person starts to identify their own pattern; what they are talking about and when they start to listen to themselves.***

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The person who is able to talk a lot gets temporary relief. But real work is not that.

And that requires considerable attention [from the counsellor] while listening. And not just listening alone; that will not serve the purpose. Slowly, slowly to develop the skill to bring the focus, to recount the question that brought the overpowering situation. Fundamentally, we need to just listen, listen without being caught up in opinions.

We think about the meaning of compassion in that setting. Just give up. To "give up" means not being caught up with failure or success. There is no continuity if you are caught up with failure or success. Sometimes we cannot perform things well and all is stuffed; that is the human condition. But it does not mean that you will stay in that condition forever; you would be out of business. There are many different ways, lots of things counsellors could be open to for e.g. to take a little break, something like that. That's the shift. As long as the counsellor knows that what the client is expressing, what the client is expressing is all about complaints. "Unhappiness" – that's the word used.

The fundamental thing is managing, how to manage and Helen Palmer was just simply identifying the emptying of the mind. Intuitively people are doing it. They have a lot to talk about; emptying the mind. Maybe you can use a different word, "sharing" or something. But you don't want to share rubbish just to make you feel good. Don't you think so?

Before coming to that point of managing, talking is helpful, it's serving the purpose of temporary relief. There is no handling or tackling (problems) until one is able to stabilize the mind by "throwing" the rubbish away; until they realise that they are the cause, the

original pattern. Then they start to listen to themselves. Kind of shift, a little bit.

Starting to listen to themselves. Not blaming.

Counselling is challenging, interesting and dynamic. Meditation is good. At Buoyancy, I am not a counsellor. I don't present myself as a counsellor. If I did that I would become stuffed. I encourage meditation practice, simply as doing meditation, reminding people and sharing that place. And I don't talk much. I just go through the procedures. Except when a new person comes, then I give a little information, make things interesting and welcoming and respond, yes. At Buoyancy, the meditation has a very important place.

Important thing is, it's a practice that is not just about doing and "I understand" meditation. Through the meditation, they may learn to empty the mind, become aware of their physicality and become more aware of the psychological aspect of those things. And be able to work with habitual and chronic patterns slowly, slowly.

It's a happy situation when they start to work things out; that's a very good situation. Counselling is fundamental. Counselling is, you know, is they themselves in trying to listen to [their] voice.

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***Actually, the meditation you are doing is your own counselling. Don't you think so? You are not arguing with what's going on in the head.***

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Just ready to come, ready to go. It's a model to counselling. You're not stuffing anybody else.

To be able to manage. We use "burnt up" or "stuffed up" – basically it is about managing one's own feelings. "Manage" does not mean to eliminate something. It should not come and go.

It is a foundation, a ground allowing many things to come, something healthy to grow, something unhealthy not to grow. It is taking care of the basic ground, mind, ground, yes. And that's what meditation actually offers.

Zen practice arouses everyone to be on that ground. We are on the same ground from the start. But we can be caught up with what grows out of this ground. A big problem. Though big it doesn't have a root, and is groundless and gives worries.

Settle onto that ground. You can only do that when you become comfortable with it. Where one is first, learn to settle. Learn to accept it, things as they are. Even if you have bad habits – that's the way it is.

## Myoju — Spring 2010

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

Printed by MinuteMan Press, Prahran, Melbourne

## Next Issue

The next issue of Myoju will be posted at the Summer Equinox, 21st December 2010. Contributions that support our practice are most welcome, including articles, books reviews, interviews, personal reflections, artwork and photographs. The content deadline is Friday 26th November. If you would like to contribute or advertise in the Summer 2010 edition of Myoju email [publications@jikishoan.org.au](mailto:publications@jikishoan.org.au)

## Bright Pearl (Ikka-no-Myoju)



*From Dogen Zenji's Shobogenzo, Book 1, Chapter 4*

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". —Dogen Zenji

## Canberra Bun-in News

In mid August as I write this, it is a beautiful, late Winter's day in Canberra with blue skies and the flowering plums and wattles beginning to put on spectacular mantles of blossom for Spring.



It has seemed a relatively mild Winter here this year and with good heating at Corroboree Park Hall in Ainslie, Sunday Sanzenkai has only experienced a slight reduction in average attendance. Between June and August the average weekly attendance has been 9 – with new people attending on most Sundays.

On Saturday July 10 Jinesh Gendo Wilmot conducted the eighth One Day Workshop in Canberra which was attended by fourteen people and on the Sunday morning afterwards he gave a much appreciated talk during Sanzenkai.

After the Workshop a group of members and friends shared a welcoming dinner with Jinesh at the Lemon Grass Thai restaurant – it was an early night as most people were tired after the preparations for the day and the workshop itself.

A week later, on 17 July, Takako Mizogami and Vaughan Behncke (representing Ekai Osho who was invited by Ven Thich Quang Ba of Canberra) attended a tribute and memorial ceremony at the Sakymuni Buddhist Centre Canberra, to mark the 1<sup>st</sup> anniversary of the passing of the Most Venerable Thich Huyen Quang, the Supreme Patriarch of the Unified Buddhist Church of Vietnam. The Rev. Chi Kwang Sunim of the Korean Soen (Zen) Centre in Kinglake, gave the Dharma address at this memorial event.

During May and early June the Charter Policy Agreement between Jikishoan Melbourne and Jikishoan Canberra was reviewed by a project team made up of Julie Martindale, Jinesh Wilmot and Jeremy Maher to determine JZBCC's meeting of the requirements of the Agreement during the 1<sup>st</sup> year of it being in effect. All of the requirements were met

and a permanent Charter Agreement was signed between the Melbourne and Canberra Committees on 18 July.

