



# Berkeley Zen Center



## June 2015 Newsletter

### Five-Day Sesshin Concludes 2015 Spring Practice Period June 10 - 14

Our spring practice period will conclude with a five-day sesshin from Wednesday, June 10 to Sunday, June 14. The first four days' schedule is from 5:00am until 9:00pm, while the final day's schedule is from 5:00am until 3:10pm, followed at 3:30 by the Shuso Hossen, dharma dialogue with the Shuso. Please sign up on the patio bulletin board for a minimum of three days; we encourage you to make two of those days consecutive. If you want to request an alternative schedule, please speak to the sesshin director. Sign-ups close on Saturday, June 6, at 12:00 noon.

The Shuso Hossen ceremony will begin promptly at 3:30pm, and will be followed by a reception. All practice period and sesshin participants will be supporting the Shuso and our practice by coming with *a* question.

If this is your first sesshin at BZC, it is strongly recommended that you first participate in a full Saturday program, have oryoki instruction, and that you speak with the sesshin director. The fee is \$35 per day, advance payment requested. Leave checks marked "June sesshin" in the laundry room door donation slot. If you have questions, contact the sesshin director Gary Artim [gartim@gmail.com](mailto:gartim@gmail.com) or 510.676.9756.



## B Z C S c h e d u l e

### June

#### Founders' Ceremonies

Wednesday, 6/3, 6:20pm

Thursday, 6/4, 6:40am

#### Lay Ordination / Zaike Tokudo

Saturday, 6/6, 3:00pm

#### Bodhisattva Ceremony

Saturday, 6/6, 9:40am

#### Five-Day Sesshin/ End Practice Period

Wednesday, 6/10 – Sunday 6/14

#### Shuso Hossen

Sunday, 6/14, 3:30pm

#### Zendo Holiday

Monday, 6/15

#### Half-Day Sitting

Sunday, 6/28, 8:00am – 12:00 noon

### July

#### Zendo Holiday

Saturday, 7/4

#### Founders' Ceremonies

Monday, 7/6, 6:20pm

Tuesday, 7/7, 6:40am

#### Bodhisattva Ceremony

Saturday, 7/11, 9:40am

#### BZC Campout

Saturday - Sunday, 7/11 – 7/12

#### Zazenkai (Just Sitting Day)

Sunday, 7/12, 8:00am – 5:00pm

#### Mountains and Rivers Sesshin

Thursday 7/30 – Sunday 8/2



#### 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.

## Practice Period Events in June

Shosan (dharma dialogue with the abbot): June 5,  
5:40pm and June 8, 5:40am

Lay Ordination: Saturday, June 6, 3:00pm

Five-Day Sesshin: June 10-14

Shuso Hossen (dharma dialogue with the shuso):  
Sunday, June 14, 3:30pm



## BZC Campout

All are warmly invited to the annual Berkeley Zen Center Campout, scheduled for July 11-12. We've reserved a group campsite in nearby Tilden Park, and will meet for a potluck dinner and possibly a short hike, as well as s'mores and songs around the campfire, sleeping under the stars, and waking up to oatmeal and coffee/tea/cocoa in the morning. Join us to pass on the campfire rounds we grew up with, tell stories, and learn the latest songs from our own kids.

All ages are welcome! If you prefer not to stay for the night, come for the dinner and company. If you would like to stay but are missing a tent or sleeping bag, let us know, and we can almost definitely find one for you. Contact [marie\\_hopper@sbcglobal.net](mailto:marie_hopper@sbcglobal.net) if you have questions, and look for a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board in mid-June.

## Family Activities at BZC

### Saturday Morning Supervised Play

Supervised play is offered many Saturdays (schedule below) from 9:40am zazen through lecture, supervised by Berkeley High student Lihong Chan. To use this service, or for coverage for 8:45am zazen instruction, contact Laurie Senauke, 510.845.2215, or [lauries@kushiki.org](mailto:lauries@kushiki.org) by noon the Friday before.

### KidZendo

BZC's Saturday program for children 3 and up is offered during the school year, typically on the fourth Saturday of each month, from 9:30am to 11:15am (see schedule below or online). BZC members create this program, which includes songs, stories, offerings, art activities and a snack. For more information, and to RSVP, contact Laurie.

