

# Myōju



JIKI037

Soto Zen Buddhism in Australia

Spring, Volume 9 Issue 1, September 2009

## The Function of Rules and Roles

A dharma talk given by Ekai Korematsu Osho to the Melbourne Sangha at Sunday Sanzenkai on the 31<sup>st</sup> of May 2009. Transcribed by Katherine Yeo, edited by Paul Harris.

The Jikishoan committee spent the afternoon studying our rules of association. We went through each clause, one by one, to understand its meaning and relevance. It required a lot of concentration. Committee work is oftentimes like this. These rules provide a framework for our community, so it's important to understand them. We're required by law to comply with these rules too.



Rules apply not only for organisations. If you want to play football there are rules. For competition sports, rules make the game meaningful and enjoyable for everyone, including the spectator. I noticed when I came to Melbourne how many sporting programmes there are on TV. People enjoy and get excited about sport, and for a lot of people it's an important part of their life.

**Rules are important in the broader social context too. Moral rules, or morality, define the fundamental qualities we like to see in each other -- qualities that make life more peaceful, supportive, enjoyable and less troublesome.**

In the Buddhist tradition, including Zen, rules come first. Just like if you want to be a professional footballer you have to play by the rules. Without these rules personal desires and agendas take over. Rules actually allow things to work; like the laws of mechanics.

For those working in the judiciary, or people in some kind of authority where they are called upon to make judgments that affect others, understanding the role of rules is crucial. I am sure that some of you would have heard in the news recently that President Obama appointed a Hispanic woman to the Supreme Court. Her name is Sonia Sotomayor. This was such a splendid thing, not because he nominated a woman, not because he appointed a Hispanic person. No, no, no. He appointed someone who knows the rules not just intellectually, but with a knowledge informed by experience. No one else could compare with that experience, including the men.

So in this case we know that the person has not only great knowledge, but also experience that exceeds all others. But is the person free from personal agendas or not? That's always an important question. How do individuals in positions such as these overcome or avoid personal agendas and bias? When you are in a role like this you have to put the care of others, the benefit of the community, above any personal agendas or desires you may have. On the other hand a person may have a good heart, with a genuine concern for the welfare of others and the community as a whole, but no real clue or appreciation of the rules or the law. That's a problem.



### In This Issue

*The Decade Ahead, Zen in South America, Ballarat Celebrates, The Pursuit of Happiness, and more...*



In the same way it is very important for our committee members to understand the rules that relate to our sangha, to learn how to serve the interests of our community, and to nurture themselves as individuals too. It's all about integrating our practice with the work we do, even if that's bureaucratic, administrative, paper work. We do it right. There's a joy and a kind of happiness in doing that, even with the most mundane tasks.

It was very interesting today, as we worked very intensely going through our list of rules. There are so many of them! Identifying, reading, questioning. It required quite a lot of concentration, for more than an hour-and-a-half, but no one seemed to be bored. That was a good sign.

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***Rules should be there to make things work, for everyone's benefit. So we need to observe the rules, and be clear about their purpose.***

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We also need to avoid creating too many rules. Too many rules can make life very complex. Sometimes we need to loosen up, become more flexible. Maybe there are flaws in a particular rule? The point is to understand and appreciate the meaning of a rule – to transcend liking and not liking, personal agendas, self-centredness and individual differences.

I think I have spoken enough about rules now. The rule is for me to stop so that we can all move on to our next activity – supper or going home.

Thank you.

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### **Charting a Course for the Years Ahead** *A President's Perspective*

A little more than ten years ago Jikishoan was born, and like any child, having grown from an embryo safely inside its mother's womb, when it came into the outside world it was totally dependent on its parents for survival.

Like a baby, its eyes could not focus immediately – it could only see outlines and shapes, and hear the incomprehensible sounds of its Mother and Father. With hands and arms, and feet and legs waving and kicking, un-coordinated, it found itself in a new world full of new experiences. In time the baby learnt to crawl, and that was even more exciting – so many things to explore.

Gradually the child learnt, inherently and with training from its parents, to do things for itself. To talk, walk, run, eat, go to the bathroom, put on clothes. As the child's world expanded there was no thought or reason required – things just kept happening. As the child's awareness grew it began to understand that there were certain ways things were done, and routines that when followed allowed it to feel secure, safe and loved. The child didn't have a word for these ways and methods, but eventually learnt, when it could begin to reason for itself, that these were rules.

So in its first ten years Jikishoan has been like a growing child, and now at 10 years of age the parents, family and teachers are preparing it move into another stage of life – finishing primary school, moving on to high school, maturing to an adolescent, beginning work and supporting itself. In order to do all of these things, with the knowledge and basic survival skills it possesses, the child / young adult must begin to learn how to co-ordinate and manage it's own affairs for itself.

On the 2<sup>nd</sup> of August this year, at our 11<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting, a new Jikishoan Management Committee was elected with some people who had served on the committee previously and some new members. The basic structure of the committee didn't change. However, the interpretation and emphasis of the committee roles and responsibilities did, to allow us to prepare for and accommodate the next stage of Jikishoan's development and growth during the next ten years. This shift in emphasis is important for several reasons. Jikishoan in Melbourne has grown to a total membership (including friends) of 180. Ballarat sangha recently celebrated its tenth anniversary, and Jikishoan Zen Buddhist Community Canberra was incorporated in January 2009 and became a Bun-in (Charter Branch / Temple) on the 25<sup>th</sup> of April 2009.



Imagine a ship. Each member of the crew has a role to play so that the ship can operate smoothly for the safety of its passengers. Every crewmember from the cook to the captain needs to be clear about the purpose and direction of the ship, and how their roles support this. A ship is a self-contained entity when it's on the ocean – it needs to be self-sustaining, and follow the course it has charted so that it reaches its destination safely. If it is, say a cruise ship it is open to anyone who wants to travel on it and the crew must work together to ensure that their guests enjoy the journey.

Even though the crew (this could be compared to the Management Committee) is made up of individuals, they can no longer act as individuals and must work cohesively, together, and share the responsibility of operating the ship safely and efficiently. To do this well the crew needs to understand their roles and follow the rules that are part of the ships standard operating procedures.

