

Myōju



Sōtō Zen Buddhism in Australia

JIKI044

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Seeing and Hearing

This is an excerpt of a Teisho talk given by Ekai Osho during the April 2010 Bendoho Retreat, held at Adekate Forrest Lodge, near Creswick, Victoria.

Teisho is a formal teaching session held each afternoon of the 7 day retreat. The Sangha (group) studies a text chosen by the teacher and is given the opportunity to ask questions. On this occasion, Genjo koan, referred to in some English translations as Actualising the Fundamental Point or The Issue at Hand was the text. Genjo koan is a key fascicle of Zen's Japanese founder, Eihei Dogen Zenji's masterwork, Shobogenzo. — Editor

When you understand things as they really are, when this is experienced, then you must be practicing. When tea is served, you drink it! Or you say no thank you, whichever way it goes. When you are in the class, you listen, you discuss. When you hear the true Dharma you must practice it.

So understanding is anything, but understanding becomes meaningful when it is carried out. Practice activates understanding. Understanding, just intellectually by putting things into certain memory systems doesn't have any significance until something is carried out. Practice is the proof of your own understanding – if you actually understand, you express it. So then you always put the practice forward and express what you learn and what you know yourself.

It's not the other way around. Of course, increasing understanding is very important, but you need to see and you need to hear. In our usual way of understanding we don't think that way you know. Usually what we think is "we need to think, think harder to understand" or something like that! In this way, without thinking clearly, you think hard and you get all sorts of information, pulling it out and then coming to the conclusion, "I understand".

You need to see and to listen. If you can see and perceive clearly and hear, then you already understand.

Then how you respond is proof of your understanding – you may run away from fear or you

may stay. It is really like [Ekai Osho snaps his fingers] that urgent. Let's say something happened suddenly 'POW!' - what do you do, you think about it right?! You may need five minutes to get everything in order, get all the information. You think "because this is based on this and that..." but what if this has never happened before and therefore we have no way to know what to do? So in trying to understand by thinking you cannot be really present.



Photo: Wouter Vandevorde

Just naturally belong to past memories and make use of them in the present situation. That is what to do. There's nothing wrong with collecting information in order to have a certain kind of basis to know how you might proceed. Statistics is like this, and most of the so-called 'understanding' of our reality is based on something like this - we are all under this influence. We need to have the discipline of collecting information, storing it in a certain format and later utilising it. In this way it might be helpful.

However, most of the time, we don't care; we get lots of information randomly and shove it somewhere. Unless you are good with this sort of discipline, good

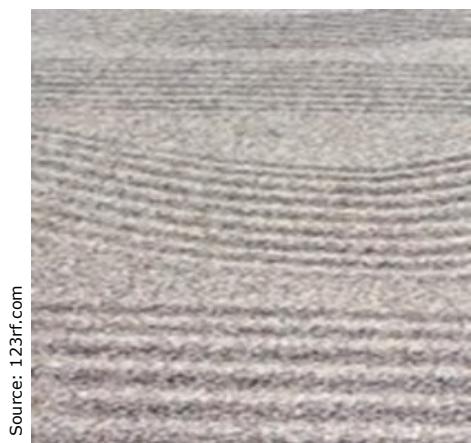
In This Issue

Japan Disaster Kaneta Roshi Appeal, San Francisco, Canberra News, Foundation Day, Easter Retreat Reflections, Sōtō Kitchen

at statistics and keeping a record, you are just pretending; trying to be rational and make sense of something. Some people are like this.

The Government employs people who do well looking after statistics and numbers, who know how to execute things properly. I think this is typical of many Governments; they must be very smart and need to have all the numbers ready.

Some people don't appropriately respond and need to wait before coming back with a result. There is always a hesitation; which does not necessarily work very well but does make sense considering all of that information! Sometimes things which are done hastily at first do create other problems and this shows there is very little experience or immediate understanding. They are relying too much on intellect and all kinds of things - people are not that logical! They like to be entertained and are also forgetful. [It is] interesting.



Source: 123rf.com

When you hear, or even when you see, there may already be a conception and not a direct understanding - you're not able to directly see the present. It can happen that you go by an experience of something that happened yesterday or that you have a preconceived notion of people. You don't notice that this occurs, that you already have ideas about certain things, identifying something with something else - good people, or thinking "*they're a good person that is always helpful*", or something like that.

Maybe today will be different - but you need to see and hear to learn and understand. One of the things that Shunryu Suzuki Roshi often said was "*Not always so*". These were his words, "*Not always so*". I think this is very good idea [concept]. Human beings are the other way around; we look for something very concrete, very definite! Reality is not always so. Reality is things are *probably* so, not definite. Probably so!

From the Sangha: "Thich Nhat Hanh said everyone should put on their fence a sign saying "Are you sure?".

[Ekai Osho laughs] That's very good isn't it? That's like people who have to say to each other "*I love you, I love you*"! Yesterday you said it but that is not enough, today you should love too! There is a need for maintenance, once is not enough. You need to do

You need to repeat things again and again, that is a very sure practice.

it again and again.

Just agree to eat breakfast again and again, once is not enough. So is understanding - we need to see and see, and hear and hear and hear. That intellectual, critical conditioning of mind doesn't want to do that. We just think once is enough to understand, "*I understand, I can do that*". We really need to see, hear and hear and hear - at least three times.

Zen Master Dogen said in his writings "*If you want to say something, you have to think three times*".

Three clear points:

1. You need to think: is that something you really want to say? You ask yourself the question - do you really want to say that? Do you really want to tell the truth to this person?
2. What you want to say, is it very beneficial for that person? I understand you want to say that, but will it be profitable, that is, will it provide a good, positive condition for the other person?
3. Does what you want to say have any positive environmental impact, or something similar to this, for another person? Or is it only about you and the immediate person? If not, do it somewhere else - we have the means to decide.



<http://global.sotzen-net.or.jp/eng/>

From the Sangha: "Can you do that and still be spontaneous?"