### Theater Games

We are continuing our monthly Theater Games offering suggested by sangha member Thea Gold. It's a way to be silly and free together, while cultivating creativity, body awareness, spontaneity, relaxation, expressivity, trust, laughter, and concentration. It is suitable for all ages, and for the shy as well as outgoing. Through games, storytelling, and improvisation, we practice fully opening to each moment. It is held typically on second Saturdays (see schedule or online) from 9:30am to 11:15am. To RSVP, contact [lauries@kushiki.org](mailto:lauries@kushiki.org). Family practice schedule:

June 6	Supervised play
June 13	Sesshin - no program
June 20	TBA
June 27	TBA
July 4	Zendo Holiday - no program

Note: supervised play during the summer months will be arranged ad hoc by appointment. Contact Laurie at [lauries@kushiki.org](mailto:lauries@kushiki.org)

### Family Practice E-mail Group

Our Yahoo group makes it easier to communicate about family practice. We only send, at most, one event e-mail a week. To join, e-mail Marie at [marie\\_hopper@sbcglobal.net](mailto:marie_hopper@sbcglobal.net) or Laurie.

**Please RSVP for ALL family activities to [lauries@kushiki.org](mailto:lauries@kushiki.org). Thank you!**

# Every Day Is a Good Day

Shunryu Suzuki-roshi

from a transcription of a talk given on the *Blue Cliff Record*, Case 6

Ummon Bun-en (Yun-men Wen-yen) was a disciple of Seppō (Hsueh-feng I-ts'un). He died in 949.

## Introductory Comments by Suzuki-roshi

Each existence, animate and inanimate, is changing during every moment day and night. The change is like flowing water which does not ever come back and which reveals its true nature in its eternal travel.

Water flowing and clouds drifting are similar to a well-trained old Zen master. The true nature of water and clouds is like the determined, single-minded, traveling monks, who do not take off their traveling sandals even under the roof of sages. Worldly pleasure, philosophical pursuit, or whimsical ideas do not interest the traveling monk, sincere to his true nature, for he does not want to be fat and idle. Such a monk does not care for hospitality which would stop his travels. He recognizes as true friends only those who travel with him on the way.



Zen master Ummon Bun-en (Yun-men Wen-yen) (862/4-949). Painting by Hakuin, one of three hanging scrolls comprising a set, with Daruma and Rinzai in the others. Eiheji temple copy.

The idea of this kind of travel may make you feel lonely and helpless.

In Japan, Zen is understood by the word *wabi* or *sabi*. These two words are nouns, but today they are used mostly as adjectives: *wabishi* or *sabishi*. One meaning of *wabishi* and *sabishi* is lonesome and monotonous. The intellectuals understand these words to mean the simplest and most humble form and style of beauty.

In the strict sense, *wabi* and *sabi* mean reality which does not belong to any category of subjectivity or objectivity, simple or fancy. However, it is this reality that makes subjective and objective observation possible and perfect, and that means everything, simple or fancy, able to come home to our heart. In the realm of *wabi* or *sabi*, even on one drop of dew you will see the whole universe.

Contrary to *wabi* and *sabi*, usually when some object is put into the range of perception, our first reaction is not acceptance, but rather rationality, repulsion, or emotional disturbance. The way of Western civilization is not directed at acceptance so much as at “how to organize many objects and ideas in the realm of perception or thinking” and “how to control the sense data of the sensual world.”

In the world of *wabi* and *sabi* there is no attempt, no attainment, no anger, no joy, sorrow, or any waves of mind of this kind whatsoever. Each existence in this world is the fruit of subjective self-training and objective pure and direct understanding. The savor of fruits comes home to our heart, and confirmation of reality takes place. We observe falling flowers at their best. By repeating this kind of direct experience, one may have calm and deep understanding of life and deliverance from it, like a traveling monk who has full appreciation of everything and is nonetheless completely detached from it.

Now may I call your attention to the following subject:

Main Subject by Setchō (presented by Suzuki-roshi)

Attention! Ummon introduced the subject by saying: I do not ask you about fifteen days ago. But what about fifteen days hence? Come, say a word about this. He himself replied for them: Every day is a good day.

