

# Buddhist Studies at Santa Cruz Zen Center

From the beginning, the Zen tradition has been known as a “separate transmission outside the scriptures, pointing directly to the human mind.” However, the Zen ancestors were thoroughly steeped in the traditional teachings that guide people to awakening from entrapment in false beliefs about themselves and the world, and the suffering that comes from such limitation. Especially in this modern age, when Buddha-Dharma is still just beginning to take root in American soil, it is essential for all practitioners to understand the basic principles of practice that have been passed down for centuries. For those vowing to enter and study all Dharma gates for the complete liberation of all living beings, it is also necessary to deeply understand the profound and subtle teachings of the Mahayana, the Great Vehicle of Bodhisattvas, including the views of Mind-Only and the Middle Way of emptiness, which form the basis for the Zen tradition. Though intellectual study of the words of the ancient realized ones is certainly not the same as their realization, some would say that it is virtually impossible to realize what they did without such thorough and far-reaching study. We are extremely fortunate to live in a time when these precious teachings are available to us in our own language, in translations and commentaries from teachers who have spent their lives making the effort to bring them to us as clearly and authentically as possible. Dogen Zenji says in *Shobogenzo Bukkyo* (Reading Sutras): “The practice and realization of unsurpassable, complete enlightenment is brought forth sometimes by a teacher and sometimes by a sutra.”

Santa Cruz Zen Center offers an ongoing cycle of class series, study retreats, and Dharma talks, which give a comprehensive overview of the vast array of Buddha-Dharma, with an emphasis on Mahayana and Zen teachings, and their practical application in meditation and in daily life. The teachings are presented in six general categories, which are listed below along with suggested reading and dates of Dharma talks on each subject given at Zen Center (2009-2011), which can be downloaded or listened to at [sczc.org](http://sczc.org).

## 1. Foundations of Buddha-Dharma: Discontent and the End of Discontent

Four noble truths and eightfold path: setting in motion the wheel of Dharma	<i>Jan 31, June 9, 2010</i>
Four contemplations: rarity of human life, impermanence, causality, suffering	<i>Sep 19, 2007, Jun 30, 2010</i>
Three refuges: Buddha, Dharma, Sangha	<i>Jul 3, 1979, May 12, Jun 15, Aug 31, 2011</i>
Karma and rebirth: intention creates the world	<i>Oct 28, 2009, Nov 21, 2010</i>
How the mind works: five aggregates, twelve links of dependent arising	<i>May 26, 2010, Jun 12, 2011</i>
Four foundations of mindfulness and mindfulness of breathing	<i>Dec 2-3, 2010</i>

*Recommended reading (● = classical root texts):*

- The Life of the Buddha, According to the Pali Canon – Bhikkhu Nanamoli
- In the Buddha’s Words: An Anthology of Discourses from the Pali Canon – Bhikkhu Bodhi
- The Wings to Awakening: An Anthology from the Pali Canon – Thanissaro Bhikkhu
- Abhidharmakosabhasyam of Vasubandhu (extensive overview of Buddha-Dharma) – Leo Pruden
- Who Is My Self: A Guide to Buddhist Meditation (on meditative absorptions and the path) – Ayya Khema
- What the Buddha Taught (on four noble truths, eightfold path, etc.) – Walpola Rahula
- The Heart of the Buddha’s Teaching (on four noble truths, eightfold path, etc.) – Thich Nhat Hanh
- Old Path, White Clouds: Walking in the Footsteps of the Buddha (Life of Buddha) – Thich Nhat Hanh

## 2. The Bodhisattva Path: Limitless Compassion

Bodhisattva Precepts: living compassionately in the world	<i>Jan 13-May 12, 2010, Mar 30, Jun 8, 15, 2011</i>
Altruistic aspiration for awakening: bodhichitta and the four universal vows	<i>Nov 18, 2009, Jun 16, 23, Jul 7, 2010, May 25, Jun 29, Oct 12, 2011</i>
Six perfections: giving, virtue, patience, enthusiasm, concentration, wisdom	<i>Dec 23, 2009, Feb 3, 2010</i>
Ten vows of Samantabhadra Bodhisattva: endless commitment to benefiting beings	<i>Nov 25, 2009</i>
Calm abiding and special insight: shamatha and vipashyana	<i>Feb 20, 2008, Dec 2-8, 2010, Dec 1-7, 2011</i>
One vehicle: the Lotus Sutra and all paths as one bodhisattva path	<i>Sep 15, 2010, Oct 19, 2011</i>