That's a good question, a good question. Experience is intuition. If you haven't had this learning, then there is no spontaneity. You need to have intuition; it means you've learnt these points, learnt completely and then you have forgotten about it. You don't need

to say "I said that for you" or "because it's good for you, I wanted to do that". Saying things like that are really for the benefit of a third person. You don't need to say why; things will just appropriately come out. Spontaneity is like that isn't it? You don't know who says it for whom!

But intuition doesn't come automatically, it is learned. Intuition is not already embedded, it doesn't just happen. This is why study is important, and how we study is important. If you haven't had education, there is no way to receive the result, the truth of it.

From the Sangha: "Ekai, are you saying you have to learn intuition?"

Intuition is the result of what you have learned and experienced, before this there is not such a thing. What you may have is an instinct, which is different. Intuition is different. Animals and humans beings – all have instinct. Instinct is purely impulsive. Intuition requires learning and experience. Being intuitive definitely does not belong to a logical kind of thinking, what makes it different is that it has to be forgotten completely. It is intimate with you.

From the Sangha: "So you must have had previous experience?"

Learned already, yes, experience is like that. Present experience includes everything. Past is not separate from the present. Our sense of time and what we have doesn't work in a reality where past is separate and used as some type of trigger. Past is present. Present is past. What you have learned, what you have acquired, comes out naturally. Impulse, or impulsive action and intuition often look identical, but one of these behaviours contains something learned. Therefore, something appropriately reflected comes out spontaneously, and it has to be from a kind of learning that is free from fixed patterns.

Ordinary learning involves patterns, you just develop the pattern and when something is triggered a response comes out impulsively. You need to completely learn to let go, learn to be free. So, although a lot of our learning is through patterns, don't stick to any one of them. It's like having fluidity; appropriately something arises, just comes out.

So there are all kinds of ways of learning things and often when we are curious, seeing and hearing, the foundation of our learning is natural.

This type of learning may not have a certain format, or structured way of coming out, but suddenly you will find that something has been learned. As a result, your response may not be with words, but instead your actions respond.

This kind of learning initially takes place in early childhood, where there is tremendous growth in many ways from our learning experiences. However, later on, after two or three years of age and once we start

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

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Next Issue

The next issue of Myoju will be posted at the Spring Equinox, 23rd September 2011. Contributions that support our practice are most welcome, including articles, book reviews, interviews, personal reflections, artwork and photographs. The content deadline is Monday 1st August 2011. If you would like to contribute or advertise in the next issue of Myoju email: 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

Abbot's News

Kaneta Roshi Appeal Japan Disaster Relief Follow-up



A few days after the recent Easter Retreat, I called Taiten Kaneta Roshi to confirm that he had received the funds Jikishoan had sent to his bank account on 19 April 2011. \$10,000 Australian dollars was raised over a period of one month by Jikishoan's members and friends to express our concern for the welfare of Roshi, his family and in support for the devastated communities in Japan.

On 11 March 2011, as you know, the Tohoku Earthquake-Tsunami struck a vast region of Eastern Japan. Miyagi Prefecture, where Kaneta Roshi lives, was the most devastated and affected area.

Soon after talking with Kaneta Roshi on the phone, I received a call from his son, Rev. Taiou Kaneta, Abbot of Tsudaiji Temple and Roshi's successor. He cordially thanked me for the funds from Australia and told of how helpful the funds from Jikishoan have been and what they planned to do with them for their community.

According to him, the main points of their relief project are:

- To utilize the funds from Jikishoan, Melbourne and contributions from local donors in Japan, to support devastated communities by providing food and other basic needs; promoting the heart and mind well being of stranded evacuees and communities;
- To target isolated communities and people in devastated towns and small villages; and,
- To organize volunteer teams with Tsudaiji's network of temple communities and local communities.

I was impressed and moved when I heard him say: "With the \$10,000 from Australia (Jikishoan), we could undertake \$100,000 worth of disaster relief projects."

He also said that, "We have set-up a Jikishoan-Tsudaiji Disaster Support Office at Tsudaiji here in Japan. We plan to report all about our activities and provide updates to Jikishoan members through our blog site [on the internet] as soon as it is implemented."

I told him that I would inform all Jikishoan members and friends of his work. The blog is now up and running at <http://jikishoanproject.blog.fc2.com/> so please have a look at the Jikishoan-Tsudaiji project.



Rev. Kaneta and Priests
The banner reads: "Pacifying the souls"



Members of Kaneta Roshi's network
The banner reads: "Australia-Melbourne
Jikishoan Disaster Support"

Rev. Kaneta expressed his feeling and resolve by saying: "*In truth, it is just beginning of long, enduring disaster relief work. Attention and focus for the ongoing care of the hearts and minds of victims of this devastation will become very important for many years to come.*"

At the time of writing, two months has passed since the devastating earthquake struck Eastern Japan. The rescue period for survivors and the missing is now over. The disaster victims and affected people and communities in the Tohoku region have a long way to go before they return to normality. The reconstruction of the region will take 10 years in Miyagi prefecture - according to the plan by its reconstruction office. Just imagine this, completing the clean-up of the enormous amount of debris created by the disaster across entire communities will take 3 years. This clean-up must occur before being able to put basic building foundations and other infrastructure in place, all in accordance with the new blueprint designed to cope with potential future earthquakes and tsunami.

The total cost, estimated by the Central Government, is expected to exceed 300 billion US dollars. Sadly, Tohoku is now recorded as the worst natural disaster in the history of the world.

Inspired by the extent of the disaster, Rev. Taiou Kaneta set up the Australia-Japan Disaster Support Office at Tsudaiji and embarked on the relief mission

with his volunteer network. This is the outcome of his father, Kaneta Roshi's, integrity and also the response of Jikishoan members and contributions from the Australian community to the Japan Disaster Relief Appeal initiative. Sincerely, I would like thank Taiten Kaneta Roshi and those who kindly responded to our initial appeal, "**A Warm Meal to a Victim.**"

The Committee's Plan for Action

When the Japan Disaster Relief Appeal was launched immediately following the tragedy in March, the Jikishoan Committee agreed as part of the plan to match contributions from members and friends dollar-for-dollar.