So we could say that the physical structure of the ship; its keel, rudder, engine room, and steel skin is the framework upon which the rules are based, and these rules must ensure the maintenance and running of the ship.

In a way Jikishoan is like this ship. It has its crew, its rules and its operating procedures. Except now Jikishoan is not one ship – it is in fact a small fleet – one large mother ship in Melbourne, a smaller ship in Ballarat and a new addition to the fleet in Canberra. Similar to the newly launched ship, Jikishoan was developing its rules and operating systems in its first ten years. During this period the emphasis has been on developing strong crew(s) through the Ryos so that members and guests knew how to do what was necessary. This built and provided an environment for a stable practice, and a harmonious community.

Even though the Ryos provided crucial support to the practice they could not contribute in a structured way to developing the management framework and processes Jikishoan required to take it in the direction it wanted to head over the next five to ten years. With strong Ryos in place the emphasis needs to shift to the co-ordination of management functions, and effective governance.

This evolving change of emphasis began with the election of the 2009/2010 Committee and the third Committee Workshop on the 6<sup>th</sup> of September, and will continue to unfold over the next three years to carry our community forward on a safe passage for the next five to ten years.

The beneficiaries of Jikishoan are its members, and the Committee members must be mindful of this in performing their respective roles and the development and implementation of our long-term plans.

*Vaughan Behncke*

### The New Committee



(Back Row, L-R) Paul Harris, Jeremy Maher, Mark Summers, Richard Myddleton, Hannah Forsyth, Luke Menzell, Jinesh Wilmot  
(Front) Naomi Richards, Kiyoko Taylor, Ekai Osho, Vaughan Behncke, Julie Martindale

## Myoju – Spring 2009

The calendar accompanying this Myoju is printed on pink paper, representing the flowers in the spring season.

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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, 21<sup>st</sup> December 2009. Contributions that support our practice are most welcome, including articles, book reviews, interviews, personal reflections, artwork and photographs. The content deadline is Friday 27<sup>th</sup> November. If you would like to contribute or advertise in the Summer 2009 edition of Myoju email [publications@jikishoan.org.au](mailto:publications@jikishoan.org.au)

### Bright Pearl



*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 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.'

# Sangha News

## Ballarat Sangha Celebrates 10 years

On Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> of August 2009, the Ballarat Sangha celebrated its tenth anniversary at their zendo in St. Cuthbert's Hall with a ceremony presided over by Ekai Osho, followed by a delicious potluck dinner.

Over thirty past and present Ballarat members and friends participated, including founding members Lorraine Collishaw and Rhonda Fletcher. There were also members from the Melbourne zendo, which has supported the Ballarat Sangha in many ways during its ten years of practice. Past and current members travelled from Werribee, Warrnambool, St. Arnaud, Geelong, Castlemaine and Gisborne to join in the celebrations.

Naomi Richards spoke in her role as newly appointed Vice President of the Committee, about the extra duties of country members who need to learn many roles and be able to multi-task, rather than having the luxury of concentrating on learning just one role. There were apologies from the two founders of the Ballarat group, Millicent Reed who was in hospital, and Seizen Radman who sent a message of good wishes.

Gifts of a new Inkin bell and ceremonial equipment were gratefully received from Ekai Osho, and a water jug and drinking glass from the Jisha Ryo. During the ceremony Ekai Osho congratulated the sangha members on reaching the ten years milestone and some members spoke about the practice having changed their lives.



A series of leather wall plaques depicting the story of the Herding of the Ox, handcrafted by Ballarat member, Peter Blackman was presented to Ekai Osho from the sangha members to commemorate their tenth anniversary.

A delicious meal was enjoyed by all, together with a birthday cake and singing "Happy Birthday" to us. We look forward with anticipation to the next ten years. On our fifth birthday one of our wishes was to have a temple or permanent "home" by our tenth birthday! Maybe it will take another ten years.

Gassho from all at Ballarat Zendo.

Lorraine Collishaw

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## Winter Dharma Talks

*"Zen practice starts with bowing  
and finishes with bowing."*

Ekai Osho

Once again this winter, the Venerable Traleg Rinpoche invited Ekai Osho to give a series of talks on Friday nights during July at the Kagyu Evam Buddhist Institute, in Lygon Street Brunswick. The text for this year was Raihai Tokuzui (Bowling and Acquiring the Essence) from Shobogenzo by Eihei Dogen Zenjii.

The main theme of this essay is the connection between "utter awakening" and meeting the true teacher. There is also quite a long discussion about delusion and prejudice towards teachers based on gender.

In his criticism of Japanese culture of his time Master Dogen says, "There are many 'sacred places' that are prohibited to nuns and other women to enter, even Mahayana practice centres.... If the argument is that past customs should never be changed, does this mean that the endless circuit of birth and death is not to be changed?"

During retreats, Ekai gives a talk each afternoon at 3pm that is called Teisho. These winter talks at KEBI are similar occasions. So members and friends of Jikishoan who are not able to attend retreats can have the opportunity to consider a text from the Soto Zen tradition with our teacher's guidance, much as we do on retreat.

By repeatedly returning to the text each Friday evening over four weeks some familiarity with Master Dogen's words starts to develop.

With his usual joyfulness, Ekai unfolds the text by discussing details, translating terms and extemporizing on themes and stories contained in the text. The occasion is very much a communal event, even though most of us come along with a strong sense of a sole seeker.

On each evening, Ekai asks the assembled students to read some part of the text aloud. Even if students *understand, don't understand, or half understand*, they still read. And gradually, through hearing Master Dogen's voice live, via the student chorus, our relationship to the text and to each other begins to subtly change.

*Acquiring a mind and body is fairly easy;  
bunches of them arise just as numberless rice plants,  
hemp, bamboo and reeds grow throughout the world;  
but it is rare to encounter the Teachings.*

Raihai Tokuzui Master Dogen Zenjii

Shona Innes



## Making a Long Turn

In Adrian Olley's garage workshop, the altar for Jikishoan's Canberra zendo is taking shape. The altar's front panel lies flat on the workbench, its Tasmanian oak boards joined, glued and clamped together. It's three forearm-spans wide – the size suggested by Ekai Osho when Vaughan initially met with him about the dimensions and design of the altar.



