

# sangha

## Newsletter of Santa Cruz Zen Center ❖ Warm Jewel Temple - January 2016

### WHICH MOON IS THIS?

Concern about self-esteem and self-confidence is a really big issue for people, in our culture and in the world in general. We have a tendency to alternate between low self-esteem, even self-loathing, and overly inflated self-esteem or arrogance. It can be challenging to find the middle way where we don't fall into either of these extremes: aversion to our experience of the self or attachment to it. The middle is where we are not overly involved in the illusion of a separate independent self, a self which usually seems to be either not good enough or better than everyone else. Developing strong confidence in Dharma and in the practice is important, but this is not the same as confidence in the self.

We often try to build up a sense of self-esteem and self-confidence by engaging in various kinds of self-improvement projects, in order to temporarily relieve self-doubt. We may feel unsure what we're doing in this life, or if what we're doing is right; we may have doubt about how we're practicing or how we're living or if we're doing enough. It is disconcerting to feel this underlying nagging doubt, even if it's not a big one. So we try to prop up some version of our self that looks good or feels good, and we may try to fake it a little, contriving a better self, not being authentically who we really are, which we can't actually get a hold of.

Since our modern culture places a high value on productivity and keeping busy, we sometimes immerse ourselves in busyness to build self-confidence and relieve self-doubt. We often get approval from others if we look busy. These tendencies which may be common in the business world also tend to creep into the world of spiritual practice. Are we practicing to accomplish something in order to feel better about ourselves and be approved by others, or are we practicing to drop away all the views about ourselves completely? This a good question for practitioners to ask, again and again.

We can consciously or unconsciously set up some kind of practice goal and then feel better about ourselves if we reach it, and feel bad if we don't reach it. The self can concoct some elaborate set-ups, contrived to build up a sense of self-esteem. Spiritual institutions like Zen Centers often operate around these unconscious motivations. As soon as a practice place is set up, all these issues are immediately there. As an old Zen saying goes, "if you set up a single speck of dust, the nation flourishes but the old peasants frown." The old peasants, ordinary people, are happy living a free, natural, uncontrived life. But set up a Zen Center and soon there are defined roles, power and authority, hierarchy, doing the practice right and not doing the practice right, fulfilling requirements and commitments, wondering if we need to be ordained, if we

need Dharma transmission, if we need some important role in order to be practicing well. All these forms are just made-up human constructs; they serve a function that can be beneficial if taken up or received selflessly, but they can also simply make us feel like we're doing something important, which will raise our self-esteem and self-confidence, or make us feel worthless if we fail.

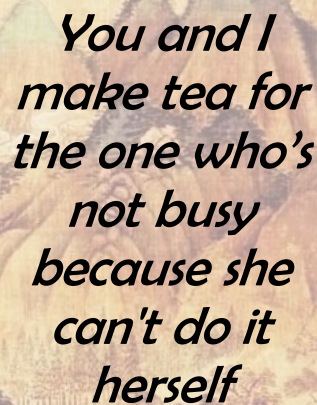
This kind of tendency seems to be built into every institution.

There's nothing really wrong with trying to build up self-esteem. From a conventional or therapeutic view, it may even be quite important. Since it's almost inevitable we don't have to eliminate it, but if we're not aware of it, it can distract from and undermine the essential practice of non-busyness, freedom from self-concern. We can start to think that Zen practice is all about which roles we have, or how much we're accomplishing, instead of just fully appreciating whatever appears to arise and the boundless space of awareness in which it's all happening. Doing things to benefit others is important in the conventional world, but if we forget the empty ground of suchness, it's easy for a spiritual community to become another worldly business.

I was recently at a retreat with one of my Tibetan teachers who admonished his students: "People have no time to study and clarify the practice but they want to meditate. People have no time to meditate but they want realization. People have no time for realization but they want to be a teacher." It's only natural that this is the way it goes, especially in a fast-paced busy culture like ours, where many people are trying to boost self-esteem in as easy a way as possible.

Case 21 in the Book of Serenity is called "Yunyan Sweeps the Ground." It's about two Zen practitioners in ancient China exploring the issue of busyness: As Yunyan was sweeping the ground, Daowu said, "Too busy." Yunyan said, "You should know there's one who isn't busy." Daowu said, "If so, then there's a second moon." Yunyan held up the broom and said, "Which moon is this?"