At the April meeting, the Committee accepted my proposal to run a new fundraising drive, enabling the organisation to meet its commitment of matching the amount contributed by individual members and friends (\$10,000AU).

Therefore, the Japan Disaster Relief Appeal will now run for an extended period of two months. This means that Jikishoan, as a Buddhist organization and international member of the Soto Zen Buddhism network, will collect donations for the Appeal until 18 June 2011. The Committee's main focus during this time will be to approach other organizations, such as companies, businesses, shops and interested groups for contributions. This may be for direct donations from the organisations themselves, or through the use of collection boxes, which their customers and members can use to make a contribution.

Jikishoan members and friends will again be able to contribute to the Appeal during this period if they wish.

This time, the funds collected through the Appeal will be sent to the Soto Zen Central disaster relief headquarters in Tokyo. The following official web-links have information about their activities in Japan, as well as internationally.

<http://global.sotozen-net.or.jp/eng/news/prayforjapan.html> (Soto Zen Official Website)

http://sva.or.jp/global/japan_earthquake/
(SVA: The Soto affiliated International relief organization)

Background of my proposal

Jikishoan's tie with Japan is getting stronger year by year, mainly through the traditional forms of Zen Buddhist practice and especially after Kaneta Roshi's first visit in 2007.

Over the past 12 years, many inspired Jikishoan members have visited temples and monasteries in Japan to experience Zen there and to extend their practice. Six of our members have received monastic ordination (novices) in Japan, including Hojun Halse, who is currently training at Daijōji under Abbot Ryushin Azuma-Roshi.

In this way, the connection Jikishoan has with Japan consists of a personal connection for members as well. At a time like this, it is also good to be reminded of the Soto Zen Central support behind Kaneta Roshi and Tsudaiji's connection with Jikishoan. This very support allowed Roshi to visit Australia in the first place. It also enabled Yoyu Miyashita-Roshi, Director of Education of Soto Zen Central at the time, to come to Melbourne to officiate Jikishoan's Tenth Anniversary in 2009.

In April this year, I was requested by the International Department of Soto Zen Central to join in their worldwide fundraising effort for the Japan Earthquake and Tsunami Relief. Considering the unique connection Jikishoan members have with Japan, I am hoping to see many members and friends respond and assist with the Committee member's new initiative and my proposal to extend the Japan Disaster Relief Appeal for a further two month period.

I plan to visit both Sotoshu Shumicho, the head office of Soto Zen Central, in Tokyo and also Tsudaiji, in Miyagi, this September. If your preference during this extended Appeal period is to support the original project of Rev. Kaneta and Tsudaiji, please specify when making your contribution.

I would like to encourage your contribution, small or large. The donation period ends on 18 June 2011.

With deep gassho,

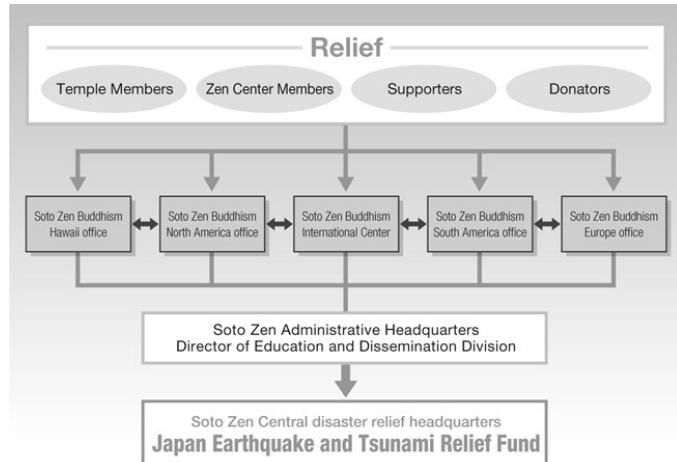
Ekai Korematsu

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Please contact the Publications Officer
(Renata Salajić) for a copy.

Email: publications@jikishoan.org.au

Donations to the Japan Disaster Relief Appeal after 18 June will be delivered personally by Ekai Osho to the Soto Central Office and Tsudaiji temple when he visits Japan in September. — Editor



Kaneta Roshi's life Journey and Aspiration

The following writing was delivered to his American Zen students at Northwest Zen Community in the State of Washington, USA on 24 October 2009. It was enclosed in a letter from Kaneta Roshi last month, together with some photos. - Ekai Osho

I was born in 1928, the year before the Wall Street Crash and the subsequent American Depression that shook the entire world. As a result, the women in rural farming villages had to sell themselves in order to feed their families. Children as young as 12 or 13 years of age worked as domestics or had to apprentice themselves because their families could not feed them. People who had had white colour jobs were forced to live as Lumpen proletariat and live like tramps. Although I was too young to understand, I was surrounded by great poverty.

Later political actions like the Japanese invasion of Manchuria, the establishment of the Kairai political powers, etc. were taken in order to escape poverty. The military coup and the incidents of February 26 and May 15 led to the War with China, the War in the Pacific, and the Second World War, and the military became increasingly autonomous and three million people lost their lives in the ravages of war. In 1941, at the age of thirteen, I started junior high school. On December 7 of that same year the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor, starting the Japan-American War.

I remember that upon hearing this news my classmates and I all uncritically danced with joy. Yet before 10hg labour mobilization began. Still suffering from have been mobilized into labor, I then entered the university and then on August 15, 1945, the war came to an end.



Kaneta Roshi front row, second from the left
and Northwest Zen Community

When I was studying in Tokyo, I confronted its bombed out areas, the returning soldiers coming home from having fought abroad, wounded and sick combatants, and homeless war orphans, and they all made me feel like I was suffocating. And so on March

1, 1949, at the age of 21, I entered Eihei-ji, the Soto Zen training monastery, as a novice monk. I returned to Tsudai-ji on March 21, 1951, and served as *shiso* for ten years.