Commentary by Suzuki-roshi

Today does not become yesterday, and Dōgen-zenji states that today does not become tomorrow. Each day is its own past and future and has its own absolute value.

*Taken from a San Francisco City Center transcript thought to be based on notes by Richard Baker. It is not verbatim; no tape is available. The City Center transcript was entered onto disk by Bill Redican (11/4/01). This talk is thought to have been given on Thursday, November 1st, 1962. From <http://suzukiroshi.sfzc.org/dharma-talks>.*

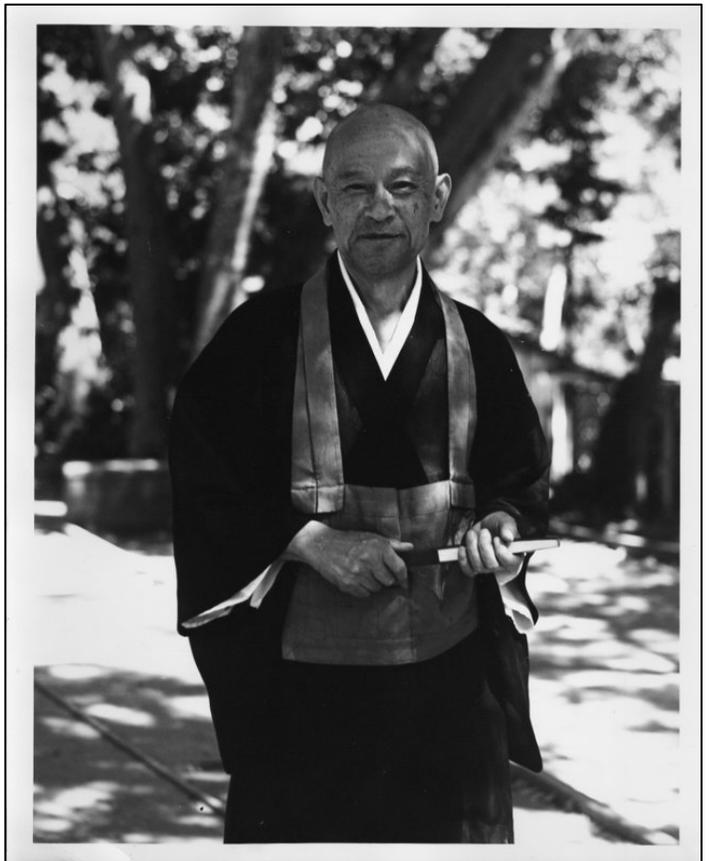
**Another translation of Case 6 of the Blue Cliff Record (by Cleary and Cleary):**

Yun-men said, "I don't ask you about before the fifteenth day; try to say something about after the fifteenth day." / Yun-men himself answered for everyone, "Every day is a good day."

There is no introduction to this case by Yuanwu.

Here is the verse on this story by Xuedou:

He throws away one,  
Picks up seven.  
Above, below, and in the four directions,  
there is no comparison.  
Placidly walking along, he treads down  
the sound of the flowing stream;  
His relaxed gaze descries the tracks of  
flying birds.  
The grasses grow thick,  
The mists overhand.  
'Round Subhuti's cliff, the flowers make a  
mess;  
I snap my fingers; how lamentable is Shunyata!  
Don't make a move!  
If you move, thirty blows!



*Shunryu Suzuki at Tassajara, c. 1969.*

## Sounding Board

*Wenzi said, "The path of water is such that when it rises to the sky, it becomes raindrops; when it falls to the ground, it becomes rivers."*

- Eihei Dogen Zenji's Sansuikyo

Except right now in California, not so much. The BZC Board and Practice Committee are looking at ways to reduce our water consumption, including: stop watering lawns (and possibly replace lawns with bricks or drought-resistant plants), replace remaining toilets with low-flow, and hand water most garden areas. Some of us are familiar with other measures from past droughts, like saving sink and bath water that runs as we are waiting for hot water, flushing toilets only when necessary, and using gray water for irrigation.