In late July, Bret Cooper filled a casual Office Bearer position on the JZBCC Committee and became Treasurer – he will hold this position until the Canberra AGM on 19 September. We also welcomed a new member in July, George Quinn.

Other news is that our current President, Martha Sear is expecting twin boys in mid October and we all wish her the best with this life changing event and thank her for her commitment to the practice and her unstinting effort on the Committee over the past twelve months.

Three members the Canberra Sangha, Nicky Coles, Tony Crivelli and Vaughan Behncke attended the August Bendoho Retreat.



Should any members of the Melbourne and Ballarat Sangha's be visiting Canberra, we would be pleased to welcome you to Sunday or Wednesday Sanzenkai.

*Vaughan Behncke – Secretary (Canberra)*

## Ballarat Sangha News.

Early in 2010 we found ourselves in need of new leadership when Gareth Jones had to resign due to work pressure. Patrick McCabe has been learning to manage our finances under the helpful guidance of Millicent Reed and Julie Martindale. Patrick and Lorraine Collishaw were co-ordinating the group until mid year, when Rod Hanton offered to take over the facilitating of Thursday night sessions. The current roles being held now are, Patrick handling finances, Lorraine co-ordinating Sunday Sanzenkai together with Ekai Osho's visits, and Rod co-ordinating Thursday night Sanzenkai.

Winter has been very severe in Ballarat with many days not reaching above 8°C and evenings down to zero deg. It is difficult to coax people out on these

cold nights, but a small number continue to meet. Patrick and David Brumley have taken Precepts recently, and we celebrated our 11<sup>th</sup> birthday in August with a Pot Luck Dinner. We are also having a social cup of tea after Sanzenkai on Sundays. This has proved a successful way for people to connect more and relax together.

Three Ballarat people attended part of the Winter Retreat.

We look forward to the emerging Spring weather and some larger attendances in the next few months.

*Lorraine Collishaw, (Ballarat Jisha).*

## The Golden Rakusu Triangle.

In Western Victoria there is an area know as the "Golden Triangle", because of the quantities of gold discovered there in the 1800's.

Three members of Jikishoan live roughly at the three corners of this triangle, - namely George Duckett in Newstead, Cherry Tennant in Castlemaine and Lorraine Collishaw in Ballarat. During the year these three women came together to sew their rakus, following the theory that three heads are better than one! So, four sessions were held respectively at each other's houses with a few weeks in between each session to enable sewing at home. Each session saw the three pondering over the directions, cutting, measuring and sewing for a couple of hours, followed by a delicious "lunch to share", followed by more sewing. Then away we would go for a few weeks before getting together to work out the next bit of the jigsaw puzzle. Our venues provided very peaceful and nourishing environments, George's meditation room and craft centre, Cherry's creative art studio and gallery, and Lorraine's dining room looking out onto her garden.



At the end of this time we all produced our rakus ready for "blessing" and we all agreed we had thoroughly enjoyed our "project". It was a rich blend of time spent together, and time spent in solitude while we undertook this journey. And yes, it is true, three heads are better than one.....and we had many "golden" moments in our triangle.

*Lorraine Collishaw.*

## Castlemaine's First Jukai Ceremony

On the 26<sup>th</sup> June 2010, a Precepts ceremony was held at the Eastern Sun Studios, the zendo of the Castlemaine Zen Group. This was a quietly momentous coming together of many communities.

Foremost perhaps, it was a 'coming of age' for the Castlemaine Zen Group which has been meeting twice weekly since May 2006. While this requires a measure of cooperation, it is minimal compared to what is needed when hosting an event. Each member offered something uniquely themselves including our newest member, Peter Renfrew, who appeared with a tea strainer.



Lorraine Collishaw came not only to receive her rakusu but also to cheerfully transport thirty zafus and zabutons from the Ballarat Jikishoan Group. Cherry Tennant, Lorraine and I had met monthly at each others homes to sew our rakusu, unwittingly becoming dharma sisters with Lorraine and I having the rakusus to prove it. As we problem solved, often with much hilarity, we also made rakusus with identical, less than perfect, outcomes. The process was an invaluable insight into the life of another satellite sangha, generating a familiarity and connection with the Ballarat community that would never otherwise have been.

Ekai Osho came, with his family, to officiate at the ceremony. Without Ekai Osho, there is obviously no Jikishoan community, no ceremony and no Castlemaine Zen Group. This was the inaugural official acknowledgement that we, the Castlemaine Zen Group exist. This is a deceptively simple equation but a significant one in that we became more than a handful of meditation practitioners in a regional township. We became part of a larger community, the Jikishoan Zen Community. By default we became part of the Soto Zen tradition, the lineage becomes real, and we belong to a community that is timeless.

The Jikishoan community was served on the day by Bev Cowan as teacher's assistant and 'big' Jim Holden (with Trish) as Ino. We were enormously grateful for their presence for many reasons, in particular for lending their experience and a gravitas to an event that may otherwise have become a lovely afternoon tea, as the majority present could be described as a

'less than lay' congregation.

We opened the ceremony to the greater Castlemaine community and anyone who we felt might be interested- our families, our friends, colleagues and past participants. The zendo soon filled, which lent lovely warmth to proceedings and an enthusiasm, which perhaps only a complete novice can contribute.



Amongst the guests was Paul Demshy, whom some of you may remember. While we primarily know Paul through his artisan bread — which he bakes here in Castlemaine — he came nonetheless with a green glazed rectangular plate replete with ganache covered delicacies. It was a beautiful offering to the larger Jikishoan community and for me represented the past community honouring the present.

