



Berkeley Zen Center



January 2005 Newsletter

Tsunami Relief – Message from Buddhist Peace Fellowship

We all send heartfelt prayers and support to all who have been affected by the December 26th earthquake and subsequent tsunamis affecting Asia and Africa. The devastation is beyond our imagination.

Buddhist Peace Fellowship invites your generous donations for relief, medical supplies, food, and housing in many of the affected areas.

BPF has been in touch with friends and organizations throughout Asia. Among those are Sarvodaya in Sri Lanka, International Network of Engaged Buddhists in Thailand, the Subang Jaya Buddhist Association in Malaysia, Bandar Utama Buddhist Society in Singapore and Malaysia, and the Foundation for the People of Burma.

Donations to Buddhist Peace Fellowship for Tsunami Relief will be immediately transferred to reliable organizations in Asia. No administrative fees will be applied by BPF, and all donations are fully tax deductible according to IRS regulations. BPF will acknowledge each donation by letter.

For further information, including disaster updates and lists of resources in the United States and abroad, please check the regularly updated BPF website www.buddhistpeacefellowship.org.

Please make out checks to BPF/Tsunami Relief, and mail to Buddhist Peace Fellowship, P.O. Box 3470, Berkeley, CA 94703..

January & February Schedule

Founders' Ceremony
Monday, 1-3, 6:20pm
Tuesday, 1-4, 6:40am

One-Day Sitting
Saturday, 1-8, 5am to 9:10pm

Bodhisattva Ceremony
Saturday, 1-22, 9:30am

Half-Day Sitting
Saturday, 1-22, noon to 5pm

Founders' Ceremony
Thursday, 2-3, 6:20pm
Friday, 2-4, 6:40am

Half-Day Sitting
Sunday, 2-6, noon to 5pm

Buddha's Parinirvana Ceremony
Saturday, 2-19

Three-Day Sitting
Saturday, 2-19 through Monday, 2-21

Bodhisattva Ceremony
Saturday, 2-26, 9:30am



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 preference, age, and physical ability. May all beings realize their true nature.

Suzuki Roshi Thirty-Third Memorial Service - 2004

Thirty-seven years ago,
First morning of Rohatsu,
You passed from this world.
You left us behind, to pass you up.
Then it was our turn,
Our responsibility,
Picking up this grain and carrying it further.

Foolish and naïve as we were
We plunged forward,
The old codgers shaking their heads
And wondering.

Here we are thirty-three years later,
Still feeling our way in the dark,
The blind leading the blind
In faith that we are Buddha.

Old man Shakyamuni said that we should be a lamp unto ourselves.
You showed us how to do that.
Your teaching and example has guided us ever since,
And when I seek your council it never fails.
The well is deep and bottomless.

On this day we remember and pay homage to you in gratitude for your selfless contribution. With this offering of fragrant incense we invite you to sit in our midst as our teacher and our inspiration.

Sojun

One-Day Teaching Retreat, Saturday, 5th February

On **Saturday 5th February** our usual Saturday program will be expanded to include an afternoon of continued lecture, dialogue and *zazen* with Shohaku Okumura. Shohaku is a dharma heir of Kosho Uchiyama and is widely recognized as one of the foremost translators of Dogen into English. He was head of the Soto Zen Education Center in San Francisco and interim abbot of Minnesota Zen Meditation Center. Recently he founded his own *sangha*, Sanshin Zen Center, in Bloomington, Indiana.

We have used his translations of many texts including *Refining Your Life* (on the Tenzo Kyogen) and *Dogen's Pure Standards for the Zen Community*. He will speak on his teacher,

Uchiyama Roshi, and about the writings in *Opening the Hand of Thought*.

The day will begin at 6 am through our usual Saturday program. There will be a simple lunch shared in the community room with Shohaku-san, followed by additional sitting, lecture and dialogue. The suggested fee is \$25-\$50 for the day.

Some texts are available through our bookstore. Stop by on Saturday. These texts are also easy to find on-line.

Sign-up will be posted on the courtyard bulletin board, to help plan for seating, lunch and clean-up. If you have questions, contact Andrea Thach: 510.420.0902, ananda3917@earthlink.net

On Martin Luther King Junior's Birthday

Hozan Alan Senauke

Each January we observe Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday in the United States. It is amazing that we have a national holiday celebrating a nonviolent social activist who taught about the dangers of racism, classism, and militarism, especially given the warlike climate we live in today. But I am afraid that nowadays the real dragon—Dr. King—is usually portrayed as a kindly kitten. The radical quality of his compassion and his rejection of racism is conveyed as a warm and fuzzy dream.

Martin Luther King has become a sound bite—"I have a dream..." He is a black man on a postage stamp. And if we leave Dr. King on that postage stamp we forget how he moved mountains, how he failed to move some mountains, and how he paid with his life for trying. In Taigen Leighton's book *Faces of Compassion*, Martin Luther King is seen as the embodiment of Samantabhadra, the shining practice bodhisattva—idealistic, acting with concern, courage, resolve, and grace to create a pure land right here. From another perspective—perhaps close to his heart—we can see him like the Bible's old prophets: a truth teller, one who consciously takes on the karma of a whole society, who puts his or her whole life at risk for the sake of others.

How do we bring forth Dr. King's radical and selfless qualities in our own lives and share them with everyone? We inhabit a world where there are fresh scars of violence every day. As much as ever, we need his teachings of nonviolence and what he called "beloved community"—what we call *sangha*. From the earliest days of his ministry, Dr. King has suggestions that resonate strongly with us as Buddhists.