Statewide there is a mandate for 25% reduction in water consumption, and East Bay MUD has set some strict guidelines ([www.ebmud.com](http://www.ebmud.com)). BZC spontaneously reduced water consumption between 2013 and 2014 by 26%; we're not definitively sure of the reasons for this savings, but residents have been conserving water, we fixed a major leak during the kitchen remodel, and we added a water-efficient clothes washer. This reduction will be recognized by the state, so we are well on our way to our mandatory goals. However, we'd like to go beyond that and do everything we can to conserve water, just on general principles. This will take an all-inclusive effort from the many parts of BZC, including gardeners, residents, dishwashers and other position holders.

The Board's role is to make resources available where they can support this effort, and the whole BZC sangha can contribute to this effort to stay responsibly connected to earth, water, fire, and air.



## Sangha Harmony

The HEAR committee will be sponsoring a series of councils to promote sangha harmony and develop our conflict resolution skills by raising controversial issues in a safe setting. The committee is open to your input about what topics fall under this description. Our first council will take up the dynamic relationship of BZC residents and non-residents. The meeting will be on **July 11 at 1pm**, convened by Stan Dewey and Laurie Senauke.

The residency program at BZC contributes an important structure to the practice at BZC, and to the sangha. By combining intensified temple practice and rent subsidized housing, residents are able to commit to following the schedule fully, and provide a backbone for BZC activities. Residents also open their homes for various community programs, thus, sangha members interact with residents in a variety of ways. Over the years, the resident group has evolved (and also stabilized), and market rents in our neighborhood have skyrocketed.

This launching council seeks to open up the issues on both sides of the resident-non-resident divide. Within the safety of the council process, thoughts and feelings can be brought to light, heard and understood by participants. In the interest of having a deep conversation about a complicated set of issues and considerations, we are keeping the number of non-resident to roughly equal the number of resident participants. The committee knows of some members who might have particular interest in participating, but we are open to others. Members who would like to be considered to participate in this council should indicate their interest to the conveners. The conveners will make invitations with the aim of having broad representation of opinion and feeling.



## Lay Ordination Saturday, June 6

This year's Lay Ordination ceremony—*Zaike Tokudo*—will take place on Saturday, June 6 in the zendo at 3pm. Receiving lay ordination from Sojun-roshi are the following students:

Michael Cole  
Jeanne Courtney  
Kelsey Hermann  
Heather Garnos, and  
Teri Jo Tinus;  
Deb Self

is receiving lay ordination from Hozan Sensei.

Congratulations in advance to all who have been studying and sewing diligently with our sewing teacher Jean Selkirk. Everyone is warmly encouraged to attend the ceremony and the reception afterwards. Check the zendo bulletin board for details and please sign-up for preparation (tenzo assistance & set-up) and clean-up.



### Mountains and Rivers Save the Date!

When making your summer plans, please consider setting aside time to participate in the annual Mountains and Rivers Sesshin at Pt. Reyes National Seashore, Thursday July 30 to Sunday August 2. More details to follow in the July newsletter—feel free to contact Christy at ccalame@earthlink.net with any questions.

### Note from the Librarian

After serving as BZC librarian for more than two years I have become familiar with the collection we house in the community room and have come to truly appreciate it. I frequently stumble across unknown (to me) gems on the bookshelves. Also, the library regularly acquires new books and subscribes to several periodicals (*Tricycle*, *Shambala Sun*, *Buddhadharma* and more). All of these are available to check out. I try to be in the library on Tuesday afternoons from 4:30 to 5:30pm. You are welcome to come in and browse. If the library is not open, look for me in the office.

A new version of the computer program we use to catalog books was recently installed (thank you, Troy DuFrene). Several new books are just being processed and will soon appear on the "New Books" shelf. They include: *The Heart Sutra*, Kazuaki Tanahashi, *Unfathomable Depth*, Sekkei Harada, *Meditation on Perception*, Bhante Gunaratana and *The Nirvana Sutra, Vol. I*, translated by Mark L. Blum.

Last but not least, the librarian's plea: remember your overdue books and return them soon!

Thank you,  
Ellen Webb



Photos by Ko Blix

### Changing Hands

Maria Winston and Tamar Enoch have been our co-head jikidos for the past two years. They have done a wonderful job of organizing the morning cleaning of the zendo. They also purchased cushions for the zendo chairs which has been much appreciated by the people who use them. We offer our heartfelt thanks to Tamar and Maria and welcome Ben Clausen to this position.