Adrian has been working on the altar for two months. 'I've learnt that being a craftsman isn't about perfect materials and cuts', he says. 'It's about using imperfection to create balance'. The boards framing each of the altar's four sides meet at an angle of 45 degrees. Adrian has cut each of these angles by hand, with a plane or saw, paying careful attention to the nuances of each piece of wood. When the oak travelled from the timber yard to the workshop, the different humidity subtly altered its shape. Each cut releases tension in the grain, delicately changing it again and again. 'Wood, as a living material, does not behave like metal and although you make two cuts each of 45 degrees, they don't always join at exactly the 90 degree angle that you wanted. Adjustments have to be made to ensure that, when it all comes together, the finished joint is square.'



The completed altar, sanded, lacquered and accompanied by an incense burner stand, should be ready for Ekai Osho's workshop and Canberra's first

Jukai ceremony in September 2009. It will become the focal point of the Canberra zendo and its growing sangha, reminding us of the words of the Buddha about the connection between mindfulness and working with wood from the Mahasatipatthana Sutta:

*Here a bhikkhu, gone to the forest or to the root of a tree or to a room that is void, sits down; having folded his legs crosswise, set his body erect, and established mindfulness in front of him, just mindful he breathes in, mindful he breathes out. As a skilled turner or his apprentice, when making a long turn, understands 'I make a long turn,' or when making a short turn, understands 'I make a short turn,' so, breathing in long, the bhikkhu understands 'I breathe in long,' or breathing out long, he understands 'I breathe out long'; breathing in short, he understands 'I breathe in short,' or breathing out short, he understands 'I breathe out short.'*

*Words and photographs by Martha Sear, with thanks to Adrian and Heather Olley*

## Canberra Bun-in

On a typical Canberra winter's day – calm, crisp cold air and vivid blue skies – Jikishoan Canberra held its fourth One Day Workshop at Corroboree Park Hall in Ainslie with 33 participants (24 of them new to Zen practice) conducted by Hannah Shudo Forsyth.

With the advent of spring and the plum and Manchurian pear blossoms in full display we are busy preparing for Ekai Osho's Public Lecture and One Day Workshop on 18 and 19 September respectively, and Jikishoan Canberra's first Annual General Meeting on 20 September.

Every year Canberra celebrates spring with "Floriade", a month long, international flower festival with over a million blooms and 400,000 visitors. This year the theme of Floriade is "Mind, Body and Soul" and Jikishoan Canberra has been invited by festival organizers to assist with the building of a Zen garden. Volunteers from the sangha will be working on the garden between 7 and 10 September.

*Vaughan Behncke (Kanji)*



## 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 25 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 13<sup>th</sup> 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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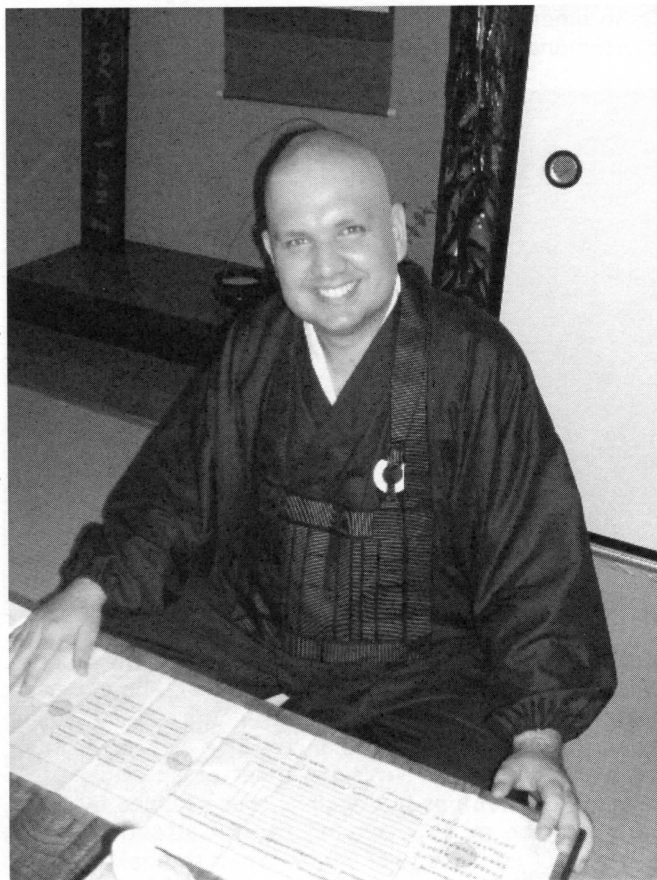
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## Letter from Daijoji

*[Haydn Hojun Halse was ordained at Daijoji on the 25<sup>th</sup> of July. The following is an edited and abridged version of a letter he circulated to friends and our community on 6<sup>th</sup> June]*



As I sit here writing this letter, I am covered in a weeks worth of facial hair and haven't bathed for 5 days. We've just completed our monthly sesshin, where we sit for about 80% of the day. No work is done except for 20 minutes temple cleaning in the morning and the only breaks are after the day's meals. I remember how good it felt to complete a sesshin from my time at Antaiji temple in 2006, but I'd forgotten how much I hated doing them. The funny thing is, otherwise boring and mundane work becomes an absolute pleasure to do in comparison. So if anyone you know is complaining about the work they do, then send them over here to work camp Daijoji and we'll set them straight.

Today is a rest day so I have the time to write. On most other days I would now be in "the forest" raking leaves and clearing the area. Although Daijoji is located within the city of Kanazawa, the entire block it occupies is an oasis of green in a city of grey stone. Trees and moss covered graves surround the temple proper and all this must be kept clean and maintained. Normally we would do about 4 hours labour a day in addition to meditation, chanting and monastic training. However, from tomorrow, that jumps to 7 hours a day for the next month as we prepare the grounds for a National holiday in Japan called D-bon. This is where families return to their ancestral homes to honour their ancestors. It includes commemorative ceremonies at the family graves, of which at Daijoji there are plenty.



The intensity of the work combined with the frugality of the food has meant that by the time this letter is sent, I will have lost 15 kilos in the 4 weeks I have been here. There are people on the Biggest Loser who don't pull numbers like that!!!