Over time I grew more mindful. After seeing more of the world, I returned to Eihei-ji and began to familiarize myself with the life of *Sesshin*. I began to look at the horrors of the current century: the Korean War, the massacre of six million at Auschwitz, the tragedy of the Vietnam War, the genocide by Pol Pot and the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia, and I could see that this was turning in an endless cycle. I learned that the numbers of those who died violently in the Iraq War triggered by the 9-11 terrorist incident was greater than the amount of people who died peacefully. From my lifetime of Buddhist practice, I realized that these things demand serious response.



Photo: Courtesy Taiten Kaneta Roshi

Kaneta Roshi and Northwest Zen Community

How did all of this lead me to come to Seattle? As I confront the end of my life, I realize that I must speak my mind and act from my heart as a form of Buddhist atonement. Until the end of my days, I will always say, You should not kill each other, you should not make others kill, you shall not even kill in order to avoid being killed. You shall not put yourself in this position; you shall not laud others for killing nor abet others in killing. You shall live a life free of killing.

Furthermore, "You shall not steal and not take the fortunes of others. This includes the capitalist practice of extracting another country's resources. In a democratic country one should be able to act on behalf of the common good and divide wealth equitably and fairly. You should not engage in the international theft that wrecks lives and produces millions of refugees, as well as producing a violent military culture, unfair treaties, and sponsors foreign dictators who help with the theft of natural resources. These unfair practices in which rich countries plunder poor countries produce the seemingly endless refugee culture that confronts us today.

Before UNICEF has to intervene, you should be looked right in the eye and told, "You shall not steal, you shall abet in stealing, and you shall not become addicted to the looting of other countries. In order to

save the world, we should embrace the ten precepts of Jukai ... Please! I came to Seattle to teach the peaceful practice of Zen and its vision of social justice in the world.

I am not simply saying that we should avoid the use of nuclear weapons. I am saying quite straight forwardly that we should stop killing. Can people ever be happy if they are killing each other? If I get used to killing, soon I can become capable of even killing my own family members. We should not develop violent habits of the heart and mind. We need to avoid the endless cycle of retribution where it is always an eye for an eye and soon the whole world is blind.

We need to change the quality of our mind. I entered the life of Zazen to cultivate such a mind and I hope you will embrace my warm heart.

Taiten Kaneta

Tsudai-ji Soto Zen Temple 25th Chief Priest

Northwest Zen Community Director in Education



Photo: Renata Salajic

**Heart (and mind) cannot be seen
Loving-kindness can be seen**

- Ekai Korematsu Osho

(Continued from page 3)

Seeing and Hearing

to learn language, then a shift of learning occurs to become one based on patterns. Learning words is like learning a pattern, isn't it? We move to this next level of learning and when we do we are kind of a losing the fundamental learning, direct learning level aren't we? We are covering it up and operating with this kind of pattern learning.



Photo: Brian Osborne

Throw out that kind of pattern learning. To overcome it, bring out experiencing first. Hear and see. Eat. Taste. Feel it. Something like that is quite simple. If we are relying too much on modern conveniences, like the internet, you'll not cultivate this experiencing - you'll not bring about very basic learning, fundamental, intuitive learning.

There is a kind of misconception, misunderstanding about the way we learn, even about Zen. Internet Dokusan [a student's personal, private interview with a teacher] – I'd lose my job! Internet Teisho! You can ask about whatever you like; you can ask a particular question about whatever you want to know. Or, you only want to know about this question but not that one! Or, the teacher wants to teach something but you don't want to hear it [everyone laughing]!

Transcribed by Nicole Thomas
Edited by Renata Salajic

Committee News

From the President When you go to San Francisco.....

In March I was fortunate to travel to the United States to visit friends and holiday in New York.

I was flying into San Francisco and having a three day stopover there on my way to New York and intended to visit the San Francisco Zen Centre in Page Street. Ekai Osho asked me to make arrangements to contact and make connections with a number of people while I was there between 21 and 23 March.

Ekai Osho asked me to convey his greetings to the following three people who he knows well from his own time in San Francisco: the Rev Zenkai Blanche Hartman and to give her his condolences for her husband Lou's death whose funeral was held at the City Centre of SZFC on 13 March 20; the Rev Gigen Vicky Austin; and, the Rev Dairuyu Michael Wegner.

Also, he asked me to visit and pay his respects to Rev Issho Fujita (Director) and the Rev Ikki Nambara (Assistant Director) at the Soto Zen Buddhism International Centre "Sokoji" in Laguna Street, a 15 minute walk from the San Francisco Zen Centre. The Rev Ikki Nambara came to Melbourne as Miyashita Roshi's assistant when he officiated at Jikishoan's 10th Anniversary in 2009.



Sokoji - Soto Zen Buddhism International Centre, San Francisco

During my stay Ekai Osho also asked me to make arrangements to visit the Berkeley Zen Centre and meet and pay his respect to Abbot, Rev Sojun Mel Weitsman, who was Ekai Osho's first instructor in Zen practice in 1972 while he was a college student at Berkeley.

As my flight from Sydney arrived in San Francisco about midday on 21 March, I was able to telephone and arrange to visit Sokoji that afternoon. Unfortunately, both the Rev Issho Fujita and the Rev Ikki Nambara were in Japan at the time, having gone there after the earthquake and tsunami. However, I was able to meet with and pass on respects to the Rev Yuji Ito the Administrative Secretary.



Photo: Vaughan Behncke

Plaque reads: "Commemorating the 60th anniversary of the founding of the Sokoji congregation, and the 10th anniversary of the construction of this temple."

That evening I was able to attend the daily 5.30pm zazen practice at the San Francisco Zen Centre and then participate in a ceremony conducted by the Centre's Shuso with the Sangha to mark the Spring equinox. Afterwards, I shared supper with the Sangha and was able to meet and talk with the Rev Zenkai Blanche Hartman who asked me to pass on her thanks and respects to Ekai Osho. She asked many questions about Jikishoan's practice in Australia.