*Recommended reading* (● = classical root texts):

- The Buddha Speaks the Brahma Net Sutra (on bodhisattva precepts) – Buddhist Text Translat. Society
- The Flower Ornament Scripture: A Translation of the Avatamsaka Sutra – Thomas Cleary
- The Lotus Sutra – Gene Reeves, Burton Watson, or Bunno Kato, etc.
- The Vimalakirti Sutra – Burton Watson, John McRae, or Robert Thurman
- Nagarjuna on the Six Perfections (Great Perfection of Wisdom Treatise) – Bhikshu Dharmamitra
- The Way of the Bodhisattva by Shantideva (classic verses on six perfections) – Padmakara or Batchelor
- The Essentials of Buddhist Meditation by Zhiyi (on shamatha and vipashyana) – Bhikshu Dharmamitra
- Being Upright: Zen Meditation and the Bodhisattva Precepts – Reb Anderson
- The Mind of Clover: Essays in Zen Buddhist Ethics (on bodhisattva precepts) – Robert Aitken
- The Practice of Perfection: The Paramitas from a Zen Buddhist Perspective – Robert Aitken
- The Words of My Perfect Teacher (on four contemplations, three refuges, bodhichitta) – Patrul Rinpoche
- Fearless Simplicity: The Dzogchen Way of Living Freely in a Complex World (on shamatha, with and without an object, and nondual vipashyana) – Tsoknyi Rinpoche

### **3. Mind-Only: Mere Manifestations of Mind**

Storehouse consciousness and the eight consciousnesses: alaya-vijnana	<i>Feb 20 - Mar 6, 2011</i>
Three natures of all things: other-dependent, imaginary, perfect	<i>Mar 13 - Apr 10, 2011</i>
Mind-only and mere-concept: chittamatra and vijnaptimatra	<i>Feb 9-13, 20, Mar 16, Apr 10, 27, 2011</i>
Buddha nature and tathagatagarbha: empty clear awareness	<i>Aug 4, 10 2011</i>

*Recommended reading* (● = classical root texts):

- Wisdom of Buddha: Samdhinirmocana Mahayana Sutra – John Powers, Thomas Cleary, or John Keenan
- The Lankavatara Sutra – Red Pine or D.T. Suzuki
- The Awakening of Faith in the Mahayana, attributed to Asvaghosha – Yoshida Hakeda or D.T. Suzuki
- The Summary of the Great Vehicle by Asanga – John Keenan
- A Buddhist Doctrine of Experience: A New Translation and Interpretation of the Works of Vasubandhu the Yogacarín – Thomas Kochumuttom
- Three Texts on Consciousness Only by Vasubandhu and Hsuan-tsang – Francis Cook
- Luminous Heart: Third Karmapa on Consciousness, Wisdom, and Buddha Nature – Karl Brunnholz
- Reflections on Reality: The Three Natures and Non-Natures in the Mind-Only School – Jeffrey Hopkins
- Understanding Our Mind (formerly called Transformation at the Base), plus "sequel": Buddha Mind, Buddha Body – Thich Nhat Hanh

### **4. The Middle Way: Dependently Arising Appearances and Emptiness**

Personal identitylessness: no independent self (Nagarjuna, chapter 18)	<i>June 12-July 17, 2011</i>
Emptiness of all: nothing whatsoever inherently exists (Nagarjuna, chapter 1)	<i>May 19-June 27, 2010</i>
Two truths: conventional and ultimate (Nagarjuna, chapter 24)	<i>May 19-June 27, 2010</i>
Suffering and freedom are not separate (Nagarjuna, chapter 25)	<i>May 18, 2011</i>

*Recommended reading* (● = classical root texts):