Azuma Roshi, the Abbot or Docho-san of Daijōji, has been extremely generous with me, the extent of which leaves me feeling very much like a burden. I'm told that this is how it is in Japan when someone becomes the disciple of a monk, but it doesn't sit well with my sensibilities. Especially since I have all the money I came with.

I have not been allowed to pay for a single thing. This includes physical checkups and health insurance as well as all the materials I need for my Ordination. I am even being sent to Japanese classes from November at a cost to Azuma Roshi of approximately \$4,000 per semester. This is all so that I can properly guide the new monks when it becomes my turn as a head monk, but this is still a while away.

A date has been set for my Ordination. It will be on the 25<sup>th</sup> July. Azuma Roshi is very keen to have at least one of my parents here for the day.

The date has been postponed twice in the past due to my lack of clothing required for Ordination. Again Azuma Roshi has paid for everything that I did not already have. He even engaged a tailor to hand make my clothes as it was thought that the largest size commercially available would not fit.

The tailor measured me up 3 weeks ago and the irony is that at my current rate of weight loss, I will have easily lost over 30 kilos by the time of my Ordination and my new clothes will be too big.

Prior to my ordination I am considered a guest, which means for the most part I have my own room. Being a guest isolates me from the others here. When I try to be of assistance, I am usually met with polite responses aimed at sending me back to my room to rest or study Japanese. Consequently I am quite lonely.

Even when I am around the other monks, the language barrier between us put me in an awkward position where I can only do or act when I surmise what is happening from the action of the others. I spend a great deal of time in my head loving, singing songs and dancing.

The only humour I encounter are memories of the past. Still as melancholy as all this sounds, I'm still quite confident of being here until I complete my training. The pain I'm in will lessen as I lose more weight and become more flexible.

In my next letter I'll talk about the food here which is interesting if not tasty. At one time I was sure I was served tree bark seasoned with what looked like dirt.

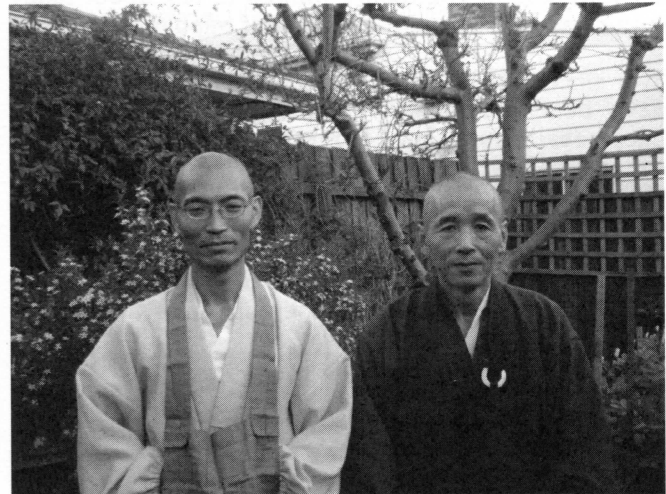
Until then, my unending love to you all.

Yours,

Haydn

## Zen in South America

[On the 19<sup>th</sup> of August Rev. Senpo Oshiro from Argentina came to Melbourne to join us on retreat and meet with our community. The following is an extract from the talk he gave at the Brunswick zendo on Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> of August]



There is a lot of interest in Zen in Argentina. Zen is a trend all over the world and everyone wants to do something like have a "Zen house", a "Zen garden", and even "Zen food". If people's initial expectations about "Zen" brings them to the practice, if it opens the door, then that is good. Zen is universal and open to everyone, no matter what their reason may be.

There are many different groups with different styles of practice in Argentina. Our group is a small one – smaller than Jikishoan. Our dojo started in 1997 but we're growing. That's one of the reasons why we got incorporated this year.

There is a large Japanese community in Brazil and there are a few Japanese Buddhist temples there, as well as Chinese, Taiwanese and Korean. A few of these temples follow the Soto Zen tradition, and they have ordained monks too.

This year they are building a bigger monastery in Sao Paulo called Bushinji. If you go to South America, try to go to another monastery called Zenkoji. It is very beautiful and it's in the Brazilian jungle, so it works as a natural reserve and many school children go there to visit. They have sesshins as well. There is one Soto Zen temple in Peru and none in Argentina yet. We're hoping to establish a temple in Argentina – that's our long-term plan.

The dharma is very rare. That is one of the reasons I have respect and admiration for Ekai Osho-san's work here in Australia, growing this sangha.

Going all the way from one end of the world to the other, from Japan to Argentina and having the opportunity to hear such teachings – what are the chances of that? But somehow it happens, and I am doing my best to assist that.

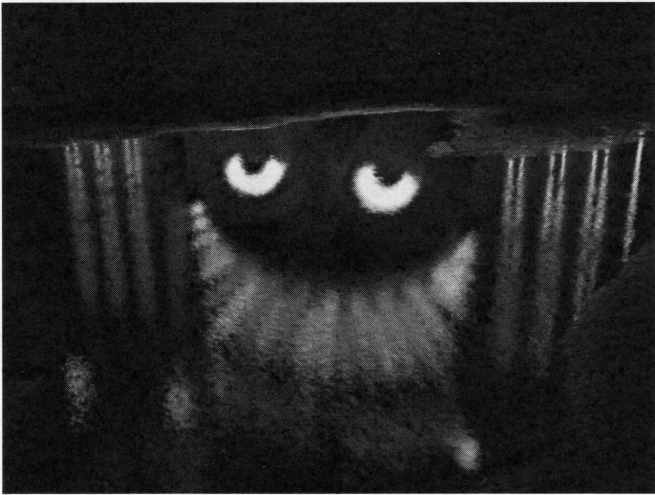
(Sangha News continues on Page 11)

# Zen and the Pursuit of Happiness

A dharma talk given by Geoff Dawson from the Ordinary Mind Zen School at Sunday Sanzenkai in Melbourne on 12<sup>th</sup> July 2009. Transcribed by Nicole Thomas, edited by Paul Harris.

Thank you for inviting me here to speak Ekai, and it's good to see so many people around the room that I've sat with before. The topic I wanted to talk about today is the way of Zen and the pursuit of happiness.

Ever since human beings have been able to think, they have been pursuing happiness. Originally the word happiness meant luck, so originally happiness was considered just something that happened by chance. Words such as happening, happen-stance or hapless come from the same root. In centuries gone by, the idea of whether you were happy was something determined by the Gods and they decided whether you had good fortune or bad fortune, just on a whim.