Of the many gifts the day brought, there is one other that struck a symbolic chord. Jo Scopelitti's (one of our members) wife presented me with a flower arrangement. All wilted and died with the exception of a single bud. A month later, a single magnolia bloomed in the corner of my living room, on top of the television, next to Buddha.

*Georgie Duckett*

## Building Fund

In December 2008, Jikishoan received Deductible Gift Recipient status from the Australian Taxation Office for the purpose of raising funds to build or purchase a building. This was a great achievement for the community as it now meant that donations of \$2 or more to the Building Fund would be tax deductible for the donors.

The vision that formed for our 'dream temple' was a suburban house in the Melbourne metropolitan area with room for a small Zendo, office, kitchen and accommodation. The vision was modelled on the current Footscray Zendo.

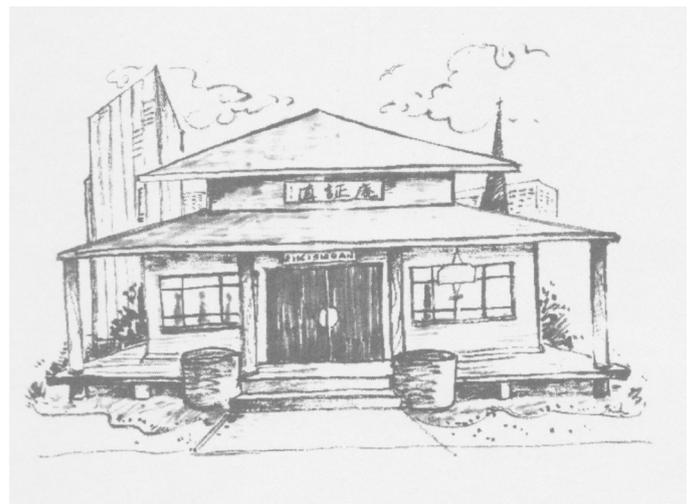
In August 2009 it was hoped that the formal launch of the Building Fund would happen early in 2010 but for a variety of reasons this did not occur. It is hoped that the new financial year will see a planned and co-ordinated approach to the launch and growth of

the Building Fund.

Throughout 2009/2010 systems were put in place to receive and receipt donations and a number of donations were received.

- Ekai Osho, having decided not to proceed with building a Zendo at his West Heidelberg home, makes regular, generous donations to the Building Fund.
- In June the Chiko Ryo ran a raffle and art auction where they raised \$949 for the Building Fund.
- \$550 was raised by donations accompanying membership renewals.
- At 30 June the balances for the Building Fund Accounts were: Cheque account \$2,599 and Savings account \$3,267.

Many thanks to all Members, Friends and supporters of Jikishoan who have contributed to the Building Fund in 2009/2010. Donors this year were quite self-effacing and most elected not to be named publicly but please know that your contributions were most gratefully received.



Throughout the year there has been considerable interest shown by individual Members in various projects/approaches to raising funds for the Building Fund. In 2010/11 we hope to harness this energy and enthusiasm and start working towards our 'dream temple' becoming a reality.

*Naomi Richards*

## Membership

We are pleased to welcome the following new members of Jikishoan:

Melbourne: *Bret Cooper*

Canberra: *George Quinn*

*Ekai Korematsu Osho and the JZBC Committee*

## Welcome to Jikishoan Zen Buddhist Community

Jikishoan is a growing community of people learning and practicing Zen meditation under the guidance of Ekai Korematsu Osho. Ekai has practiced and taught Zen Buddhism in Japan, the USA and India for over 30 years.

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

Jikishoan runs a range of programs 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 or on the website at [www.jikishoan.org.au](http://www.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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## Bear or No Bear (A day at Daijoji Temple.)



The alarm goes off – It's 4am and freezing in the Tea-house in the garden at Daijoji. I crawl across the tatami matting, switch on the kerosene heater and crawl back to my futon for another 3 minutes. The alarm goes again. I get up, run to the bathroom and back, and start to dress – the pile of clothing is waiting – two pairs of track pants – and six layers on top – singlet, long-sleeved woollen singlet, hara-maki, juban, woollen jersey, koromo. NO SOCKS (but I have my lovely ankle-warmers which are fortunately hidden by the long trousers.) Handkerchief, rakusu case, chant book, torch. Through the garden, and on the way to the Sodo for early morning zazen – passing a monk – gassho – passing the Hatto – deep bow to the altar and Buddha. Reaching the Sodo – step in over the sill and walk across the stone floor to my cushion. Hojun-san (Haydn in his previous life with us here in Melbourne) is already there – familiar, reassuring - bow to the cushion and Hojun-san, turn, bow to the room – and settle onto the cushion facing inwards. The Abbott and his attendant appear through the dark doorway. The Abbott performs his morning ritual. He goes around the room in gassho, and looks out into corridor before he offers incense to Buddha with three prostrations and settles in his seat. My sleepy mind wonders what is he looking for – robbers, assassins, snakes?

Three bells. We turn and face the wall –flickering candle light in the dark - quiet, cold – in the distance a deep bell starts – every couple of minutes – then faintly – the sound of a car. Breathing in – breathing out – spine, mudra, breath – Keep those eyes open! Astonishing! Sleepy mind the same in Daijoji as in Melbourne – breathing in – breathing out – a bird cries out – breathing in- breathing out – suddenly a tiny chink of light through the shutters of the window – then the duet between the umpan and han – and Zazen is over.