Yunyan was sweeping the ground, which means any kind of busyness: being caught up in overwork, obsessed with lots of things to do, trying to raise self-esteem, and even doing various kinds of meditation practices. Meditation is sometimes spoken of as sweeping the ground of mind, such as using the breath to sweep thoughts away, in order to achieve a more peaceful state. Even this kind of effortful practice could be seen as just a little bit "busy." Any kind of self-improvement project could be considered busy. The beauty of just being aware of being aware is that it



*You and I  
make tea for  
the one who's  
not busy  
because she  
can't do it  
herself*

doesn't involve any doing whatsoever. The point is simply recognizing that awareness is already and always aware of itself, and there is nothing outside of this all-inclusive awareness. This is actually the only way of being that is completely and utterly effortless, truly not busy. Recognizing our original face is not seeing some thing. It's empty of anything other than itself, totally ungraspable, and yet embraces the appearances of every single experience. Thus "the one who isn't busy" is the true nature of the busy one. Or it could be said that the experience of busyness appears in the boundless space of "the one who isn't busy;" the busy one is actually a manifestation of the unbusy one.

The moon represents reality or truth; a bright full moon is like the silent truth of Dharma. Nagarjuna's teaching of the middle way says that there are two truths, the conventional truth of dependently arising appearances, and the ultimate truth of inconceivable emptiness – and these two truths are actually one inseparable unity. Daowu was pointing out that the two truths of conventional busyness and ultimate non-busyness sound like two separate realities. How could there really be two moons?

Yunyan held up the broom, and asked, "Which moon is this?" This is the heart of the story, the heart of the middle way. How could the not-busy one be somewhere else apart from the one holding the broom? The one who's not busy is the very nature of the one who appears to be busy. Thus we don't need to eliminate the busy one, but simply recognize the non-busy one who is always simply aware of everything, including the busy one. We can take this question into our life throughout the day as well as during zazen, asking again and again in all kinds of situations, "Which moon is this?" While sitting silent and still, following the breath, settled in the body: which moon is this? While driving in traffic, cooking a meal, washing the dishes: which moon is this?

Here's another story about these two Dharma brothers: Yunyan was making tea and Daowu asked, "Who are you making tea for?" Yunyan said, "There is somebody who wants it." Daowu said, "Why don't you let him make it himself?" Yunyan said, "Fortunately, I am here to do it." You and I make tea for the one who's not busy because she can't do it herself, she's never busy. We do the work in this world and somebody just witnesses. Truly you and I are servants, we live for that somebody, our practice is to serve her. She appreciates tea and she equally appreciates no tea. She is free from male and female, human and non-human, life and death, arising and ceasing, purity and impurity. She is the only one who is truly not busy.

Wansong's ancient commentary to the story of Yunyan sweeping the ground says, "Good people, while you eat, boil tea, sew and sweep, you should recognize the one who is not busy. Then you will realize the unity of mundane conventional truth and awakened ultimate truth. In the Soto Zen lineage this is known as simultaneous inclusion, naturally not wasting time." Simultaneous inclusion is the middle way, and when we are in accord with it, there are not two moons. This is truly not wasting time.

- edited from a talk by Kokyo Henkel

### RECEIVING THE PRECEPTS

Richard Salzberg and David Ramirez received the bodhisattva precepts from Kokyo on October 11, along with a rakusu (Buddha's robe) which they sewed, a Dharma name, and the blood lineage of buddhas and ancestors. Richard's new name is Engan Doka (Complete Vow, Song of the Way) and David's new name is Seitoku Anzan (Sincere Virtue, Peaceful Mountain). Congratulations to these bodhisattvas on undertaking this commitment!



Receiving the Precepts: Doka, Kokyo, and Anzan

### YEAR OF INVESTIGATING AND PRACTICING DEVOTION

The theme for 2016 will be studying and cultivating the mind and heart of devotion: commitment, dedication, enthusiasm, and love. This includes devotion to Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha, to Zen practice, to vows and precepts, to suffering beings. Classes and workshops exploring this theme will include the Lotus Sutra, Samantabhadra's Vows in the Flower Ornament Sutra, refuge in the Three Treasures, bodhisattva precepts, a ceremony for deceased children, end-of-life preparation and care, and more. Please see [sczc.org](http://sczc.org) for the complete 2016 calendar to plan ahead for sesshin and practice periods.

