



Berkeley Zen Center



July 2015 Newsletter

Zazenkai: A Day of Just Sitting

Sunday, July 12, 8:00-5:10

Sunday, July 12, from 8:00am to 5:10pm, BZC priest Ryushin Andrea Thach will lead a silent one-day sitting. This will be a rare opportunity to spend a day doing nothing but zazen, kinhin, bowing and eating. We will maintain silence throughout, with the exception of bells to mark meditation periods, and chanting the Refuges aloud at 5:10pm.

Participants should plan to come for the whole day. A break from 12:20-1:00 will allow time for sack lunches to be eaten in the community room or, if we're enjoying fair weather, outdoors.

There will be a 10-minute period of bowing at your own pace prior to the lunch break, and we will have two periods of fast kinhin. Both of these activities can be adapted to harmonize with individual needs and abilities.

A sign-up sheet and further information will be posted on the courtyard bulletin board. The fee is \$20.

Please feel free to contact Andrea Thach, andrea.thach@gmail.com if you have any questions.



B Z C S c h e d u l e

July

Zendo Holiday

Saturday, 7/4

Founder's Ceremonies

Monday, 7/6, 6:20pm

Tuesday, 7/7, 6:40am

Bodhisattva Ceremony

Saturday, 7/11, 9:40am

BZC Campout

Saturday - Sunday, 7/11 - 12

Zazenkai (Just Sitting Day)

Sunday, 7/12, 8:00am – 5:10pm

Mountains and Rivers Sesshin

Thursday 7/30 – Sunday 8/2

August

Half-Day Sitting

Sunday, 8/2, 8:00am – 12:00pm

Founder's Ceremonies

Monday, 8/3, 6:20pm

Tuesday, 8/4, 6:40am

One-Day Sesshin

Saturday, 8/15

Work Day

Sunday, 8/23

Bodhisattva Ceremony

Saturday, 8/29, 9:40am



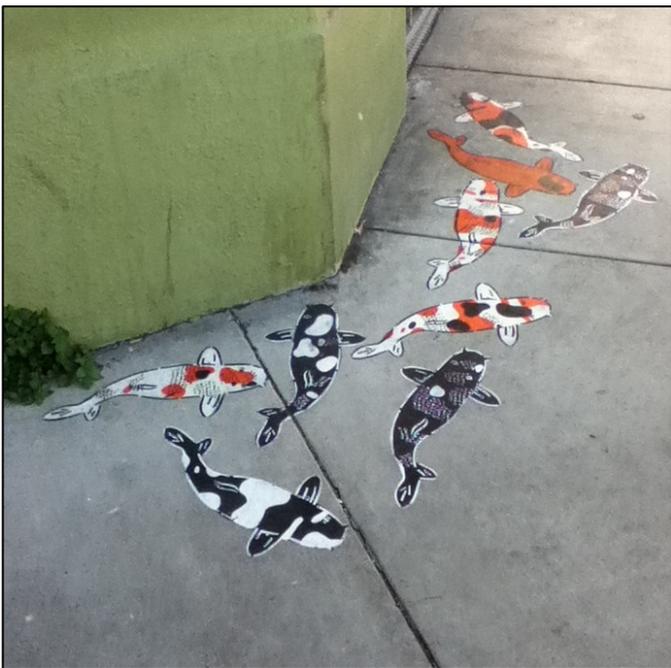
Affirmation of Welcome

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.

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 if you have questions, and look for a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board in mid-June.



Phantom fish who left their element on the corner of Telegraph & Alcatraz

- Genjokoan

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 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.

Family practice schedule:

July 4 Zendo Holiday – no program

Supervised play during the summer months will be arranged ad hoc by prior appointment. Contact Laurie at lauries@kushiki.org several days before the day you want to attend.

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 or Laurie.

Please RSVP for ALL family activities to lauries@kushiki.org. Thank you!

Acceptance

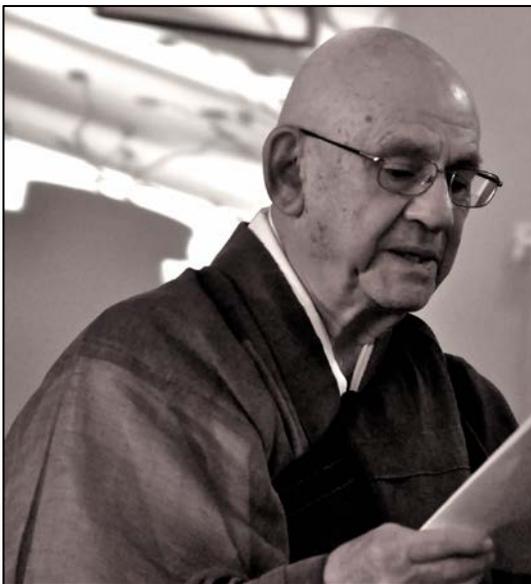
During our last sesshin the word acceptance came up. I didn't think so much about it before I began practicing zazen. During my early years as a novice, there were times when zazen was excruciatingly painful.