Two bells. We leave the Sodo, change our slippers again, and file down to the Buddha Hall where the monks perform a special chant as they walk around the room in a horse-shoe pattern – chanting faster and faster. I stand in shashu listening. Suddenly it stops. More prostrations - and then we file back to

the Hatto – past huge open doors looking out onto the gardens. In the misty grey light I can make out rocks, mossy grass and trees. For the chanting service we sit in seiza on tatami matting. I am most grateful for my zagu mat and ankle warmers. There are some familiar chants – the Heart Sutra and Sandokai – and some unknown. A few local people appear through the large wooden door, offer incense and stay to watch and listen.

'Ohaiyo gozaimas !' (Good morning!) The monks all greet the local people and each other as we rush off for the work period of cleaning. The first day I am assigned to dust the photographs of the ancestors in a large room - among them Tettsu Gikai and Keizan Jokin. They feel so present – I have only known them through the Lineage Chant we chant in Melbourne. I suspect that I am being treated kindly and given easy tasks. (The next day I am promoted to cleaning the floors around the altar area in the Hatto.)

It is a grey, watery day, and still cold. Breakfast. We stand shashu in silence at the long table waiting for the Abbott. Suddenly he appears and breakfast starts -rice porridge, sea-weed condiment, umeboshi plum and a spoonful of soy beans. I am astounded by the speed these monks can eat. (Over the time I am there I learn to take a quarter of the amount of food and finish at the same time as them.) At the end, the Head Monk makes some announcements and then the Abbott speaks in his powerful voice – amongst all the Japanese words (which are foreign to me) I suddenly hear 'Hannah-san'. The meal finishes and we wash our dishes at the central wash station, finishing with a bow to each other. Hojun explains to me that a bear has been seen in the cemetery surrounding the monastery. It has just woken from hibernation and may be a bit grumpy. 'Please be careful as you go back to your Tea house!' A stun gun is not part of the emergency kit I have brought along – plasters, Voltaren tablets for back pain, headache tablets – yes – but nothing for fighting off a bear – not even a whistle.

Samu work period – sweeping up mountains of leaves from around the gravestones. The cemetery at Daijōji has massive trees sheltering the ancient gravestones. The mossy ground is covered deeply with leaves, which must have been from last autumn – now exposed as the snow has melted. We rake and stuff the leaves into large canvas bags – which are picked up by a monk driving a very small ute which can negotiate the paths winding through the cemetery. There is a small break (for me – but not the monks) before lunch. So back to the Tea-house where I am staying. As soon as I lie down on the tatami I fall asleep.

Oryōki lunch, a rest, more Samu, and then supper. I am excused from the afternoon Samu as I am developing a cold – (in fact I later end up having 6 days in isolation) But during this particular afternoon Hojun-san lends me his computer and a DVD of the movie 'Zen'. Here at Daijōji I feel as if I am indeed living in the movie. After supper Hojun-san and I return to the Sodo for more Zazen. Again it is dark,

quiet, cold. Breathing in – breathing out – settling down.

Astonishing! Quiet mind the same in Daijōji as in Melbourne.

The day is over – Hojun-san and I bow to each other and head for our rooms As I open the door to head for the Tea-house I switch on my torch. I make my way past the tall lanterns and bushes, flicking the torch around looking for the bulky shape of a bear, or eyes shining in the dark. But I make it safely to my room. What a relief to tumble into the futon, very tired and also very happy.

Contented sleepy mind finds what the Abbot was observing in the corridor this morning. No thing. No bear.

*Hannah Forsyth*

## **Narrow path towards the cemetery**

### **Generations of abbots**

#### **Fallen camellias**

*Mitsu Susuki*

*Spring 1972*

*Rinso-in*

## **Reflections on the August Retreat**

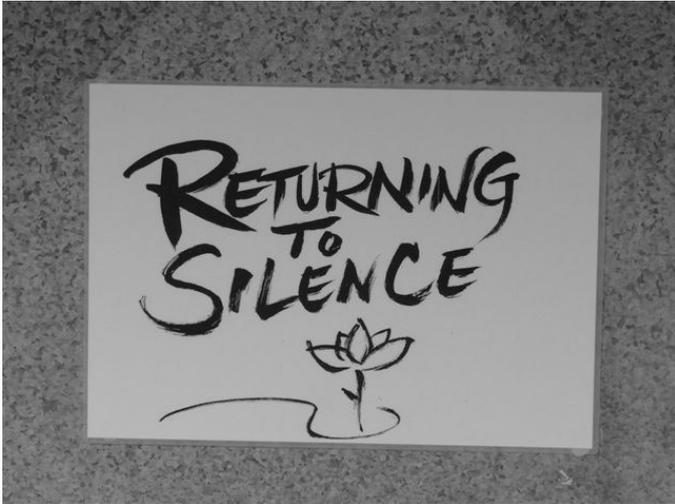
### **Returning to Silence**

#### **A Retreat Ino reports**

The guiding phrase we use on our Jikishōan retreats is "Returning to Silence". It implies that we are coming back to a familiar place. It's not a rule that can be enforced or we can make happen. It emerges out of the practice itself as we drop mind and body away. Without effort we quite simply find ourselves there.

Master Dogen wrote that 'to study Buddhism is to study the self; to study the self is to forget the self'. During Jikishōan's recent Winter Retreat held from August 20 – 27 at Adekate Camp, 27 participants took part in their own journey inwards. The retreat format gives us the optimum conditions needed to do just that. A schedule created and shaped over hundreds of years ensures that the thinking mind can be left alone once confidence is gained in that schedule. For those who have attended many retreats a reassuring sense of being just right where one needs to be exists.