And then it was the Greek philosophers – Socrates, Plato, Aristotle for example – who started to reflect on what a human life was about and whether it was actually possible to work toward a state of happiness. However they didn't call it happiness, they called it a state of virtue, and they equated virtue with happiness. If I remember correctly, Aristotle said *that happiness is the state of a person practicing virtue*. In other words, practicing an ethical life and cultivating truth is happiness. But the issue in Greek philosophy, regarding this pursuit of happiness, was that they believed happiness was for an elite few, that it was not something that was open to everyone to accomplish.

When Rome became the centre of European culture, Christianity spread through that empire to various other countries, and with the rise of Christianity came the view that you could only really be happy when you went to heaven and you were united with your creator. However instead of it being limited to an elite few, everlasting bliss in heaven was open to anyone who had the faith. People in those days however didn't really think that you could ever be truly happy here on Earth. If you led a virtuous life then you would get your reward in heaven. Now that view became modified through the centuries, so that you could perhaps be reasonably happy on earth, then you went to heaven.

By the time of the Age of Enlightenment in Europe, which was around the time of the Eighteenth Century,

there was quite a dramatic change, with a lot of new ideas and fresh views. By this time Christian/European culture had started to overcome its guilt about experiencing pleasure.

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***They began to really embrace pleasure and equated happiness with the pursuit of pleasure and the maximisation of pleasure.***

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Philosophical thought at the time focused on the individual and the rights of the individual to experience happiness right here on earth. This time was also the beginning of Utopian Socialism – the idea that happiness could only really be found by creating the ideal social order, of harmony and equality. From one of these two philosophical strands, Utopian Socialism, Communism developed. And out of the other strand, focusing on the individual, came Capitalism and free enterprise.

In the meantime, the colonisation by Europeans of America and Australia and other newly discovered places in the world, began to take place, and particularly in the USA this idea of the individual being able to pursue happiness really started to take off. For the first time, the right to the pursuit of happiness was documented as a political statement. It's enshrined in the American constitution. Communist countries followed their own socialist paths, none of which seemed to be great experiments in human happiness.

The free enterprise, American individual work ethic didn't seem to be entirely successful either in creating happiness. The same is true here in Australia. From it came the idea that the individual had the right to work, to accumulate wealth and through that you would become happy. The problem is that we work so hard to create wealth, we've become addicted to it, and we've got to get more and more and more to keep up, until we don't have any time left to enjoy it. What happened is that people became so preoccupied with working to obtain material wealth, that their leisure time ended up becoming rather superficial or shallow, for want of a better word.

Leisure became based mainly on pursuing pleasure in tourist resorts and shopping malls, rather than leisure being used for reflection, or creativity, to just be, and to just appreciate life as it is.

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***We became a doing culture rather than a being culture. This led to a kind of cultural malaise, a kind of sense of emptiness – not emptiness in the Buddhist sense but emptiness in the sense of flatness or deadness of spirit – which we still experience to this day.***

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This is very well expressed in the literature of T.S Eliot in his poem "The Waste Land", and other poems of his, which captured that sense of the pointlessness of living in the Post-Industrial Age.



Out of this cultural malaise developed psychoanalysis and psychotherapy, and some people began to enter psychoanalysis as a way of pursuing happiness. People thought they could overcome their feelings of depression or anxiety or neurosis, and find some kind of fulfillment in *the talking therapy*. Those of us who were born last century grew up in a culture where psychotherapy and personal growth then became a widespread way to find some kind of happiness in life. Perhaps along the way we experimented with some chemical approaches to pursuing happiness as well. Not only was there alcohol, but a few other strange, exotic chemicals to sample. By the 1980's people also attempted to overcome their feelings of unhappiness through the chemical companions to psychotherapy – anti-depressants, Zoloft, Prozac, etcetera.

I work as a psychologist and a psychotherapist, as well as practicing Zen and for many years I've been interested in the differences and similarities between the two. There is an overlap to some degree between the two, but in many ways they are very different, and I want to emphasize some of those differences in this talk tonight.

Psychotherapy does work to a certain degree to assist people to overcome feelings of depression, anxiety, personality disorders, etcetera. It does work, otherwise we wouldn't do it, and I wouldn't do it. But it doesn't seem to me to work on as deep a level as Zen practice does.

---

***Zen practice is in my bones, it's a deeper kind of experience than what I've ever experienced in psychotherapy.***

---

In the past many schools of psychotherapy focused a lot on psychopathology – problems, what is wrong with us - it followed the medical model. Now there is a new form of psychology, which is called Positive Psychology, and it looks at enhancing happiness and cultivating optimism. Is this the same as Zen practice? I'm not sure. I don't think so. It may bear some similarities but I don't think it's the same.

Optimism is a certain preconceived view that we have about the future that it will turn out okay and pessimism is also a pre-conceived or fixed idea of how the future will be. But have optimism or pessimism got anything to do with the present moment? They are a projection from the past or the present onto how the future will be. But is it about just experiencing **this** moment as it is?

When we look at the pursuit of happiness and we look at the processes involved in it, it's interesting to go back and listen for example to one old Taoist philosopher, the Chinese Taoist philosopher Chuang-Tsu, who said that *happiness comes to those who do not pursue it*. A very interesting statement. The American writer and naturalist, Thoreau made a statement that is very interesting as well. He said that *pursuing happiness is like pursuing a butterfly, the more you pursue it, the further it gets away from you. But if you sit still, it will come and sit gently on your shoulder*. So there is something mistaken I believe, in the way we actually go about pursuing happiness in the first place.

And where the problem lies is that if we are coming from a position of being stuck in our own separate ego identity when we pursue happiness, we are grasping at something, trying to get something and hold it to ourselves. My understanding of Zen, and Buddhist practice generally, is that the grasping itself and the aversion itself is the cause of unhappiness. If we don't examine that, then I think that our sense of happiness is very superficial.