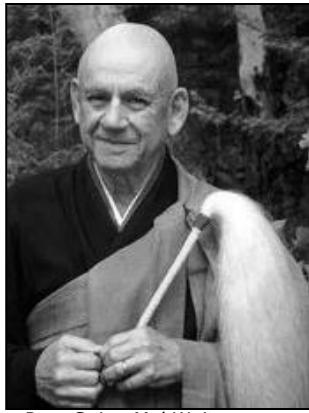
Unfortunately, I was unable to meet with both the Rev Gigen and the Rev Dairuyu as they were absent at the time.

The following afternoon I took the train (it's called the BART) to Berkeley and then the short walk to Russell Street and Shogakuji (Berkeley Zen Centre). I had tried to make an appointment to visit but the phone was on answer service, so I 'just did it' and arrived at Shogakuji unannounced and met Sojun Mel Weitsman just as he arrived at his letterbox to collect the mail.

We spent some time together in his study and he spoke of his memories of Ekai Osho as a student and asked many questions about my role and Jikishoan's practice in Melbourne and Canberra. We arranged to exchange newsletters (Myoju and the Berkeley Zen Centre newsletter) electronically.

I was felt privileged and inspired by my meetings with the Rev Zenkai Blanche Hartman and the Rev Sojun Mel Weitsman. They were wonderfully open and compassionate and showed much interest in Jikishoan. It was good to make the connection personally and on behalf of Jikishoan.

Both Zenkai Blanche and Sojun Mel practice in the lineage of Shunryu Suzuki. Sojun received transmission from Suzuki Roshi's son and successor, Gyugaku Hoitsu, at Rinsoin temple in Japan in 1984. He was officially installed as Abbot of Berkeley Zen Centre in 1985. From 1988 to 1997, he served as co-abbot of San Francisco Zen Centre.



Rev. Sojun Mel Weitsman

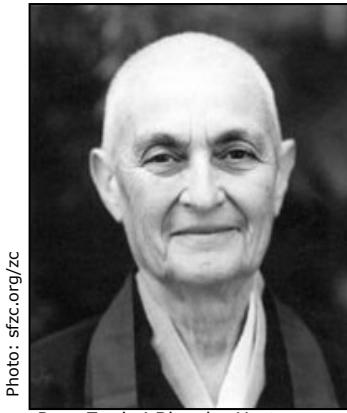


Photo: sfzcc.org/zc

Rev. Zenkei Blanche Hartmann

In 1977, Blanche Hartman and her husband Lou were both ordained as priests by Zentatsu Richard Baker and in 1988 she received Shiho (full transmission) from Sojun Mel Weitsman. In 1996, Zenkei Blanche was installed as co-abbes of San Francisco Zen Centre and was the first female Abbess of the City Centre, having served just after Tenshin Reb Anderson and Sojun Mel Weitsman.

Shunryu Suzuki first arrived in San Francisco from Japan in 1959 and the San Francisco Zen Centre was established three years later in 1962 – 49 years ago. Berkeley Zen Centre was established 44 years ago in 1967. Visiting both of these centres allowed me to see, first hand, what can evolve over time with solid practice, compassion, persistence and attention to detail and organisation.

For me, connecting with people at both of these centres was, in a way, a glimpse into the possible future for Jikishoan in Australia.

Vaughan Daisen Behncke

18 May 2011

Canberra Bun-in News

Since the last news from Canberra in the December 2011 issue of Myoju, the practice here seems to have moved into a different phase. It seems deeper, as more people are becoming involved in the Samu (work practice) and helping with the tasks involved in Sunday Sanzen-kai - paying attention to the detail of setting up and packing up of the Zendo.

After the Christmas/New Year break, Sanzen-kai resumed on 16 January 2011 and every week since then has seen new people attending. The majority of new people say that they have found out about the practice from our Canberra Times (newspaper), One Day Workshop advertisements and also by looking at the Canberra pages of the Jikishoan website. This year, an average of ten people have attended Sanzen-kai each week.

On 30 April, Jikishoan Canberra marked the milestone of its 100th Sunday Sanzen-kai since incorporation in January 2009.

To update you on a few of our members and the

activities they've been involved in:

We are in regular contact with Martha Sear our Vice-President and she tells us, that she and her twin sons, Callum and Oliver, now seven months of age, are doing well.

George Quinn, a Canberra member who lives in Sydney was temporarily working in Ipswich where he headed up a Mental Health Team assisting people suffering from the effects of the Queensland floods.

Three members from Canberra: Tony Crivelli, George Quinn and Vaughan Behncke; enrolled in the Zen and Integrated Buddhist Studies – 2011 Practice Period.

On 19 March, Hannah Shudo Forsyth conducted a One Day workshop in Canberra of which 14 people attended and on 21 May, Ekai Osho conducted the 11th One Day Workshop held in Canberra, with 21 people in attendance.



Photo: Vaughan Behncke

Canberra Zendo

On the evening of Ekai Osho's workshop we held a community dinner with our Teacher as the guest of honour – 20 people, including members, friends and partners had a very enjoyable social evening at an inner-Canberra Chinese restaurant.

At the beginning of his weekend in Canberra, Ekai Osho and 5 members of the Canberra committee had an early dinner at Caph's bistro, Manuka.

Anytime you are visiting or passing through Canberra we would be pleased to welcome you to Sunday Sanzen-kai practice.

Ferro Fabbri

President, Jikishoan Canberra

Committee Workshop #6

Jikishoan's twice yearly Committee workshops came into being in 2008. Ekai Osho wanted to ensure that those serving on the Committee understood their formal responsibilities and the rules of the organization. Committee members, ryo coordinators and anyone with an interest in the workings of the organization are encouraged to attend. Some people come many times.