### sCooking, Serving

When I filled out the practice period application, I noticed the option to help serve dinner at the Men's Shelter. Although I had served once years ago at the shelter, I had never helped prepare the meal. So, I spoke to Laurie about it, signed up on the community room porch bulletin board and showed up on Center Street on May 8 a little before 5pm. I was early and had some time to hang out on the street a half block from city hall, across the park from my old alma mater, Berkeley High, and a few doors from the Veteran's Hall.

Laurie arrived at 5pm with a load of food that Don had purchased earlier from Costco and we helped bring in food. Several long-time stalwarts prepared lemonade and set up the serving tables for buffet. Folks were washing dishes, locating tools and some of us pitched in to wash and cut up potatoes, prepare salad, portion out chicken into baking/serving pans. I learned by watching how to mash cooked potatoes with the skins on, add a quart of 2% milk and a cube of butter. Delicious.

In the freezer, Laurie discovered ice cream from a previous dinner that could go with the Trader Joe blondies which I had overbaked a bit... some of the men don't have good teeth, so soft is better.

After serving the line of men who thanked us and told us frequently how good the food was, I filled a plate with food and joined some of them at a table. One man asked about Buddhism and where we were located. Laurie invited him to a zazen orientation at 8:45am on Saturdays. Another man told me he had lost his small business when he got

sick and ended up at the shelter. The third man was not able or willing to engage in conversation and left after he finished his meal and before dessert. Men can stay for 30 days, have to leave each day by 7am and return at night for dinner and bed. You can see some of the dorm area from the dining hall.

It is a good space to be in and the more hands make the work lighter. I was glad to see more volunteers show up for serving and clean-up help. We were all out of there by 8pm.

I'm still thinking about Friday. How can I impact the roots causes of poverty, ill will, and greed? How can my Buddhist practice and my political practice make a difference? One idea is that you can really help by preparing food, serving, and eating with people. Give it a try and then consider if you can schedule yourself regularly and be one of those who can be counted on to be there.

- Sue Oehser

### Twelve O'Clock Zen

High noon...that watershed moment when morning turns to afternoon. No better way to celebrate the turning than by sitting zazen at BZC, Monday through Friday. We sit from 12 noon to 12:30, informal zazen, just sitting. Please join us.

—Hozan



### **Saturday Speakers, 10:15am**

May 30 – Susan Marvin  
June 6 – Sojun Roshi  
June 13 – Sesshin  
June 20 – Dairyu Michael Wenger  
June 27 – Laurie Senauke  
July 4 – Zendo Holiday

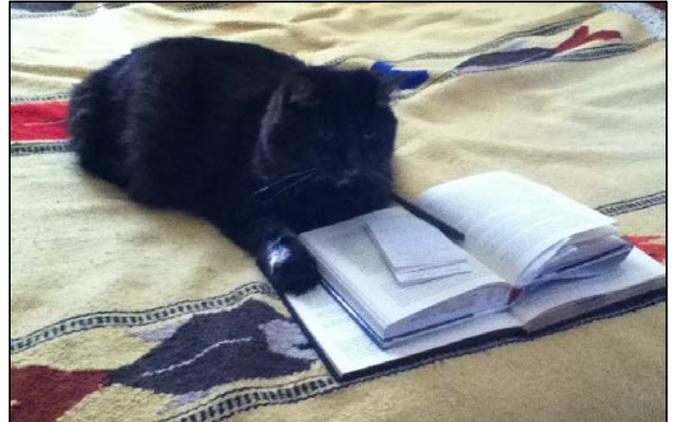
### **Friday and Monday Talk Schedule**

June 5, Friday 5:40pm – Shosan with Sojun Roshi  
June 22, Monday 6:25am – Lisa Nelbach  
June 29, Monday 6:25am – Esmi and Lucio Ramirez

### **NEWSLETTER SUBMISSION DEADLINE**

**Third Friday of the month before each issue. Submit items to [bzcnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:bzcnewsletter@gmail.com).**

**June deadline:  
Friday, June 19, 8:00pm**



### **The Other Side of the Page**

Rereading Dogen's *Journal of My Study in China*, Rocky follows the advice of Sojun Roshi: reading the other side of the page to uncover the true meaning of Rujing's subtle admonishment: "Only stupid people keep cats."  
- Ross Estes Blum

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