A few years ago I was invited to speak at a conference that is run annually in Sydney called "Happiness and It's Causes", which is sponsored and conducted by a Tibetan Buddhist group. They invited me to speak one year, and so I committed myself to going, and then I wondered "well what are the causes of happiness?", and I had to admit to myself that I didn't know. At that point I thought – well, I have committed myself but I actually don't know the answer. So I fell back on my Zen training and just surrendered to the fact that I didn't know, and when I did that I immediately felt happier! [laughter from audience] I'm quite willing to be corrected here because my academic understanding of Buddhism isn't fantastic, but I've never come across anything in Buddhism that states there is a cause of happiness.

If we go back to basic Buddhism and look at the Four Noble Truths – suffering, the cause of suffering, the end of suffering, and the path that leads to the end of suffering - We might see that the four noble truths are a medical metaphor. It's like we're sick, we're suffering from a psychological ill-at-ease-ness or disease and we've become inflamed with the causes of unhappiness or the causes of suffering, which are grasping, aversion, and ignorance - or greed, hatred and ignorance. Now my understanding of what the word nirvana means is the absence of those things. It's not the gaining of something; it's the absence of grasping, aversion and ignorance. Zen practice is one of the ways to dissolve that grasping and aversion, that ultimately unsatisfying relationship to life.



So when we look at it in that way, there are causes to unhappiness or causes to suffering but not causes of happiness. That is basic to a Buddhist understanding of life. I believe it is naive to think that there is some way you can manipulate yourself, through a therapeutic procedure or by thinking in a different way, or by developing a different attitude like being optimistic that will bring deep abiding joy.

I think that the Zen perspective on happiness or a fulfilling life is that it actually arises naturally. That is, you remove the causes of unhappiness and what is left is just something that is naturally there without effort. Which is being the moment as it is, where there is nothing missing, it's complete in itself.

One of the things that I think is important to emphasize in practice, is that Zen practice is not just about concentrating on the moment. If you concentrate on the moment, you are separate from it – it's about being the moment, being this very body, being this very circumstance. While we're concentrating on it, there's still a separation that occurs. Zazen is not a competition with yourself against the monkey mind that wants to wander off. That's dividing yourself. What is at the essence of Zen practice is surrendering into the moment, accepting into the moment, releasing into the moment. Something is let go of. The grasping and aversion is released. This surrendering process is at the core of it, and it's really at the core of all genuine religious practice, whether it's Buddhist, Christian or whatever. You see it in all religious literature, the importance of surrender, of humility. That's at the core of it, that's at the core of practice. In the Ordinary Mind Zen School we recite our practice principles, which are -

*Caught in the self-centred dream. Only suffering.  
Holding to self-centered thoughts. Exactly the dream.  
Each moment. Life as it is. The only teacher.  
Being just this moment. Compassion's way.*

Those are the principles that guide us through practice. One of my teacher's, (Joko Beck's), favorite sayings, which I think was the subtitle of one of her books, is an old Zen phrase.

***On a withered tree, a flower blooms.  
When the old ego, with it's grasping and  
aversion dies, when it is completely dead, then  
the blossoms of compassion burst forth - The  
flowers of joy, the flowers of warmth and  
friendship, and the flowers of equanimity.***

So that's the end of my talk. But I really welcome questions or anything you may wish to discuss.

*[Audience participant]: When did you start your Zen practice and how old are Robert Aitken and Joko Beck now?*

Joko is about 96 and I know Robert Aitken is a year younger. So they are getting on, and in November I'm going to see Joko but I'll stop in Hawaii to see Robert Aitken as well. In terms of my own Zen practice, I started in Japan in 1976 with Kobori Roshi who was a Rinzai Zen teacher in Daitokuji, Kyoto. After that I wanted to be part of a Zen community and practicing more in a western context, and he recommended Robert Aitken to me. Robert Aitken tried on the one hand to stay very true to the Zen tradition as he had inherited it through Japanese culture, and adapt it to this culture in some way. It's the same dilemma I struggle to deal with as well. We want to maintain the rigor and true roots of Zen practice, and yet make it applicable and relevant to our everyday lives right here and now. Robert Aitken brought humility, great

compassion and a great generosity. He also brought a very clear understanding of koan work, and is a very widely read man with a refined appreciation of literature. He introduced us all to a lot of western literature and made a lot of the links between Zen practice and aspects of our own culture that we can connect with. One of his other contributions was through Engaged Buddhism – actually bringing the dharma into the world, through a peaceful, political activism, embracing the Buddhist view, the Zen view, that we are all inter-connected. That is the greatest delusion, to think we're separate little creatures, when in fact we're all inter-connected, right from the very beginning. I think Robert Aitken taught us how to act on that.

*[Audience participant]: I gather from your talk that you think the cause of a lot of unhappiness in our culture is this desire for more and more, whereas in the Zen tradition we're actually subtracting things. Is that correct?*

Yes I think so. Let me just relate to you something else too which is very inspiring and moving to me as an example of Dharma practice. In my work as a psychologist, there's a woman who I've been working with for many years in long-term therapy and she's also a Buddhist practitioner. She's one of these people who for one reason or another, through genetics, bad childhood upbringing, whatever, suffered from very deep depression nearly all of her life. She had, what we call in our profession, *treatment resistant depression*. It didn't matter what she tried, what therapy she went to, what medication she was put on, her condition just didn't seem to get better. But in the last two or three years, she's made a remarkable turn about and you wouldn't believe it's the same person you saw four years ago. Her life is going pretty well now, and I saw her a few weeks ago and I asked her, if she were to give some advice to someone else who was experiencing deep depression, what would you advise them, what worked for her? She said there were two things – the first thing was that she stopped asking herself why she was depressed. Instead of asking "why, why, why?", she just started managing it. In other words practicing with it. What comes with giving up the "why?" question is surrender, acceptance. Because what is embedded in the "why?", is "if I can just understand what the causes are I can just get rid of it, control it". But the "why?" just leads to more and more thinking, thinking about thinking, endlessly. We are addicted to explanations.

And the second thing she said that really made a difference was that she gave up the expectation of getting better. No attachment to outcome. Does that ring a bell? Now that didn't mean she stopped practicing or coming along to therapy. But its taking one moment at a time, taking one day at a time, and dropping the attitude that - *because I'm putting all this work in I must get better*. So she abandoned the "why?", dropped the expectations and very gradually, very slowly, you could see her life turning around. They're the words of someone who was deeply depressed, you know, seriously depressed for years and years. Those words from a person like that who suffered so deeply resonate with all of us. It's a teaching for all of us.