More so than any other retreat I've attended with Jikishoan this was very much a 'within' retreat. The weather was very cold, often wet and frequently windy for the whole 7 days, which kept all participants within – the zendo, the dining room or their bedrooms. These locations provided much needed sanctuary from the challenging conditions with the zendo fire, particularly, working overtime to ensure all felt its welcome as they entered to go within themselves. It was kept going 24 hours a day throughout the retreat due to the efforts of a Tasmanian member who knows what shivering on the cushion is like.



This retreat the Teisho text was on the topic Shobogenzo Genjo Koan by Zen Master Eihei Dogen, which deals with "the issue at hand" – the koan of everyday life. Osho san's teachings on this resonated deeply with me in my role as the retreat Ino dealing moment by moment with the many issues the retreat presents. Whether that was pre-retreat planning, setting up the zendo before starting, practicing chanting services each day, offering trainings to ryo members, keeping a watchful eye on how the retreat was progressing, attending coordinators meetings, just sitting, working to ensure the retreat was conducted in a harmonious and compassionate way to benefit all participants, organizing the packing up at the end or finally returning home to continue daily practice.

Like all retreats this was 'same same but different'. There was illness amongst some participants; aches and pains in all bodies; confusion and perhaps a little clarity; many chances to work on bowing; the ever present great teacher oryoki; hearing again that, yes, everything changes because no abiding self exists and maybe this time getting it; participants coming and going; joy in a pair of thermals and a dog called Buckley, who taught valuable lessons about meeting others with an open heart and that a line up of shoes can indeed make a fine bed to rest on.

As I drove home at the end I reflected with gratitude on the way everyone conducted their retreat, taking care of themselves and each other, on the infinite patience and kindness of our beloved teacher as he tries to keep our practice pure, on the wonderful weather that teaches into the marrow of our bones, and on how much I appreciate the tremendous gift

given to me by all the Ancestors one of whom's words kept returning to me as I drove:

"Please let me remind you who study the inconceivable

Your time is running fast. Don't ignore it." - Shitou

*Jim Holden – 34th Retreat Ino.*

## **The Man From Ino from The Banjokoan**

There was movement at the Zendo for the word had got around  
that a man was on the prowl at 3 am  
the wind was howling like a fiend and the rain a steady stream  
and everyone was glad it wasn't them.

While we dreamed of cappuccino it was the man from Ino  
a man who'd lost all sense of 'me, me, me',  
the one thing on his mind was to leave himself behind  
and get the fire ablaze by half-past 3.

It didn't matter he was freezing, there was work that needed doing  
such as dragging all the sleepers from their daze,  
so he mustered up his bell and went like bloody hell  
he'd shift the lazy buggers and make them change their ways.

And up we all got moaning, backs and legs still groaning  
and stumbled into clothes as cold as ice  
and lurched towards the Zendo thinking this is round the bendo – ho  
and other thoughts that weren't so very nice.

But what a sight to greet us, a blazing fire to meet us  
and candles lit and everything just so –  
let us gather round and sing to the one who's done this thing  
to that brave – and undeluded – man from Ino.

*Harry Laing  
August 2010*



## Brown Dog Retreat

He is like a mascot. During the first part of our Winter retreat we were accompanied by a big brown overweight Labrador. He adopted us for a couple of days: accompanied us across the courtyard from building to building, sat alongside and under feet, took part in the photographs and for a while, became part of the community.



When he wags his tail, he looks like he is smiling. He is very pleased to see any one of us emerging from buildings at 4 am, 6.30am, whenever. From the verandah, he looks up and wags his tail as Ekai Osho exits the dining room and walks down the ramp. We are all smiles.

Day 3, 5.45 am, outside the Zendo: - the big brown dog is deeply asleep atop the rows of shoes lined up on the very cold concrete.

*Shona Innes*

### ***What we can do! The Jikishoan Skills Survey***

Jikishoan's volunteer activities have traditionally been focused on ryo groups or work groups from Tenzo to Ino, Chiko and Jiroku. In this way many members have learned new skills and contributed to the sangha over the years. The organization is growing steadily and we decided to find out a bit more about members skills. In March 2010, in my role as Ninji-bu, I put out a survey to members. I received fifteen responses from a membership of 108. Twelve respondents were from Melbourne, and three from other parts of Victoria and Australia. At least ten people saw themselves being involved with the Jikishoan sangha for fifteen or more years into the future – that is to

2025. The majority of respondents are members of ryo groups or identified with a ryo group from retreat experience. What I found amazing was that so many people highlighted artistic skills – painting, bonsai, dance, choreography, photography, music editing, folk music and songwriting. There wasn't as great an interest in computer skills, though quite a few people are very experienced in this area. Another strong area was cooking, and enjoyment of preparing food. We have our home handy people as well. A gardener or two. There is also quite considerable experience in project management, some at a high level. We also have people who can translate, work with children and edit a film!

If you'd like to let us know what you enjoy doing just drop me a line at [anniebol@iprimus.com.au](mailto:anniebol@iprimus.com.au)

*Annie Bolitho*

## Ryo News

### **Koho Ryo in transition**

The aim of the Koho Ryo is to support the practice of members, friends and guests of Jikishoan by publicising and promoting the community's activities, internally and to the general public. This is achieved through the production of our quarterly newsletter "Myoju" and electronic publications, including the Jikishoan website. In addition members of the Koho Ryo transcribe and edit Ekai Osho's Sanzenkai and Dharma talks for publication in Myoju.