- The Heart Sutra – Red Pine, Mu Soeng, or Edward Conze, etc.
- The Diamond Sutra – Red Pine, Mu Soeng, or Edward Conze, etc.
- The Fundamental Wisdom of the Middle Way: Nagarjuna's Mulamadhyamakakarika – Jay Garfield
- Introduction to the Middle Way: Chandrakirti's Madhyamakavatara with Commentary by Jamgon Mipham – Padmakara, Tyler Dewar, or C.W. Huntington
- The Sun of Wisdom: Teachings on the Noble Nagarjuna's Fundamental Wisdom of the Middle Way – Khenpo Tsultrim Gyamtso
- Progressive Stages of Meditation on Emptiness – Khenpo Tsultrim Gyamtso
- Center of the Sunlit Sky: Madhyamaka in the Kagyu Tradition – Karl Brunnholz
- Meditation on Emptiness – Jeffrey Hopkins

Emptiness Yoga: The Tibetan Middle Way – Jeffrey Hopkins

Introduction to Emptiness – Guy Newland

Appearance and Reality: The Two Truths in the Four Buddhist Tenet Systems – Guy Newland

How to See Yourself as You Really Are – His Holiness the Dalai Lama and Jeffrey Hopkins

### **5. Zen: Pointing Directly to Mind, Manifesting True Nature**

Just sitting: shikantaza      *Dec 19, 1978, Jul 29, 2009, Apr 4, 2010, Feb 16, Jul 7, May 4, Sep 28, 2011*

Awakening through words: koans      *Jul 1, 2009, Feb 24, Mar 19-22, Jul 28, Aug 18, Oct 13, 27, 2010, Jan 27, Apr 20, Jun 1, Nov 16, 23, 30, 2011*

The teacher-student relationship: face to face meeting      *Jul 14, Aug 4, 11, 2010, Jan 12, 19, Mar 20, 2011*

Ceremonies and ritual: expressing devotion      *Oct 18, 2009, May 12, Oct 13, 2010, May 12, Jun 1, 2011*

Early Chinese Zen: Bodhidharma, Sengcan, and Huineng      *Aug 11, Oct 20, 2010-Jan 5, 2011, Nov 30*

Transmission of Light: the lineage of Zen ancestors      *Jul 27, Aug 17, Sep 28-Oct 2, 2011*

Merging of Difference and Unity: Shitou's Sandokai      *jikoji-talks.proper.com/index.html Jun 1-5, 2011*

Jewel Mirror Awareness: Dongshan and open receptivity of mind      *Mar 19-20, Nov 10, 2010, Oct 26, 2011*

Dogen's informal talks on the spirit of practice (Shobogenzo Zuimonki)      *Jun 2, 16, 2010, Sep 14, 2011*

Treasury of the True Dharma Eye (Dogen Zenji's Shobogenzo) in 95 chapters (plus Fukanzazengi):

    Wholehearted Practice of the Way (Bendowa)      *Nov 22, 2009 (rest of class not recorded)*

    Actualizing the Fundamental Point (Genjo koan)      *Oct 17-Nov 21, 2010*

    One Bright Pearl (Ikka Myoju)      *Apr 5-9, 2011*

    Mind Itself is Buddha (Sokushin zebutsu)      *Jul 8-11, 2010*

    Valley Streams, Mountain Colors (Keisei sanshoku)      *(Feb 9-13, 2012)*

    Being Time (Uji)      *Oct 9-Nov 27, 2011*

    Mountains and Waters Sutra (Sansuikyo)      *(Sep 2-7, 2012)*

    Buddha Nature (Bussho)      *(Oct 21-Dec 7, 2012)*

    Great Enlightenment (Daigo), Lancet for Zazen (Zazenshin), Undivided Activity (Zenki), etc.