Workshop #6 was held on 9th May 2011 and there were new people and old hands there. We began with zazen and walking meditation, had a break for tea and then worked through the workshop agenda. One of the topics was 'Fee structures' which explained how we set membership, course and retreat fees, and what trends we are seeing in membership and in Jikishoan's income. People asked questions about the organisation's future direction and about fundraising for a building for Jikishoan.

Feedback from those who came for the first time was that the morning was informative, "I became a member recently and wanted to understand how the organization works". "Zazen and tea made it a Committee workshop with a difference! It was helpful to see the meshing of the big picture with the nitty gritty." Regular attendees reported that the workshops are refining each time. We finished with a delicious and nourishing lunch.

If you'd like to come to the next Committee Workshop it will be held on Sunday 18th September from 9am-12pm.

Annie Bolitho, Personnel

Committee Meeting Minutes

Accountability is important to Jikishoan and the minutes of its Committee meetings are available to all members. In the past, if you wanted to receive minutes, you just ticked a box on your membership renewal form. For 2010-11, the system has changed. If you would like to receive the minutes, please let us know by sending an email to: publications@jikishoan.org.au.

Reading the minutes is a great way to keep up to date with what's happening in Jikishoan. It's also important for our administrative health. We encourage you to subscribe.

Richard Myddleton, Secretary

Correction

In the Autumn 2011 issue of Myoju, Ekai Osho and the Committee welcomed new members. The spelling was incorrect of one new member's name. 'Isabel Henry' should have read 'Isabelle Henry'. Apologies — Editor

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 its 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. We warmly welcome anyone who would like to know more about Zen Buddhism to attend any of these activities.

How to Contact Us



Melbourne

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Education News

ENVIRONMENT OF PRACTICE INAUGURAL PRACTICE PERIOD 2011

Questions, confusion, busyness, preliminary meetings, real meetings, attendance plans, registration forms, course codes, new sutra books, ryo coordinators, emails flying, phone calls, multiple versions of new documents, study materials, new B course, briefings, B1 class, formalising ryo practices, guest book, Jikishoan Relief Fund, Shuso ceremony, Foundation Day, retreat...

At the beginning I say – “*I don’t think we understand what this practice period means.*”

Under Ekai Osho’s guidance we are going through the process – learning by doing.

Harmonious Integration of Meditation, Buddhist study and practice in the midst of your ordinary daily activities is both our intention and the heart of this practice period. — Ekai Osho, IBS Student Planner 2011

In general, there have been quite a few small changes to the look and manner of practice in 2011 which are all adding up to create a larger and more fundamental shift.

Attendance Plans – Individual

A most influential change in our practice has been the use and application of the Attendance Plan, introduced as part of the enrolment process for the new Main Course B and the Practice Period.

At the preliminary B Course meetings towards the end of 2010, Ekai Osho asked that ryo coordinators and Shuso (head student) ryo look at their Sunday Sanzen-kai attendance during the 6 months from July – December 2010.

The purpose of this survey was for each individual to determine what their attendance had been for that half year and on that basis to make a projection for their attendance during the first half of 2011 (Practice Period).

The intention was that the projection (future commitment to attendance) was grounded in the actual reality of recent attendance, rather than hoping or dreaming that the future commitment would be somehow fabulously different and better.

The task amounted to taking an honest look at what was possible within the context of one’s daily life and then making a plan of attendance based on that information.

Developing the individual attendance plan has been a tool by which students have been encouraged to bring some consistency, formality, commitment and

reality to their practice over a period of time, i.e. grounding their commitment to practice in the actualities of their daily life activities.

Attendance Plans and Community

Aside from the benefit to individual practice the attendance plans have been very useful for ryo coordinators as an organisational tool.

Having gathered as many Attendance Plans (AP) as possible, Ekai Osho brought all these plans together in one Excel document which allows coordinators to see at a glance who will be present or absent at any particular Sunday Sanzen-kai.

The original document, which has been modified and developed by Naomi Richards (Jiso) to accurately reflect attendance, will act as a reference for the Official Integrated Buddhist Studies (IBS) Student Register 2011 – a record of practice.

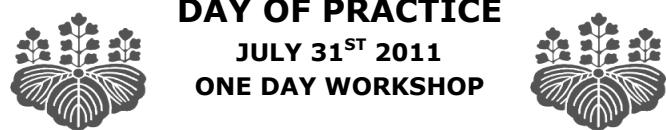
In this way, the Attendance Plan functions not only as a tool for the individual but also for the practice community. It helps to bring some clarity and formality to practice activity rather than the ‘she’ll be right, mate’ approach. It also assists in integrating intention to practice, daily life and Buddhist meditation and study.

Thank you to all Practice Period students who have entered into this process despite confusions, misgivings and doubts. The IBS Faculty and Shuso ryo wish you well for this practice session and trust that understanding will arise from your experience.

Gassho to Ekai Osho for his skill and perseverance in bringing the community to this point.

Shona Teishin Innes

Shoki (Secretary IBS)



An introduction to Zen Meditation and practice for Beginners.

Deepening practice for members, friends and IBS students.

Please contact Shuso (Head Student), Hannah Shudo if you would like to attend on (03)9687 6981 or email: [contact @ jikishoan.org.au](mailto:contact@jikishoan.org.au)

One Day Workshop dates 2011:
October 9 and December 4.

Sangha News

Foundation Day

Jikishoan Zen Buddhist Community celebrated twelve years of practice in Australia on 17 April 2011.

The anniversary was marked by a day of formal and informal activity, with the highlight being the Shuso Ceremony, recognising Hannah Shudo as Head Student of Jikishoan's inaugural Practice Period.



Buddha on the altar, with the Shuso Ceremony introductory words as read by Benji

Held at the Australian Shiatsu College in Brunswick, Victoria, students from the primary Ryos (groups) of the Practice Period met for a briefing with Ekai Osho at 10am before commencing samu (work practice) and a Shuso Ceremony rehearsal. The primary groups of the Practice Period being: Shuso (Head Student), Shuryo (Study Hall), Tenzo (Kitchen), Ino (Meditation Hall), Shika (Attending Guests) and Jiroku (Administration and Reception).

