



Berkeley Zen Center



July 2003 Newsletter

Welcome to Butch Baluyut... On Tuesday evening, June 10th, Butch Baluyut was formally welcomed into the BZC residency. The traditional Zendo ceremony of incense offering, prostrations, and jundo (greeting walk similar to the Doshi's opening of the Zendo each morning) was assisted by Head Resident, Ross Blum. Upon arriving at the Abbot's seat, Butch received the encouraging words of Sojun. Welcome to Butch, who now shares the 1933A apartment with Robert.



3-Day Mountains and Rivers Sesshin...

Our next Mountains and Rivers Sesshin will take place at Point Reyes Friday through Sunday, **August 1-3**. Sojun Roshi will be leading it. It is an inspiring and invigorating combination of hiking in silence during the day and zazen under the stars in the evening and early morning.

Everyone is encouraged to do the full three days, but provision will also be made for people who can take part only in the Saturday-Sunday portion, or who have some physical difficulty with backpacking.

If you have any questions, please call Ken Knabb at (510) 527-0959 or e-mail him at knabb@slip.net.

July & August Schedule

Founders Ceremony
Wednesday, 7-2, 6:20pm
Thursday, 7-3, 6:40am

Slide Show: Dogen Anniversary
Thursday, 7-3, 7:30pm

Interdependence Day
(Zendo closed)
Friday, 7-4

Bodhisattva Ceremony
Saturday, 7-12, 9:30am

Kanzeon Sitting
Sunday, 7-13

One-Day Sitting
Sunday, 7-20, 5am to 5:30pm

Mountains and Rivers Sesshin
Friday, 8-1 through Sunday, 8-3

Founder's Ceremony
Monday 8-4, 6:20 pm
Tuesday, 8-5, 6:40 am

Bodhisattva Ceremony
Saturday, 8-9, 9:30am

One-Day Sitting
Saturday, 8-9, 5am to 5:30pm

Work Day: Oiling the Zendo
(Zendo Closed)
Saturday, 8-16

Half-Day Sitting
Saturday, 8-23, noon to 4 pm

Three-Day Sitting
Friday, 8-30 5 am to Sunday, 9-1, 5:30 pm

Further Announcements...

Welcome... to new members, Angel Bush, Squire Davidson, Roberta Llewellyn, and Paul Sherer.




Thank you...

to long time resident **Mark Boydston**. After many years at BZC – where he has served steadily and generously as Head Resident, Saturday Director, head of maintenance, and other positions – Mark has moved "into the marketplace with gift bestowing hands." In fact, Mark has only moved to North Berkeley, so we will continue to practice with us from day to day.



Slide Presentation...

On **Thursday, July 3**, at 7:30 pm in the Community Room. Doug Greiner, Walter Keiser, and Fumiyo Uchiyama will share their experiences, from September, 2002 at Eihei-ji, where they attended ceremonies for the 750th anniversary of Dogen Zenji's parinirvana.



Saturday Childcare

Childcare is offered on Saturdays from 9:15 to 11:15. The cost is \$5 per family. Note that the childcare schedule is tentative. Childcare is not offered if no one's planning to come, so please call Laurie the Thursday before to let us know if you're hoping to attend. For more information, call Laurie Senauke, 845-2215.

July 5	No program
July 12	Childcare
July 19	Childcare
July 26	Childcare
August 2	Childcare
August 9	Childcare
August 16	Childcare
August 23	Childcare
August 30	No program

Lecture by Sojun Roshi

On the Metta Sutra, Part Three

(Continued from last month)

The sutra continues, "Let one not take upon oneself the burden of riches." Most people would like to have riches, but for a practitioner of the Dharma, especially a monk, riches are a burden. Having many things can be a burden and a distraction. They tie us down and occupy our mind so that we have less opportunity to turn our attention toward the Dharma. But often practitioners find it unavoidable to have wealth and possessions. In that case the question is, how to share those assets in a beneficial way with others.

The next line is "Let one's senses be controlled, and let one be wise but not puffed up." This brings up the question of how to not be full of pride when you do something good. That can be a problem for anyone, but especially for a teacher, or for someone who is in a position to be attached to the idea of success.

Student: How do you control your senses? **Sojun:** It's not that you control the senses, that's just a way of saying it. What you control is your desire. Our desire is aroused through what we see, hear, taste, touch, smell, and think. We can get some control of our impulses through struggling with them, but we can also get the satisfaction that comes with saying "No thanks." This "No thanks" acknowledges our desire without judging it, and allows us the freedom of choice to let go, to bow out gracefully. It satisfies our deeper intention rather than our impulse. It's not so much that we deny or fight with ourselves, but that we have access to a higher level of self-reliance and satisfaction knowing that we can do without, or with less.