*Recommended reading (● = classical root texts):*

- Trust in Mind: The Rebellion of Chinese Zen (Sengcan's Song of the Trusting Mind) – Mu Soeng
- The Platform Sutra: The Zen Teaching of Hui-neng – Red Pine, Thomas Cleary, or Philip Yampolsky
- Zen's Chinese Heritage: The Masters and Their Teachings – Andy Ferguson
- The Roaring Stream: A New Zen Reader – Nelson Foster and Jack Shoemaker
- Cultivating the Empty Field: The Silent Illumination of Zen Master Hongzhi – Taigen Daniel Leighton
- The Blue Cliff Record (100 Zen Koans) – Thomas Cleary and J.C. Cleary
- The Book of Serenity: One Hundred Zen Dialogues – Thomas Cleary
- The Gateless Barrier: Wu-men Kuan (48 Zen Koans) – Robert Aitken, Thomas Cleary, or Shibayama
- Treasury of the True Dharma Eye: Zen Master Dogen's Shobogenzo (all 95 chapters) – Tanahashi, etc.
- Moon in a Dewdrop: Writings of Zen Master Dogen – Kazuaki Tanahashi, etc.
- Enlightenment Unfolds: The Essential Teachings of Zen Master Dogen – Kazuaki Tanahashi, etc.
- Beyond Thinking: A Guide to Zen Meditation (teachings of Dogen) – Kazuaki Tanahashi, etc.
- The Heart of Dogen's Shobogenzo – Norman Waddell and Masao Abe
- Shobogenzo Zuimonki: Sayings of Eihei Dogen Zenji – Shohaku Okumura
- Record of Transmitting the Light: Zen Master Keizan's Denkoroku – Francis Cook or Thomas Cleary
- Women of the Way: Discovering 2,500 Years of Buddhist Wisdom – Sallie Tisdale
- The Art of Just Sitting: Essential Writings on the Zen Practice of Shikantaza – John Daido Looi
- Zen Mind, Beginner's Mind: Informal Talks on Zen Meditation and Practice – Shunryu Suzuki
- Not Always So: Practicing the True Spirit of Zen – Shunryu Suzuki
- Branching Streams Flow in the Darkness: Zen Talks on the Sandokai – Shunryu Suzuki
- Opening the Hand of Thought: Foundations of Zen Buddhist Practice – Kosho Uchiyama
- The Wholehearted Way: Eihei Dogen's Bendowa w/Commentary by Kosho Uchiyama Roshi – Okumura
- Dogen's Genjo Koan: Three Commentaries – Bokusan Nishiari, Shunryu Suzuki, Kosho Uchiyama

## **6. Buddha-Dharma in America: Creative Adaptations**

Buddhism, psychology, and psychotherapy: difference and unity	<i>Aug 27, 2011</i>
Buddhist women's practice: new forms of expression	<i>Mar 10, 2010, Mar 9, 2011</i>
Buddhism and social activism: compassionate engagement in society	<i>Dec 16, 2009, Nov 9, Dec 14, 2011</i>
Buddhism and environmental action: caring for the great earth and all living beings	<i>Jun 29, 2011</i>
Taking "Buddha-Dharma" out of Buddha-Dharma: awakening outside of religious forms	<i>Mar 3, 2010</i>

### *Recommended reading:*

Thoughts Without a Thinker: Psychotherapy from a Buddhist Perspective – Mark Epstein  
Zen and Psychotherapy: Partners in Liberation – Joseph Bobrow  
Wisdom of Imperfection: The Challenge of Individuation in Buddhist Life – Rob Preece  
Zen Women: Beyond Tea Ladies, Iron Maidens, and Macho Masters – Grace Schireson  
Everyday Zen: Love and Work – Charlotte Joko Beck  
The Wisdom of No Escape, and the Path of Loving-Kindness – Pema Chodron  
Bodhisattva Archetypes: Classic Buddhist Guides to Awakening & Their Modern Expression – Leighton  
Not Turning Away: The Practice of Engaged Buddhism – Susan Moon  
Bearing Witness: A Zen Master's Lessons in Making Peace – Bernie Glassman  
Dharma Rain: Sources of Buddhist Environmentalism – Stephanie Kaza and Kenneth Kraft  
Dharma Gaia: A Harvest of Essays in Buddhism and Ecology – Allan Hunt Badiner  
World as Lover, World as Self – Joanna Macy  
Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism – Chogyam Trungpa  
The Work of This Moment – Toni Packer  
The End of Your World: Uncensored Straight Talk on the Nature of Enlightenment – Adyashanti  
Buddhism Without Beliefs: A Contemporary Guide to Awakening – Stephen Batchelor

Note: see <http://www.fodian.net/world/> and <http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/index.html> for free downloads of most classical root texts above, plus Santa Cruz Zen Center library for many texts above.