After a light lunch provided by Tenzo Ryo, Foundation Day commenced officially at 1pm with members, friends and the public welcome to join informal meditation before the Ryo group presentations.

During the Ryo group presentations, members entertained the Sangha with amusing performances varying from the Ino Orchestra, Tenzo's competitive chopstick game and Sangha sing-a-longs, including a few Japanese numbers thanks to Shuryo (one was to the tune of an ABBA song). Quieter presentations from Shuso, Jiroku and Shika included a number of poetry recitals, of which two poems by members are included in this issue of Myoju.

Following afternoon tea and a period of Zazen, the Shuso Ceremony commenced. Preparation for this ceremony had taken place in preceding weeks, with Honsoku (Root Case) and Koan Commentary held at the Footscray Zendo in the week leading up to Foundation Day. Members involved in this preparation, particularly the Honsoku, formed part of the Shuso Ceremony proceedings. These members were invited to engage in 'Dharma Combat' or, in other words, to ask questions of the Shuso relating to the selected koan during the ceremony.

A tolling bell signalled the commencement of the

ceremony and once the official procession was seated in the Zendo, surrounded by the community of observers, an introduction was read by Benji, Bev Cowan (one of the Head Student's assistants). The Shuso presented herself to our teacher, Ekai Osho, requesting the ceremonial staff from him to be used during the question period.

The koan was read aloud by Hannah Shudo and one-by-one, questions were asked of her. Each time Hannah Shudo responded and with each direct response, a loud thud of the staff on the ground accompanied her answer. The koan in question, *Polishing a Tile*, follows this article.

To conclude the ceremony, Hannah Shudo returned the staff to Ekai Osho and words of congratulations from those participating in the ceremony were heard, including from Shona Innes, Bev Cowan, Andrew Holborn, Kiyoko Taylor, Vaughan Behncke, Kevin Edwards, Mark Summers, Robin Leong, Naomi Richards, Martin Landolt, Dave Hicks, Jinesh Wilmot, Annie Bolitho, Jeremy Maher and Katherine Yeo.

Formal congratulations and recognition of Hannah Shudo's accomplishment were also received from Ekai Osho, Jikishoan Castlemaine members and from Abbot Azuma Ryushin-Roshi and Rev. Gensho Ishiguro, Daijō-ji Monastery, Japan. Daijō-ji is where Haydn Hojun Halse, a member from Melbourne is presently training. Congratulatory words follow this article.



Photo: Brian Osborne

Shuso, Hannah Shudo with staff

To complete the day, a Dharma lineage service was held to commemorate Jikishoan's founder Daigen Ikko Daisho and a supper prepared by Tenzo with contributions from the community, was enjoyed by all present.

In reflecting Jikishoan's on-going commitment to the practice of welfare, fundraising activities were held throughout Foundation Day for the Japan Disaster Relief Appeal. Activities included: a silent



Shuso, Hannah Shudo and Ekai Osho with assistants, Benji, Bev Cowan, Shoki, Shona Innes and friends, following the Shuso Ceremony.

auction of donated calligraphy artwork by Jinesh Wilmot; home-made cookie and cake sale by Tenzo members; and a give-away of Jikishoan's excess book stock. Donations of any amount for the Japan Disaster Relief Fund were gratefully accepted.

Renata Salajić
Publications and Tenzo Ryo

POLISHING A TILE

Nanyue asked Mazu, "Great worthy, what is your intention in seated meditation (zazen)?"

Mazu said, "I intend to become a buddha."

Nanyue picked up a tile and, in front of Mazu's hermitage, began to polish it with a rock.

Mazu asked, "What are you doing, Teacher?"

Nanyue said, "I am polishing it to make a mirror."

Mazu said, "How can you make a mirror by polishing a tile?"

Nanyue said, "How can you become a Buddha through zazen?"

Mazu said, "What shall I do?".

Nanyue said, "Like someone riding a cart that won't go, which is right, to hit the cart or hit the ox?"

Mazu did not reply.

(Nanyue) further gave instruction saying, "Do you study sitting meditation, or study sitting Buddha? If you study sitting meditation, meditation has nothing to do with sitting or lying down. If you study sitting Buddha, Buddha has no fixed form. Within the Dharma of non-abiding, you should not pick and choose. If you do sitting Buddha, this is simply killing Buddha. If you cling to the form of sitting, you will never reach the truth."

For Mazu, hearing this admonition was like drinking delicious cream

Congratulatory words for Shuso, Hannah Shudo

Messages from Abbot and Shika Roshi of Daijoji Monastery, Japan

Congratulations for this grand ceremony and occasion!

From my heart, I pray (and wish) that furthermore your dedicated effort will continue.

Azuma Ryushin
Head of the Mountain, Daijoji
13 April 2011

Daijoji too entered Seichu (the formal practice period) today.

I feel very grateful as we are able to continue training like this (peacefully), although the influence felt from the disaster is such extreme and enormous in our country (Japan).

Hojun-san became a experienced trainee and practicing diligently every day.

I also sincerely extend my best wish for your vivants activity to your community.

Nine Prostrations,

Gensho Ishiguro
Daijoji Shika

Message from Ekai Osho, Abbot of Jikishoan:

Congratulations to Shudo Daishi for your Dharma Seat!

Shudo (spiritual pupil) shines fully with richness of her virtue and practice,

Having to study Zazen (for 12 years) thoroughly with Jikishoan,

May wondrous truth of Zen study and engaging practice be transmitted;

May the wind of the Way of Ancestors be prevailed in the heaven and earth, all over Australia.