### SANGHA DAY

Saturdays, January 9 and March 19 (9:15am-3pm).

Sangha Day is a time to come together and help take care of the temple and grounds: cleaning the zendo, making candles, gardening, etc. Please bring something for a potluck lunch.

### INTRODUCTION TO ZEN

Saturday, January 23, February 27, March 26, 10am-noon.

A monthly introduction to the body and mind of Zen meditation and the forms of practice at SCZC. The morning includes sitting and walking meditation, followed by discussion. Everyone is welcome, free of charge.

### BUDDHIST-CHRISTIAN DAY OF SILENCE AND DIALOG

Saturday, January 16. 8:30am-4pm.

With Father Cyprian Consiglio, Monk and Prior of New Camaldoli Hermitage and Rev. Kokyo Henkel. One-day sitting with six periods of zazen, as well as morning and afternoon dialogs and discussion with Cyprian and Kokyo, on the theme of devotion and daily practice. A simple lunch will be offered. Suggested donation: \$12 for sustaining members, \$15 for all others.

### ENTERING THE REALM OF REALITY

Saturday, February 6, 9:30am-6pm.

With Rev. Shoho Kuebast. The last chapter of the Flower Ornament Sutra is called "Entering the Realm of Reality" and it describes the journey of the boy Sudhana, who was sent forth to seek the answer to his question: how is a bodhisattva to practice? On

his quest he meets 53 teachers and many beautiful insights. We will recite this inspirational book together, which will take approximately nine hours. Everyone is welcome to join at any time, but especially for the final dedication of this amazing journey. Suggested donation: \$12 for sustaining members, \$15 for all others.

### WINTER PRACTICE PERIOD

February 10-April 6.

Led by Rev. Patrick Teverbaugh. Practice period is an 8-week time for making a deeper commitment to Zen practice with the sangha, to support others while being supported by others. This winter practice period will include a class series, a 5-day Parinirvana Sesshin, a one-day sitting, and end with a 4-day sesshin to celebrate Buddha's Birthday.

### PARINIRVANA SESSHIN

February 11-15 (5 days), 5am-9pm.

Each day will include morning teachings with Rev. Patrick and formal oryoki meals. Sesshin ends with a ceremony to celebrate Buddha's Parinirvana on Monday at 3:45pm, to which all are welcome. Suggested donation: \$35/day for sustaining members, \$40 for all others.

### THE LOTUS SUTRA

6 Sunday evenings: February 21-March 27, 6:35-8pm.

Class series with Rev. Patrick. The Lotus Sutra was particularly revered by Dogen Zenji, and is widely studied in all East Asian Buddhist schools. Its poetic language and beautiful imagery make it well-suited for study during this year of practicing devotion. Suggested donation: \$10/class for sustaining members, \$13 for others.

### ONE-DAY SITTING

Saturday, March 12, 8:30am-5pm.

With Rev. Patrick. Please bring a bag lunch. Suggested donation: \$12/day for sustaining members, \$15 for all others.

### ALTAR BUILDING WORKSHOP

Sunday, March 27, 1-4pm.

With Rev. Eugene Bush and Neti Parekh

This workshop will offer the opportunity to build a simple wooden home altar to enshrine buddhas or bodhisattvas, using a woodworking shop. Traditional ways to set up an altar for devotional practice will also be discussed. Maximum of 6 people. Suggested donation: \$25 for sustaining members, \$30 for all others, plus materials.

### BUDDHA'S BIRTHDAY SESSHIN

March 31-April 3 (4 days), 5am-9pm.

Each day will include morning teachings with Patrick and formal oryoki meals. Sesshin ends with a ceremony to celebrate Buddha's Birthday on Sunday at 4pm, to which all are welcome. Suggested donation: \$35/day for sustaining members, \$40 for all others.

### SHUSO MICHAEL BASHISTA

The shuso, or head student, for winter practice period will be Hogen Doyo, Michael Bashista. Michael began practicing at SCZC around 2000, received the precepts from Abbess Katherine Thanas in 2006, served as co-ino for 6 years, and is currently the treasurer of Zen Center. The role of the shuso is to support the sangha by attending as much zazen as possible, leading discussion group on Sunday evenings, giving Dharma talks, and answering questions in a Dharma Inquiry Ceremony to close Practice Period.