Members of the ryo are Nicole Thomas, Johann Montet, Nobu Kobayashi, Pauline Koe and Paul Harris.

The Committee role of Publications Manager (Shuppan-Bu) is responsible for overall co-ordination and management of the functions of the Koho ryo and until May 2010, when he resigned from the position, Paul Harris filled this role.

Since that time the Koho Ryo has been in transition and Paul has been assisting the Committee with handover arrangements for the ongoing publication of Myoju and updating and maintenance of the website.

As a result arrangements have been made for Johann Montet (of Port Douglas) to do the desktop design / layout of Myoju and editing, printing and mail-outs will continue to be co-ordinated in Melbourne.

In the coming months members of the Koho Ryo and the Committee will discuss and put ongoing plans and actions in place to move forward from this transition stage.

*Vaughan Behncke (President)*

## **Jikishoan Zen Buddhist Community Annual General Meeting 2010**

The twelfth Jikishoan AGM was held on September 5, 2010 immediately after Sunday Sanzenkai at the Australian Shiatsu College in Brunswick.

The AGM was attended by 31 Members, Friends and guests. Reports tabled by Ekai-Osho and Committee Members kept the attendees engaged for over an hour, with questions from the floor.

Nominations for the election to committee were read out, and with more nominations than committee positions guaranteeing a "counting process" courtesy of members of Jiroku. While the votes were being counted Ekai volunteered to keep everyone else entertained.

During the break, Ekai took the opportunity to recognize the hard work of Julie Martindale after ten years of committee work in various roles including most recently Treasurer.

Following are the election results

<b>Jikishoan Zen Buddhist Community 2010 Committee</b>		
Ekai- Osho	Korematsu	Honorary Member
<b>Office Bearers:</b>		
Vaughan	Behncke	President
Mark	Summers	V.P./Memb. Sec
Naomi	Richards	Treasurer
Richard	Myddleton	Secretary
<b>Ordinary Members:</b>		
Kiyoko	Taylor	Welfare
Annie	Bolitho	Personnel
Renata	Salajic	Publications
Niall	McShane	General Affairs
Jinesh	Wilmot	Education

The evening concluded with a sumptuous "Pot Luck" dinner shared by all.

*Mark Summers – Vice President*

## **Committee Workshop September 2010**

On Sunday September 12, the 5<sup>th</sup> Committee Orientation Workshop was held at the Footscray Zendo. The purpose of these workshops is to introduce, to the new, as well as remind the serving Committee Members, Ryo Coordinators and Assistants, of the Aims, Objectives and Rules (Constitution) of Jikishōan.

The workshop began at 9:00am with a period of Zazen, Kinhin, Dedication and Tea.

The workshop was opened by Mark Summers at 10:04am where everyone was welcomed.

Ekai-Osho led an energetic discussion reminding all that the Membership of Jikishōan is our Temple. This flowed into the importance of good governance, which comes as a result of educating ourselves in the Aims, Objectives and Rules (Constitution) of Jikishōan.

Other topics of discussion centered on an explanation by Ekai on Organizational Chart B – Parameters of Ryo Practices – Vision 2010/2015 and finishing with a brief explanation by Mark Summers regarding reporting of Volunteer Hours; Attendance and Samu.

The workshop finished at 12:04pm.

Many of the attendees later gathered at a local restaurant for a leisurely lunch.

These workshops are open to any member of Jikishōan with an interest in the workings of our community.

The next workshop is in May 2011.

Below is a photo of some the well fed lunch attendees.



*Mark Summers – Vice President.*

## Blind Donkey

"Dear elected Committee Members (and nominees) for 2010/2011,

I have a koan/case study for you to mark the occasion of Committee Meeting No 144, 14<sup>th</sup> September 2010, for the beginning of the new committee year.

Please accept this as a gift and reflect upon it as you are opening a new page with your practice at Jikishoan.

'A blind donkey attends the harvest festival.

A farmer said "Attention!"

His child asked, "What is it?"

"This blind donkey supported me throughout the year" the farmer told him.

The child fed a lot of fresh carrots to the donkey.

"Attention my child", said the farmer as he went contentedly away with the beast.

The Koan is a type of education system unique to the Zen tradition, not just with Rinzai but also in the Soto tradition.

Best wishes for the new committee year,

Gassho,

*Ekai.*



**Back Row: left to right:** Renata Salajic (Publications), Jinesh Wilmot (Education), Annie Bolitho (Personnel), Christine Maingard (Assistant Committee Member), Shona Innes (Secretary IBS), Julie Martindale (Assistant Treasurer)

**Middle Row:** Niall McShane (General Affairs)

**Front Row: left to right:** Ekai Osho (Abbot), Vaughan Behncke (President), Mark Summers (Vice-President), Naomi Richards (Treasurer), Richard Myddleton (Secretary/Public Officer)

## Reflections on Integrated Buddhist Studies - Jikido Training

The Integrated Buddhist Studies (IBS) program encourages practice beyond the self. The heart of integrated practice is the "doing" with others : the practice of being taught, of teaching; the practice of the Jikido and the instruments living and working together; the repetition of practice that flows outside the zendo and into one's home (with the home-made inkin before there was money to buy an actual one from Japan, and a sutra book well marked out with instructions); when hitting the inkin during prostrations "keep an eye on the Docho"; be aware of the community and regulate the roll-down on the inkin accordingly ("start the roll-down slow and then accelerate; if the roll down begins fast, there is no chance to decelerate") .....