Suzuki Roshi was always encouraging us to sit still and not move. Our zazen periods were 40 minutes; just like now. At that time, in the early '60's, his students were mostly novices. He had only been here for five years when I came. Sitting zazen once or twice a week was a significant experience for me until I came to my first Saturday morning.

After the first period and kinhin, everyone sat down again. I thought, "They are going to do this again?" I said to the fellow next to me that this was really painful. He said that yes, it always is.

But somehow I kept coming back. I knew that even so, there was something else that I was not able to explain. So coursing through a 40-minute period of zazen, when the pain would arise I would hope that the bell would ring and save me from my suffering. My whole life at that moment was waiting to be rescued. Saved by the bell! I simply could not be where I was. But in fact, I had no alternative because my intention was to stay through the 40 minutes. Sometimes, just when we thought the bell would ring, Suzuki Roshi would say in his soft voice, "We will sit 10 more minutes." We're bursting at the seams, how are we going to do this for 10 more minutes? But we did. This was our basic training.

Suzuki Roshi taught us the meaning of acceptance: We must open our self to each sensation and become one with it. If you try to escape you will suffer. But it is not so easy to be one with the pain because of the embedded associations of our discriminating mind. Most of us have to go through the painful process before we can truly open up and be free from our conditioned responses. Instead of shutting down and resisting, we open up and accept whatever appears, and instead of narrowing our borders we allow them to expand and include whatever appears. It is counter-intuitive. Instead of gritting our teeth and clenching our fist, we relax our jaw and open our hand. Suzuki Roshi would encourage us by saying that those who have the most difficulty and see it through will have the most benefit.



As soon as an 'uncomfortable' feeling arises and we don't 'like' it and don't 'want' it we form an attachment and begin to suffer. Wanting to hold on to a 'good' feeling, it is painful when it leaves. So in this sense, acceptance means letting go, or freedom from attachment, which is the bedrock of practice. There is no special state of mind to attach to and no special feeling to desire and no special self to hang on to. This can be called bliss.

Suzuki Roshi said he admired the frog sitting completely still on a rock. When a fly buzzes by, without hesitation the frog's tongue darts out and catches it. If he likes it, gulp. If not, ptooi, he spits it out and just keeps sitting. Frogs are really dumb, but who are we to judge?

- Sojun

Sounding Board

The BZC Board has made some adjustments to the board recruitment and election process. We want to make it easier to find sangha members willing to broaden their practice to include a two-year stint serving on the Board as one of its six members-at-large. It has been difficult to find a slate of five or six candidates who are experienced, able to make the commitment of time and energy, and willing to run in a contested election for the three slots on the Board that come up each year. Most people did not like the contested aspect of this process. Those who won the election may have been voted in because of name recognition or popularity, rather than skills they could add to BZC governance. And those who lost, though they were promising candidates, were sometimes disheartened and discouraged about further participation.

The Board has decided to replace the existing procedure for selecting Board members with a more efficient and responsive process. The BZC bylaws do not require more nominees than the number of Board openings available. Therefore, this year the Board will nominate just three people for the three members-at-large open positions. As usual, the Board will put forward these nominees at the September 15 meeting of the BZC membership. Nominations from the floor of the meeting will still be available, in case there are sangha members dissatisfied with the Board's direction or the candidates it proposes.

As in the past, photos and candidate statements of nominees will be posted for a month on the bulletin board. At the October election, BZC members will vote yes or no as to each nominee for the three Board member-at-large positions, just as they do for the Board president, vice president and treasurer (who are nominated by the abbot after consultation with the Board). We are planning to conduct the election electronically by e-mail and by mail-in ballot, in order to insure broad membership participation.

The board has created the Recruitment and Election Committee tasked with encouraging BZC members to consider service as a Board member as an important part of sangha practice. The committee will seek to educate the sangha about what Board service entails and the process for selecting nominees for Board members-at-large. Members can suggest possible new Board nominees to the committee or any current Board member. The committee will evaluate all suggestions for a slate of three nominees it will recommend to the Board.

To address the Board selection process, we will facilitate a Monday morning open discussion on July 6 and set up "board information" tables after some Saturday lectures. Please ask us about serving on the Board and make suggestions of who you think would make skilled Board candidates. After all, our practice place cannot survive without effective governance.

The Board will evaluate this new recruitment and election process after the October election to see whether it should be continued or altered in some way. We welcome your input.

- The Board Recruitment and Election Committee (Ed Herzog, Stephanie Solar, Stan Dewey)



50th Anniversary Party!