*SCZC relies on fees and donations to continue its mission. If you can pay more, please consider doing so. If you cannot afford the suggested donation, please offer what you can. No one will be turned away for lack of funds.*

### DHARMA TRANSMISSION

In December, Rev. Myoka Cathy Toldi received Dharma transmission from Rev. Onryu Patrick Teverbaugh, and Rev. Ekyo Dana Takagi received Dharma transmission from Rev. Fugan Eugene Bush. These two priests have been practicing for many years at SCZC and are now authorized as full teachers and lineage holders of our tradition. Congratulations to these bodhisattvas!

### TROPHIES

By Brian Bielefeld

There is this race  
between Wanting and Having  
run on the longest of playing fields.  
two runners, tied at the waist  
the first seems always in the lead  
the second, at times, pulls ahead,  
claims victory and is rewarded  
with many laurels.  
and after the sound of trumpets has faded,  
the runners sit in the shade of the tree of comfort,  
their breathing settles into a slow rhythm.  
then Wanting turns its  
eyes to the track ahead  
leaps up and takes off  
dragging its partner, whose pockets  
bulge with clanging trophies.



### NO COMMENT

By Ziggy Rendler-Bregman

I want to lie down at the gentle edge of a creek  
tuck myself against its moss-covered bank  
cheek pressed close to fragile leaves  
ear to sky and birdsong.  
I want to be like the blade of fern  
unrecognized for what it will become.

To put the smallest stone into my pocket  
feel its smooth edge, find one flaw  
a bead on my rosary. Stone  
from the bottom of a cold stream  
makes no comment about  
what is coming or going.

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## DAILY SCHEDULE



### Monday-Friday:

5:45am Zazen (all periods 40 min.)  
6:25am Morning Service (chanting)  
12:00pm Zazen  
5:45pm Zazen  
6:25pm Evening Service

### Wednesday Evening:

6:35pm Lecture/discussion  
7:30pm Informal tea

### Saturday Morning:

8:30am Zazen  
9:10am Morning Service

### Sunday Evening:

5:45pm Zazen  
6:25pm Evening Service

Library open during tea after Wed. Lecture

See [sczc.org](http://sczc.org) for other weekly events including "Ordinary Recovery", qigong, and Dharma discussion groups

Sangha Day Sat. Jan 9  
Buddhist-Christian Sitting Sat. Jan 16  
Introduction to Zen Sat. Jan 23  
Precepts Renewal Mon. Jan 25  
Kobun Roshi Memorial Tues. Jan 26  
Shuso Entering & Talk Wed. Feb 3  
Realm of Reality Sat. Feb 6  
Open Practice Period Wed. Feb 10  
Parinirvana Sesshin Feb 11-15  
Buddha's Parinirvana Mon. Feb 15  
Lotus Sutra Class starts Sun. Feb 21  
Precepts Renewal Mon. Feb 22  
Sobun Roshi Memorial Wed. Feb 24  
Dharma Film Showing Fri. Feb 26  
Introduction to Zen Sat. Feb 27  
Mahapajapati Memorial Tues. Mar 8  
One-Day Sitting Sat. Mar 12  
Sangha Day Sat. Mar 19  
Precepts Renewal Thurs. Mar 24  
Kobun Roshi Memorial Fri. Mar 25  
Introduction to Zen Sat. Mar 26  
Altar Building Sun. Mar 27  
B's Birthday Sesshin Mar 31-Apr 3  
Buddha's Birthday Sun. Apr 3  
Shuso Dharma Inquiry Wed. Apr 6

9:15am-3pm  
8:30am-4pm  
10-noon  
5:45-6:30pm  
6:25-7am  
6:30-7:30pm  
9:30am-6pm  
6:35-7:30pm  
5am-9pm  
3:45-4:30pm  
6:35-8pm  
5:45-6:30pm  
6:25-7am  
7-9pm  
10-noon  
6:25-7am  
8:30am-5pm  
9:15am-4pm  
5:45-6:30pm  
6:25-7am  
10-noon  
1-4pm  
5am-9pm  
4-4:30pm  
6:30-7:30pm



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