Training began on the first Thursday in July. Six pm. It is precision – the keso is hit when it is the moment to be hit. The inkin makes a ringing sound when it is the moment for it to make the sound. For five Thursdays, training began at 6pm.

On the first Thursday evening, training focused on the Jikido's role in the first hour of sanzenkai; on the second Thursday evening, training focused on the Jikido's role in the second hour of sanzenkai. From the third session onwards, practice and revision focused on the flow of sanzenkai, sometimes with stop-breaks so as to repeatedly practice this part or that section. When that is done, practising the flow continues.

And the teachers are Mark Summers and Oscar Roos. And through them, Ekai Osho and Jinesh. They train and guide with gentleness, compassion, preciseness, patience, "beginner's mind" repetition and a lot of humour. They each take turns to teach, giving the trainee richness. And there is neither conflict nor confusion in either of their content.

And the trainee learns and practises, realising that there are millions of Jikidos in the past, in the present and in the future; all having been trained, being trained and then training others. And the line of Jikido goes on.

It has been a privileged IBS experience.

*Katherine Yeo*

## News Flash from the National Capital

The third weekend in September this year and last year have been the most action packed weekends in the two years of Jikishoan Canberra's short history.

Planning, promotion and preparations for the program of events on these weekends galvanises members of our fledgling community into serene action and a cohesive team at least a month before the 'big weekend'

The events start with a Public Lecture given by Ekai Osho on the Friday night followed the next day by a One Day Meditation Workshop also conducted by our Teacher. Saturday evening means a chance to socialise with a welcoming dinner at a local restaurant, with the Canberra community and friends, for Ekai Osho and any guests accompanying him from Melbourne.

On Sunday morning Ekai Osho conducts Sanzenkai and usually a Jukai ceremony. This is followed by Jikishoan Canberra's AGM.



Jikishoan Canberra Committee of Management 2010-11

**Front row:** Martha Sear (Vice-President), Ferro Fabbri (President), Vaughan Behncke (Secretary), Bret Cooper (Treasurer)

**Back row:** Ekai Osho (Honourary Member),  
Ordinary Members: Takako Mizogami, George Quinn,  
Tony Crivelli

The weekend of 17,18 and 19 September this year saw Ekai Osho deliver a lecture on "The Essence of Zen Practice" on the Friday night at Corroboree Park, Ainslie which was attended by 38 people, including sangha members and people from the general public. The lecture was well received and generated many smiles, laughs and questions from the audience. The lecture was followed by light refreshments and some people stayed on to chat and ask questions about Jikishoan's practice.

7 am on Saturday morning saw the Canberra team, with Ferro at the vanguard, swing into action at Corroboree Park Hall, sweeping, mopping (chopping wood and drawing water - whoops - that was

somewhere else) and setting up the Zendo for the Meditation Workshop. The Iron Chef Tenzo Bret Cooper, in a cloud of billowing steam, preparing the kitchen and choreographing the food while Tony Crivelli with the help of Vaughan and others set up the registration desk and merchandise stall.

The full day workshop attracted 32 participants (many of them new) and Ekai Osho instructed and guided them gently through a comprehensive introduction to the three forms of Zen practice, Zazen, Kinhin and bowing. People expressed their appreciation of the welcoming and caring atmosphere, the teaching and not least of all the delicious lunch coordinated by Bret-san our own Iron Tenzo.

After a brief rest for Ekai Osho, Shundo Denovan and the A team; 14 people, both members and friends gathered at the Thai Lemongrass restaurant in Phillip to hold a welcoming dinner for our Teacher and Shundo. It was a wonderful night and a great opportunity for all to socialise and relax.

Early on Sunday morning the A team were at it again setting up the Zendo for Sanzenkai and the Jukai ceremony. George Quinn (a JZBCC member from Sydney) and Tony Crivelli, from Canberra received Jukai from Ekai Osho and Takako Mizogami received the Rakusu she had sewn.

Shortly after Sanzenkai and the Jukai ceremony and a reconfiguration by the stage team the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual General Meeting commenced. Following reports by our Abbot and Teacher and the Office Bearers of the 2009/10 Committee the election of the Committee for the coming year was held. As all nominees were unopposed they were elected, uncontested.

The JZBCC Committee of Management for 2010/2011 is:

### Office Bearers

Ferro Fabbri	President
Martha Sear	Vice-President
Bret Cooper	Treasurer
Vaughan Behncke	Secretary

### Ordinary Members

Takako Mizogami  
George Quinn  
Tony Crivelli

I offer my sincere gratitude to Ekai Osho for his teachings in Canberra and his ongoing support of the Sangha. I also thank Shundo Denovan for accompanying and ceremonially assisting our Teacher. Special thanks also to everyone who helped make the "big weekend" successful and memorable.

*Ferro Fabbri*  
*President, Jikishoan Canberra*

## Staring at the Sun

We had taken a taxi into the hills on the edge of the city, and stepped out into light summer rain onto the doorstep of a small house. I had expected a fragile, damaged person, but the eighty-eight year old woman who bowed and welcomed us was alert, graceful and stylishly dressed. Her shirt was cheerfully multicoloured – a bright blue behind a regular pattern of primary colours. She had taken some trouble over our visit.

Comfortable in leather European chairs on tatami, I faced a modern oil painting on a low easel. It was of two fallen leaves, one green, one brown. She explained that this was her grandson's work. He was studying the fine arts. I could see the origins of his considerable skill in other works in the room. Behind this and through a light wood framed window, was a view of dark tiled rooftops with the lower town in the distance. To the right, on the wall of an adjacent room, a glimpse of an old monochromatic watercolour: the face of a Buddhist saint. Kukai, I asked? No, she explained, Nichiren. Around the corner a Shrine to Kanzeon.