In November of 1957, Dr. King delivered a sermon at Dexter Avenue Baptist Church, his first ministry in Montgomery, Alabama. His text was a verse from the Gospel of Matthew: "Ye have heard that it has been said, 'Thou shall love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy.' But I say unto you, love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that spitefully use you..." And Dr. King says,

...Let us deal with this practical question: How do you go about loving your enemies? I guess the first thing is this: in order to love your enemies, you must begin by analyzing self. And I'm sure that seems strange to you, that I start out telling you this morning that you love your enemies by beginning with a look at self.

This is a basic principle of Zen practice. In "Genjokoan" Dogen Zenji writes:

To study the buddha way is to study the self. To study the self is to forget the self. To forget the self is to be actualized by myriad things. When actualized by myriad things, your body and mind as well as the bodies and minds of others drops away.

Dr. King explains further.

Now I'm aware of the fact that some people will not like you, not because of something you have done to them, but they just won't like you. Some people aren't going to like the way you walk. Some people aren't going to like the way you talk...They're going to dislike you, not because of something that you've done to them, but because of various jealous reactions and other reactions that are so prevalent in human nature.

But after looking at these things, we must face the fact that an individual might dislike us because of something we've done deep down in the past, some personality attribute that we possess. Something that we've done deep and we've forgotten about it, but it was that something that aroused the hate response within the individual. That is why I say, begin with yourself.

In Buddhist terms he is speaking about cause and effect or *karma* (action) and *vipaka* (fruit) — conditionality as expressed by the Buddha's discovery of "dependent origination." Simply put, dependent origination means: because this arises, that arises; because this does not exist, that does not exist. As Dr. King explains, there may be some small action or reaction on our part, that has co-created anger and resentment on the part of another. He urges each of us to take responsibility for our smallest actions.

Martin Luther King was a kind of Zen master. He was able to hold two realities seemingly in tension with each other — the collective *karma* of American society and the *karma* or actions of each individual — and express them in a unified spiritual principle of compassion. Dr. King says "begin with yourself," because he holds himself responsible for his every action, and asks us to hold ourselves to this same standard. At the same time, he understood that racism, and all systems of domination, flow from conditions and create systems of suffering. He asks us to oppose these systems while not excluding the people who uphold them. This is a challenging vision of *karma* for us to get our minds around. And it is an even more difficult principle to live by.

Dr. King was sustained by his faith, even in his failures — and there were many. Nearly forty years after his assassination, his life remains a *koan* for those of us who yearn for justice and equality in America. Our deep wish is to take care of our own ancient twisted *karma*, and in so doing help to heal all beings. Due to our good fortune we have the practice of *zazen*. We share the personal and communal safety of the meditation hall. Then we bow gently at the zendo door, and walk out into the wider world.

3 Day Sesshin

Our annual winter three day sesshin will be from **February 19-21**. Mark your calendars early, and plan on sitting the entirety of all three days. If you plan to stay overnight at BZC, contact Shika Eric Greene: 510.649.1653, egreene3@yahoo.com. If you have questions or are new to sesshin practice, contact Sesshin Director Andrea Thach: 510.420.0902, ananda3917@earthlink.net.



Introduction To Buddhism

The first BZC class for 2005 will be *Introduction To Buddhism*, taught by Hozan Alan Senauke. The class will meet on four **Monday evenings**, probably in the community room, **from 7:30 to 9pm**. The dates are **24th January to 21st February**.

The scope of the class will include the life of Shakyamuni Buddha, the Buddha's first and fundamental teachings, an outline of the *tripitaka*, and Bodhisattva vehicle of early Mahayana. Please see the bulletin board for signup, details, and class materials. Questions can be addressed to Alan: alans@kushiki.org.



Art News

The print hanging in the Community Room is called *Medicine Buddha*. It is a print of an original watercolor painting by Michael Sawyer and was given to Sojun Mel Weitzman for his 75th birthday last July by Michael and his wife Emila Heller. Michael was ordained as a Zen priest in 1998. He continues to live at Green Gulch Farm with his wife, Emila Heller.

This print is a copy of a painting inspired by Case 87 of the Blue Cliff records; Yun Men, teaching his community, said,

"Medicine and disease subdue each other, the whole earth is medicine, what is your self?" Part of the pointer states that "A clear-eyed fellow has no nest.... Suddenly he appears as an angry titan with three heads and six arms; suddenly as Sun Face or Moon Face Buddha he releases the light of all-embracing mercy. In a single atom he manifests all physical forms, to save people according to their type, he mixes with mud and water...." Part of the commentary states: " 'Medicine and disease subdue each other.' This is just an ordinary proposition. If you cling to existence, he speaks of nonexistence for you; if you are attached to nonexistence, he speaks of existence for you; if you are attached to neither existence nor nonexistence, he manifests the sixteen-foot golden body for you in a pile of crap and rubbish, appearing and disappearing."



Practice Leader Lectures

In the coming months, our BZC newsletter will begin to include sections from lectures by the Tanto and the other BZC practice leaders. If any of you faithful readers has the interest and time to help transcribe one or more of these lectures, please contact Alan alans@kushiki.org or newsletter editor Jed Appelman jed.appelman@gmail.com.



On Line Newsletter

You are invited to send your e-mail address to Laurie Senauke: lauries@kushiki.org to receive the BZC Newsletter electronically.

You can view the current and past newsletters at:

www.berkeleyzencenter.org/newsletters.shtml



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.

Jan 1	No Program/ Zendo Closed
Jan 8	No Program/ Sesshin
Jan 15	Childcare
Jan 22	Childcare
Jan 29	Childcare
Feb 5	Childcare
Feb 12	Childcare
Feb 19	No Program/ Sesshin
Feb 26	Childcare

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