Yoko Ekai

永光 慧海

Head of Jikishoan

THE WISDOM OF TREES

*Old trees would tell long stories,
if they could.*

*Stories of coming and goings,
of dramatic events,
of quiet and beautiful summer evenings,
of icy winds and winter frosts.
Stories of birds and their young,
nested in the forks of their branches.
Stories of sunrises and sunsets
of rain and storms, of clouds and stars
and the moon and the sun.*

*Trees are solitary beings, but never
lonely.*

*Forever present in the here and now,
forever adapting to the world around,
yet never planning for the future,
nor ever regretting the past.*

*Never going anywhere,
the world comes to the tree,
the entire universe is contained
within its very essence.*

*It knows nothing other than its own existence
and that which it is touched by.*

It knows that beyond there is nothing to know.

*We humans think we know more than there is,
not realising that it all is an illusion.*

*We rarely possess the wisdom of trees.
But when we do,
the whole wonder of existence is revealed in one
instant.*

Christine Maingard – April 2011

ENLIGHTENMENT

*Fullness and emptiness
Darkness and light
No boundaries, yet contained.*

*No longing, no attachment
No suffering, no pain
No needs, no desires.*

*No purpose, yet not indifference either
No meaning, yet full with significance
No thinking, no mind.*

*No past, no future
Not even a perception of a present moment
Infinite connection to what is one.*

*Beyond all comprehension
Everything exists, yet nothing is.*

*Being and non-being
Egoless awareness.*

*Timeless and spaceless
No beginning, no end
A circle – everywhere.*

Is this enlightenment?' I ask.

'No', says the master, 'an enlightened soul does not have such questions as there is no knowledge of this state of being. It visits you, yet when you grasp it, it evaporates like the mist in the morning valley. Only the faintest memory of nothing and everything remains.'

Christine Maingard – April 2011

CHANGES

*When every being dwells in its place,
harmony arises for all;
and each moment,
is full, as it is.*

*When earthquakes shake the foundations
an imbalance is corrected;
structures collapse,
new chances arise.*

*When winds blow fixed thoughts from their trees
fears and emptiness co-arise;
vast space appears,
don't fill it too fast.*

*Tho the dwelling place is re-shaped
it's essential nature remains;
(w)holy apart,
whilst (w)holy a part.*

Andrew Holborn 5-3-2011

Sangha Picnic - 2011

Photo: Courtesy of Mark Summers



The annual picnic was again held at Darebin Parklands in Alphington in beautiful autumn sunshine. With plenty of food and drinks to share, and good conversation, twenty adults, one child and one dog, the afternoon drifted by at a leisurely pace.

We gathered together at 2.30pm and chanted the Heart Sutra and Fueko. The afternoon concluded after we posed for the photographer, packed-up and said our farewells.

Mark Summers, Picnic Coordinator and Vice President

Easter 2011 Retreat Reflections

The Teisho text studied during retreat was The Platform Sutra - Part 1 as spoken by the Sixth Patriarch, Hui Neng, on the high seat of the Treasure of the Law/Dharma. — Editor

The following verses were found inscribed on the Zendo wall at Adekate Lodge during the Easter Bendoho retreat. They were subsequently covered up with a large sheet of paper by the Ino ryo. It would appear the verses are by the Sick Patriarch, Hughey Nong and form part of the Platform 6, Flinders Street Station Sutra.

*My body aches from neck to knee
my mind's a traffic light
what I'd give for a cup of tea
and to sleep in my own bed tonight.*

*I've been self-vacuuming seven days
I'm moved an avalanche of dust
but when I meet the teacher's gaze
bam! – the mental vacuum cleaner's bust.*

'Make no mistake,' he says and frowns

'Humans have inverted views

back to front and upside down

their heads are better wearing shoes –

So what is your identity?

A void is what I'm aiming for

but with no body it's hard to pee

and believe me, even voids can snore.

Forget the void, samadhi's nice

now I'm really on a roll

being one with the oryoki rice

essence of mind in the pickle bowl...

Stop there! My delusions crash...

what is my identity?

I'm Hughey Nong, if you've spare cash

Buy your firewood from me!

Harry Laing (who discovered the verses)



Photo: Vaughan Behncke

Reflections on identity

" Body

Breath

mind consciousness.

Moon a mirror

in a night sky."

Vaughan Daisen Behncke

Sōtō Kitchen

Recipes provided by Tenzo Ryo members.

Lumberjack cake

Ingredients

Medium apples	2
Dates	185 g
Carb. soda	1 teaspoon
Boiling water	1 cup
Butter	125 g
Sugar	1 cup
Egg	1
Vanilla	1 teaspoon
Plain flour	1 ½ cup
Salt	½ teaspoon
Butter	60 g
Brown sugar	½ cup
Milk	½ cup
Shredded coconut	60 g

Combine peeled and grated apples, chopped dates, carb. soda and boiling water. Allow to cool to lukewarm. Cream 125 g butter and sugar, add egg and vanilla, beat well. Sift flour and salt, beat into creamed mixture alternately with cooled fruit mixture. Pour into greased and greasepaper-lined deep 20 cm square tin. Bake in moderate oven 1 hour 10 minutes or until cooked when tested.

Combine extra 60 g butter with brown sugar, milk and coconut in saucepan, stir over low heat until butter and sugar have melted. Spread coconut mixture over hot cake and bake a further 20 minutes or until topping is brown.

A traditional recipe contributed by Rhonda Henderson.



Photo: Wouter Vandevorde



Tenzo, Kiyoko Taylor

Chosan cookies

Eggs	4
Sugar	2 cups
Dates, chopped	500 g
Sultanas	500 g
Pecans	500 g
Melted butter	1 ½ cups
Cinnamon	1 teaspoon
Ground cloves	2 teaspoons
Plain flour	3 cups
Baking soda	2 teaspoons

Ingredients

Beat eggs, sugar and spices together. Add fruit and nuts. Add butter and soda. Stir in flour.

Drop onto cookie sheet and bake 120 °C for 25 to 30 minutes. The dough can be easier to handle if it is refrigerated first, but this will mean a longer cooking time. Makes heaps!

Originally a Christmas cookie recipe (called Christmas Rocks) from Michael Ewing's sister, Nancy - but good anytime of year.

These yummy cookies have been baked by Michael and enjoyed during Chosan (formal morning tea) on retreats.