**Membership**

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

Renata Salajic, Niall McShane, Denys Vale, Paul Vale, Ruth Brunt, Sally Richmond and Patrick McCabe

*Ekai Korematsu Osho and the Jikishoan Committee*

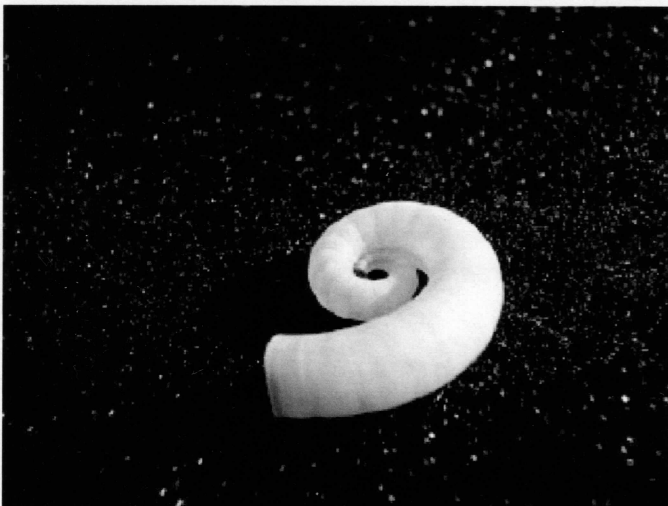
Three bows  
And a new name  
The beginner begins  
The hall's door is open  
A bird's throat fills it.

Three bows  
And a new name  
The beginner begins  
The hall's door is open  
Each bird alighting shakes the wet branch.

Three bows  
And a new name  
The beginner begins  
The hall's door is open  
Two rows of still black birds.

*Martha Sear*

*[This poem was written to honour Vaughan's ordination, during the part of Vaughan's ordination ceremony where he avowed his negative karma, the birds outside Corroboree Hall began to sing - loudly and joyfully. Their delight in that moment was truly wonderful. ]*



**Part i**

listening closely to the  
new adventures in high fidelity  
there is no separation

**Part ii**

sitting under stars  
within the full moon  
the rapid eye movement is still

*Renata Salajic*



I rose to the surface  
to see a new land.  
Reached to the boatman  
and took his hand  
I'd fallen in the river  
and come to the other side.  
Now in this land of hope  
you know what I spied?  
A thousand million mozzies  
in every place and part.  
Here is the gateway ~  
the key: a kind heart.

Gassho Senpo Sensei

*Andrew Holborn 5/9/09*

**Winter Retreat**

Settle into "no thinking"  
Let go of the need to define every experience  
Let go of the need to control  
Trust being in the hands of others  
Let your mind alone  
Don't interfere  
Just Breathe

*Cherry Tennant ©  
Adekate, August 2009*

**Haiku**

Oh so tough  
What am "I" doing?  
Much laughter

*Cherry Tennant ©  
Adekate, August 2009*

# Soto Kitchen

Here are two more delicious recipes from the Tenzo Ryo selected for Kiyoko Taylor by Michael Ewing and Michael Lever. We hope that you enjoy them!

## Red Kidney Beans and Capsicum Hot Pot

Ingredients (serves 4)

Red Capsicums	2
Red Chillies	2
Brown Onions, finely diced	2
Carrot, sliced	1
Celery, sliced	3 sticks
Leeks, sliced	2
Garlic, sliced	1-4 cloves
Red Kidney Beans, drained and rinsed	2 x 400g cans
Fava or other white beans, drained and rinsed	1 x 400g can
Crushed Tomatoes	1 x 400g can
Tomato paste	2 tbsp
Extra Virgin Olive Oil	100ml
Sweet Smoked Paprika	1 tsp
Fenugreek (optional)	1 tbsp
Fennel Seeds	1 tbsp
Thyme	5 sprigs
Bay Leaf	1
Sea Salt and Cracked Black Pepper	

### Method:

1. Remove seeds from capsicums and cut into small pieces or slices.
2. Keep or remove seeds of red chillies (depending on how spicy you want) and slice diagonally.
3. Sauté capsicum and chilli in olive oil over medium heat for 6 minutes.
4. Add carrot, celery, leeks, garlic, onions, spices and herbs and cook for about 15 minutes until the mixture is caramelised.
5. Add kidney and fava beans and season with salt and pepper, add crushed tomatoes and tomato paste and stir through.
6. Add enough water to just cover and simmer 30 minutes.
7. Serve with plain yoghurt. Diced avocado and chopped corianders are also nice to go with.

It is good with bread, brown rice, or couscous, and a simple salad.

[ this was adapted by Michael Ewing from a recipe in the Age Sunday Life 3-5-2009 ]



## Bean Salad

Ingredients (serves 4)

Chickpeas, rinsed and drained	1 can (400g)
Red Kidney Beans, rinsed and drained	1 can (400g)
Chopped Red Onion	2/3 cup
Fresh Flat Leaf Parsley	1/4 cup
Extra Virgin Olive Oil	3 tbsp
Balsamic Vinegar	2 tbsp
Sugar	1 tsp
Salt and Freshly Ground Black Pepper	To taste

### Method:

1. Place all ingredients in a bowl and toss well.







# Calendar of Events, October to December, 2009

## Weekly Activities

Day	Date	Time	Activity	Location	Contact
Sundays	Weekly	5.30-7.30pm	Sanzenkai (Except 22 <sup>nd</sup> November and 27 <sup>th</sup> December) – Zazen and kinhin meditation, tea ceremony, chanting service and Dharma talk. For beginners, members and friends.	103 Evans St, Brunswick	Jinesh/Martin
Sundays	Weekly	5.30-7.30pm	Sanzenkai – Ekai Osho present 13 <sup>th</sup> December	Ballarat	Lorraine
Thursdays	Weekly	7:00-9:00pm	Sanzenkai	Footscray	Mark
<b>October</b>					
Tuesday	13 <sup>th</sup>	7:00-9.30pm	Committee Meeting	Footscray	Mark
<b>November</b>					
Saturday-Sunday	7 <sup>th</sup> & 8 <sup>th</sup>	9:00am – 5:00pm	Tibetan Spring Festival	Yuroke	Luke
Tuesday	17 <sup>th</sup>	7:00-9:30pm	Committee Meeting	Footscray	Mark
Thursday to Thursday	20 <sup>th</sup> – 27 <sup>th</sup>	6:00pm	7 Day Bendoho Retreat	Dean	Brian
<b>December</b>					
Tuesday	15 <sup>th</sup>	7:00-9:30pm	Committee Meeting	Brunswick	Mark
Sunday	20 <sup>th</sup>	5:30–7:30pm	Members Day	Brunswick	Jinesh/Naomi
Thursday	31 <sup>st</sup>	8:00pm - Midnight	New Years Eve Zazen	Footscray	Jinesh/Hannah/Shundo