BZC will be celebrating its 50th anniversary in 2017. A party will be held in late September of that year. If you'd like to serve on the planning committee please contact Jake Van Akkeren at jvanakkeren@comcast.net.

Lay Ordination

On Saturday, June 6, seven members of the Berkeley Zen Center sangha received Lay Ordination (Zaike Tokudo) from Sojun Weitsman Roshi and Hozan Senauke Sensei. This ceremony takes place once a year at BZC and is a significant rite of passage for each participant and for the whole sangha. We have the feeling that we are all together witnessing and participating as the ordinees receive Buddha's precepts. We welcome these ordinees into the lineage of Shakyamuni Buddha and Suzuki Roshi's family.

Hozan Sensei's Students

Deb Self

Jin Kai Myô Gen

Compassionate Ocean Subtle Source

Sojun Roshi's students

Michael Cole

Kô Shin Dai Ki

Vast Mind Great Capacity

Jeanne Courtney

Mon Shin Hô Etsu

Listening Heart Dharma Joy

Kelsey Hermann

Ten Fu Hô Sei

Heavenly Wind Abundant Spirit

Heather Garnos

Shin Sen An Ryu

Deep Spring Serenely Flowing

Note: Teri Jo Tinus will receive Lay Ordination from Sojun later this year.



From left to right: Deb Self, Michael Cole, Jeanne Courtney, Vice-Abbot Hozan Alan Senauke (preceptor), Leslie Bartholic (ordinee jisha), Kelsey Hermann, Heather Garnos, Jean Selkirk (sewing teacher), Abbot Sojun Mel Weitsman (preceptor).

Four-Day Mountains and Rivers Sesshin July 30-August 2

The annual Mountains and Rivers Sesshin will take place Thursday through Sunday, July 30-August 2, at Point Reyes.

Ryushin Andrea Thach will be joining us as Doshi (officiating priest). Ryushin will be leading our daily discussions of Dogen's "Mountains and Rivers Sutra" and/or other topics of her choice, and she will also be available for one-on-one practice discussions during our free time periods on Friday and Saturday afternoons.

The sesshin will begin with an orientation meeting Wednesday evening, July 29, in the community room. Thursday morning we will carpool to Point Reyes, then hike from the Bear Valley Visitors' Center to Coast Camp, moving at a moderate pace with frequent rest stops and lunch along the way. We will get back to Berkeley around 5:00pm Sunday. All meals are provided and camping experience is not required. Everyone is encouraged to do the full four days, but provision will also be made for those who may have to arrive late.

The sign-up sheet will be posted on the BZC bulletin board. Sign-up deadline is Saturday, July 25. The fee is \$75. If you have any questions, please contact Christy Calame at ccalame@earthlink.net.



Nepal Earthquake Relief

At the May 31 meeting, the BZC Board voted to donate \$1,000 to the Upaya Zen Center Nepal Earthquake Relief Fund. Upaya Zen Center has a community network of Buddhist chaplains, and other public servants in Nepal who use local knowledge and resources to efficiently get emergency supplies to underserved areas damaged in the recent earthquake.

The Board invites community members to consider joining them in this response.



Zendotime or, Manas' Lullaby

Zendo time,
and the sittin' is easy.
Thoughts stop jumpin',
and the knees feel fine.
Oh, you breathe in and out,
And the wall is good-lookin'.
So hush, little manas,
Don't you cry.

Well one of these mornin's,
You're gonna rise up from bowin'
and you'll open your heart
to accept everything.
Every day's a good day
just as it is.
So keep on a sittin'
with the Buddha and the sangha close by.

- Mary Beth Lamb

BZC Directory Addendum

A listing of additions and corrections to the 2015 BZC Directory is available in the community room underneath the calendar. You can also contact the Office Manager at BZCoffice manager@gmail.com or call 510.845.2403 if you would like a copy sent to you.



Come and sit with us...

The weekday zazen schedule includes informal zazen at noon.

Monday through Friday

5:40am - 7:00am || Zazen, service, soji (temple cleaning)

12:00pm - 12:30pm || Zazen

5:40pm - 6:30pm || Zazen, service

Saturday Speakers, 10:15 am

July 4 – Zendo Holiday

July 11 – Sojun Roshi

July 18 – Hozan Alan Senauke

July 25 – Sojun Roshi

Friday and Monday Talk Schedule

June 29 Monday 6:25am – Open Discussion

July 3 Friday 5:40pm – Chris Evans

July 6 Monday 6:25am – New Board Election Process Discussion

July 13 Monday 6:25am – Marty Kovach

July 20 Monday 6:25am – Cole Bartholomew

July 27 Monday 6:25am – Paul Farber

NEWSLETTER SUBMISSION DEADLINE

**Third Friday of the month before each
issue. Submit items to
bzcnewsletter@gmail.com.**

**August deadline:
Friday, July 17, 8:00 pm**

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