Student: I think the meditation practices associated with the *vijnanas* (consciousness) are about control of the senses through the sense consciousness. **Sojun:** Yes. Much of the literature is about controlling the senses. You can control the senses to a point where it seems like you are no longer living in this world. You can control your sensory responses to the point where you no longer have any reaction to anything. But controlling the senses can also mean to simply act in a reasonable way in all of our interactions, with others and with material things, and acting in a reasonable way with desire. Buddhist texts sometimes say to cut off desire. You can't cut off desire. Desire is what gives us incentive. If you have no desire you're just a lump or a puddle. What is meant by desire here, is inordinate desire. There is a desire to eat, a desire to sleep, to move; a desire to interact in an infinite variety of ways. There is a desire to seek the Dharma, and there is a desire to keep desire under control. When desire is turned toward Dharma it's called "way seeking mind." Desire belongs to the element of fire, and keeping our focus on the Dharma helps to prevent the flame of desire from getting out of control.

The next line is, "Let one not desire great possessions, even for one's family." How does your family keep desire under control? It's a great test in this day and age of the overabundance of material goods, to not succumb to greed, which is being sold to us as a virtue. It helps to take stock of those things that we already have and treat them well, expressing thanks and

appreciation for their use. I think in this regard on how my eating bowls glow after wiping them over and over, and the intimacy I feel in that simple act.

Student: What about attachment to the Sangha? **Sojun:** The Sangha is our Dharma family. It's the foundation of our practice. It's not a commodity or something you can have. It's the flowing and diversity of the one body, which is you, yourself. As Sangha you can be thoroughly yourself without any attachment or non-attachment.

The next line is, "Let no one do anything that is mean or that wisdom would reprove." This is the ideal. We have our ideals, and we have our actual life. Sometimes we get caught up in the ideal. The ideal is "should." Suzuki Roshi talked about "To be" and "should be." When we say "should be," we are expressing the ideal. "To be" expresses the actual. But when we face the actual there is often a conflict. Suzuki Roshi said that when "should be" and "to be" are the same, then we have our way. What we want to be doing is what we should be doing and what we should be doing is what we want to be doing. Someone said to me, "Why are you always saying 'should'? What do you mean, 'should'?" We must be careful to not get stuck in the ideal and ignore and fail to appreciate the life of this present moment. At the same time we must be careful to not fall into complacency and lose our inspiration.

The ideal gives us some vision. Vision and ideal give us a direction. The tension between the ideal and the actual is always present in our life. When we read the sutras which extol the selfless activities of a Bodhisattva, and compare that to our own life, we can become discouraged. We wonder if these practices are attainable by human beings. The descriptions of the ideal Bodhisattva can be inspiring as well as daunting, but we always come back to the actual. The most important part of practice is to accept oneself; really accept oneself just as we are, then we can accept everyone else the way they are, and we can keep our eye on the right direction. That's the ideal. We know who we are and we know what we can work toward.

Student: What about practice not being interesting? If somebody criticizes you or gives feedback, it is actually more interesting than praise. If I can't delight in not having something, maybe I can make it interesting. **Sojun:** Whatever I say [about practice not being interesting], don't take it literally. We like the praise sometimes, but it's also embarrassing. So we want to get to what is pertinent, which is the criticism. This is not what we like, but we know it's good medicine. I don't know if interesting is the word. It is more, well, real. If we can accept criticism, it is something for us to be grateful for. That's why we say "Thank you very much" when it is offered. When someone gives us something that is not so tasty, we may or may not be happy to get it, but we can be grateful. If we really have that attitude, then everything that comes to us can help us. We can really grow that way. But, on the other hand, criticism should be given skillfully and with compassion, or it will not be helpful.

(The third of several Parts.)

Tassajara, Spring 1995



Further Announcements...

BZC Work Day...

Please put **Saturday, August 16** on your calendar. The zendo will be closed and there will be no regular program. Instead, we'll be oiling the zendo. If you're interested in helping, please look for the sign-up that will be on the BZC bulletin board sometime in August.



Women's Sesshin... is scheduled for Sunday, **September 21**. This is a reschedule from the original date of March 30.



Sewing...

Starting in July, various times will be available for sewing in the community room. These times are for repairs and sewing of either previously begun or second rakus. Classes for starting first rakus will begin as usual in January. Please call Jean Selkirk before your

first visit. Check the bulletin board for dates.



Benji's Poem...

For Ekai Uji Laurie Senauke

At Shogaku Temple
In an uneasy season
The Sangha gathers.
Listen as Yunyan sweeps the ground
The breath breathes

In the head seat, Ekai Uji
"Cherishing Ocean Being Fine"
Finds "the one who is not busy."

Now we, in turns, speak
One breath breathing
And pause to hear the Shuso

Shinko Ando Rondi Saslow
June 22, 2003



Affirmation of Welcome

Walking the path of liberation, we express our intimate connection with all beings. Welcoming diversity, here at Berkeley Zen Center the practice of Zazen is available to people of every race, nationality, class, gender, sexual orientation, age, and physical ability. May all beings realize their true nature.



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