Her nurse served tea in frail white porcelain cups. A dark blue chain link pattern seemed to lift off the surface of the cup, and it dipped over the edge in a continuity, to fill the cavity. It was the Dome, inverted. The tea was hot and fragrant. Settled, she began.

*"It was early in the morning. We had been under great strain for many months, and the planes had been coming over all the time, with the bombs. I was working in the hospital and was in the corridor when it came. I was not hurt because of the concrete wall, but my friend was near a window, and when it happened he was badly injured. I spent a long time helping him. It was my duty. Then we went to the hospital and helped the others. It was so bad. We had so little with which to help, and there were so many.*

There was a flash of grief and she was outwardly settled again.

*"I never thought I would marry. We were too frightened of what would happen, but I did, and now I have children and grandchildren, and they are alright."*

The nurse with whom we had come explains that the fear of producing deformed children was present for everyone, and a truth for many. I struggled to ask any question. What to ask that won't cause distress? Finally, panicked by the silence, I asked her how, after such an experience, she had managed to continue to see and create such beauty in the world. She took a browned soft-bound book, and ran a finger down the vertical line of characters – a dedication to her from her friend, and replied obliquely:

*"My life has been difficult. I have never since been able to look at the stars."*

I had come to Japan and to Hiroshima as a doctor and a conference speaker. I had arrived late the previous night, so my introduction to the city had begun abruptly after breakfast. I'd walked across the road and spent a morning at the Dome, the Peace Park and the museum. By midday my mind was a maelstrom, and nausea made it difficult to be a pleasant companion at lunch. These events were not ancient history, but had occurred just more than five years before I was born, and had been the subject of occasional talk between my parents and their friends when I was a child. I remembered the explanations, the justifications.



I had bought Kenzaburo Oe's *Hiroshima Notes*<sup>i</sup> at Changi airport. He refers to the fact that there were 298 doctors in the city at the time of the bombing, and that they and nurses were forbidden to leave the city. He describes the dedication and compassion with which the surviving 28 doctors and 130 nurses cared for the more than 100,000 survivors needing treatment. Most of those who survived the two blasts – the hibakusha – are now dead, but according to the Japanese government, there remain 235,569 living hibakusha as of March 2009<sup>ii</sup>. Various writers comment on the fact that they are still subject to significant discrimination.

On neither the sun nor death can man look fixedly<sup>iii</sup>. But there are some people who have been forced to do so. Although unable to look at the stars, they have survived with grace. I've had the privilege of meeting one such person.

*David Brumley*

<sup>i</sup> Oe, Kenzaburo *Hiroshima Notes*. Tr. David Swain and Toshi Yonezawa Marion Boyars, 1997

<sup>ii</sup> <http://search.japantimes.co.jp/cgi-bin/nn20090807a2.html>

<sup>iii</sup> Francois de la Rochefoucauld. "Le soleil ni la mort ne peuvent se regarder en face." Maxims.



# Sōtō Kitchen

Michael Ewing from the Tenzo Ryo selected this salad recipe. We also provide a remedy for colds.

## Carrot, Dill & White Bean Salad

Ingredients (Serves 6 – 8)

<i>Sliced carrots (1/2 cm thick on deep bias)</i>	<i>2 cups</i>
<i>cooked white beans</i>	<i>3 cups</i>
<i>Chopped fresh dill</i>	<i>Scant 1/4 cup</i>
<i>Brown sugar (or honey)</i>	<i>2 tablespoons</i>
<i>Sliced almonds, toasted</i>	<i>1/3 cup</i>
<i>Extra Virgin Oil for cooking</i>	
<i>Dressing</i>	
<i>Extra-virgin olive oil</i>	<i>1/4 cup</i>
<i>Fresh lemon juice</i>	<i>3 tablespoons</i>
<i>Fine grain salt</i>	<i>1/4 teaspoon</i>
<i>Thinly sliced shallots</i>	<i>1/2 cup</i>

### Dressing:

Combine the olive oil, lemon juice, salt and shallots in a small bowl. Stir and set aside.

### Method:

1. In your largest skillet over medium high heat, toss the carrots with a splash of olive oil. Let them cook in a single layer and keep cooking, tossing gently every three or four minutes until the carrots are deeply browned, about twelve minutes all together.
2. Add the beans and dill to the skillet and cook for another five minutes, or until the beans are well heated through.
3. Place the contents of the skillet in a large mixing bowl, sprinkle with the brown sugar and pour the 3/4 of the lemon-olive oil mixture over the top. Toss gently.
4. Let sit for ten minutes.
5. Toss gently once again, taste and adjust with more salt or sugar or lemon juice if needed to balance the flavours.
6. Serve warm or at room temperature and finish by sprinkling with the almonds just before serving.

from <<http://www.101cookbooks.com/>>



## Remedy for Colds - From the Zen Bar

(Courtesy of St. Patrick's Primary School Holbrook – Recipe Book 2004)

### Ingredients and Method:

Lemon juice	1 lemon
Honey	2 teaspoons
Garlic, crushed	2 cloves
Cayenne pepper	a pinch
Fresh ginger, grated	1/2 teaspoon

Place all ingredients in glass and fill with hot water.

Drink at bedtime, making sure to drink it all (including the dregs).

This recipe really works!

### Note:

This was introduced by Vaughan who developed a cold during the August 2010 retreat. Several other people who were developing colds took it and it worked out very well. Although the air was filled with the smell of garlic!!