## Addresses

### Ballarat

St Cuthbert's Hall, Ballarat  
West Uniting Church,  
Cnr Sturt Street and Elliott  
Street... Enter via Elliott St

### Brunswick

Australian Shiatsu College,  
103 Evans Street, Brunswick

### Footscray /Jikishoan Zendo

Address available upon  
application for a course or  
program.

### Dean

Adekate Fellowship Centre,  
Dean-Creswick Road, Dean.  
Near Ballarat 130 km West of  
Melbourne.

## Contact Information

### Teacher & General Enquiries

Ekai Korematsu Osho  
via Hannah Forsyth (*Jisha*)  
(03) 96876981

### President (*Tsusu*) & Canberra Secretary (*Kanji*)

Vaughan Behncke  
0427-319378

### Vice-President (*Kannin*) Membership (*Rokuji*)

Naomi Richards  
(03) 9380 4774

### Finance (*Fusu*)

Julie Martindale  
(03) 9499 2141

### Secretary (*Shoji*) & Annual Picnic

Mark Summers  
(03) 5428 4859

### Personnel Affairs (*Ninji*), & Jikishoan Zendo

Hannah Forsyth  
(03) 96876981

### Welfare (*Fukushi*)

Kiyoko Taylor  
(03) 95008544

### Education (*Kyoka*)

Jinesh Wilmot  
(03) 94804849

### Publications (*Shuppan*)

Paul Harris  
(03) 94192203  
publications@jikishoan.org.au

### Zendo Activities (*Ino*)

Martin Landolt  
0407-227997

### Retreats

Brian Osborne (*Ino Ryo*)  
(03) 9853 2686

### Library & Archive

Andrew Holborn  
0432-904066

### Merchandise

Luke Menzel (*Chiko Ryo*)  
0433-237293

### Ballarat

Director (*Kansu*)  
Gareth Jones  
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### Teacher's Assistant (*Jisha*)

Lorraine Collishaw  
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## Canberra Activities and Contact Information

Day	Date	Time	Activity	Location	Contact
Sundays	Weekly	5.30-7.30pm	Sanzenkai	Canberra	Vaughan

### Teaching Schedule

Teachings are given personally by Ekai Korematsu-Osho. Brochures providing more information are available. For addresses and contact information, please see overleaf.

### Orientation Courses

For beginners and those with some experience. Five sessions. 9-11am Saturdays

- Nov. 7, 14, 28, Dec. 5, 12

Venue: Footscray Zendo

Non-members \$80. Members by donation

### Deepening Practice Course

An extension of the orientation course. Courses A & B Five classes each.

Saturdays 5 - 7pm

Course B: Nov. 7, 14, 28, Dec. 5, 12.

Wednesdays 7 - 9pm

Course A: Nov. 11, 18, Dec. 2, 9, 16.

Venue: Footscray Zendo

Non-members \$80 for five sessions.

Members by donation

### One-Day Workshop

An intensive orientation workshop for beginners and those with some experience. Cost includes lunch and morning and afternoon tea.

Sunday November 8<sup>th</sup>, 9am-5pm.

Venue: Footscray Zendo.

Non-members \$80. Members by donation.

### Spring Teaching Program

#### Orientation Course

(with Jinesh Wilmot, Julie Martindale and Shona Innes)

Saturdays 9-11am

- September 12, 19, 26, October 3 and 10

#### Deepening Course

(with Hannah Forsyth and Jinesh Wilmot)

Saturdays 5-7pm

- September 12, 19, 26, October 3 and 10

#### One Day Workshop

(with Julie Martindale and Hannah Forsyth)

- October 12

Footscray Zendo

Cost for all Spring Program activities \$70 Non-members, Members by donation.

### Bendoho Retreat

A seven-day intensive residential Zen experience, including daily Chosan (morning tea), Teaching and Teisho (afternoon Dharma talk). Cost depends on the number of days attended and includes meals and accommodation. Maximum places: 40. Priority given to people staying 7 days and registering before the application closing date of Sunday 1st November 2009. 6pm Friday 20 November to 2pm Friday 27 November.

Venue: Adekate Fellowship Centre.

Cost: Depends on number of days attended and includes meals and accommodation.

### Sanzenkai Melbourne

Zazen and kinhin meditations, Tea ceremony, chanting service and Dharma talk. For beginners, members and friends. 5.30-7.30pm Sundays (Except Nov 23). Newcomers: please arrive by 5.15pm. By Donation. Participants are welcome to stay for an informal supper \$5

Venue : 103 Evans St. Brunswick.

### Sanzenkai Footscray Zendo

Zazen and kinhin meditation, Tea ceremony, chanting service and reading. Thursday evenings. 7:00-9:00pm. Phone Mark Summers 0411-552072 or Jinesh Wilmot 0411-289679.

### Sanzenkai Ballarat

Zazen and kinhin meditation, Tea ceremony, chanting service and reading. For beginners, members and friends. 5.30-7.30pm Sundays. Suggested donation \$7.

Venue : St Cuthbert's Hall. Ballarat West Uniting Church. Cnr Sturt St and Elliot St. Please enter by side door.

### Sanzenkai Canberra

Zazen and kinhin meditation, tea ceremony, chanting service and reading. 5:30-7:30pm Sundays

Newcomers please arrive by 5:15pm

Suggested donation of \$8 and \$4 concession

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### New Years Eve Zazen

8:00pm - Midnight

Footscray Zendo

***What you gain in one way you lose in another. Therefore, do not try for specific results.***

F.M.Alexander

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The pink paper of this calendar represents the colour of the flowers in spring.

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