

# Sangha Life

The Missouri Zen Center  
220 Spring Avenue  
Webster Groves, MO 63119  
314-961-6138

[www.missourizencenter.org](http://www.missourizencenter.org)  
December 2013



## Paradigm Shift

We have problems of power politics, ponzi economics, pyramid society, and pop or pomp culture. Actually we have pseudo culture, not really culture or cultivation to cease and change karmas.

Organisms orient self sustenance and survival, homeostasis and metastasis with their karma-machines and karma-kinetics. Evolution is also devolution - division and diversion.

Humans have developed ego infatuation, elation, and estrangement, which become the triple poisons of delusion, craving, and anger, causing samsara, suffering, and strife as hellish beings, hungry ghosts, fighting devils, etc.

Small separated self is like a cancer cell, spreading, smothering, and slaying the whole organism, organization, organic systems - individual, social, ecological systems with wars, disasters, destructions, demises, etc.

Wholly wholesome whole requires paradigm shift from sinfulness (sick separation like disruptive cancer or bubble) to holiness (wholesome whole like harmonious body or ocean).

Holiness (hagia, ariya: wholeness) is inevitable for and interdependent with health (wholesomeness). Harmonious unity of them is essential for happiness (wholly wholesomeness).

Holy harmonious healthy happiness is possible in sitting, stopping karmas, and settling in holy harmonious healthy realm of unconditioned peace and unsurpassed awakening in ultimate truth, goodness, and beauty.

Rosan Daido

12/1/13



"Life and death are of supreme importance.  
Time swiftly passes by and opportunity is lost.  
Each of us should strive to awaken.  
Awaken.  
Take heed, do not squander your life."

Dogen Zenji (1200 - 1253)



### *On the purity of mind*

*From the very beginning of practice the mind is pure. Why then the need to practice Zazen? It is because of our attachments, aversions, and delusions that cloud this pure mind like clouds in the night sky blocking out the bright, full moon. We don't think that the moon has lost its luster, or disappeared, simply because there are clouds obscuring our view. In the same way, our judgments, scheming, and the distinctions that we create lead to the mostly cloudy conditions within our minds. It is as though someone has held out the most brilliant jewel in front of us, and we have placed our hand over our eyes insisting that we don't see a thing.*

*When we practice Zazen, we can begin by knowing that our pure mind is already with us. It is not that there is something that we have to do to create this mind, rather there are some things we need to not do, to simply let go of, even abandon, in order for us to get the opportunity to fully penetrate this pure mind or "Thusness." Also referred to as "prajna" (experiential wisdom), this aspect of shunyata (emptiness) is the essence of this very life, here and now, before distinctions and attachments arise.*

Jimu

### **Donations to MZC Will Be Appreciated**

Please consider a donation to the Missouri Zen Center. All donations are tax-deductible. If you are in a position to contribute financially please do so to the extent you are able. We know that everyone has been affected by the state of the economy and if you are not able to contribute financially then consider a donation of you time and talents. We suggest a \$25 per month donation for those who can afford it though we gratefully accept whatever you can contribute. If you are in a position to donate more at the end of the year, please know that it will be welcome. If you are not able to donate money then your presence is still valued.



*You should study not only that you become a mother when your child is born, but also that you become a child.*

Dogen Zenji (1200 - 1253)



Here are some words of the Tathagata that I find fascinating - it is part of **The Shorter Instruction to Malunkya** from the Cula-Malunkiyovada Sutta.

Rick

*Bear always in mind what it is that I have not said, and what it is that I have said.*

*And what have I not said?*

*I have not said that the world is eternal; I have not said that the world is not eternal; I have not said that the world is finite; I have not said that the world is infinite; I have not said that the soul and the body are identical; I have not said that the soul is one thing and the body another; I have not said that the saint exists after death; I have not said that the saint does not exist after death; I have not said that the saint both exists and does not exist after death; I have not said that the saint neither exists nor does not exist after death. And why have I not said this?*

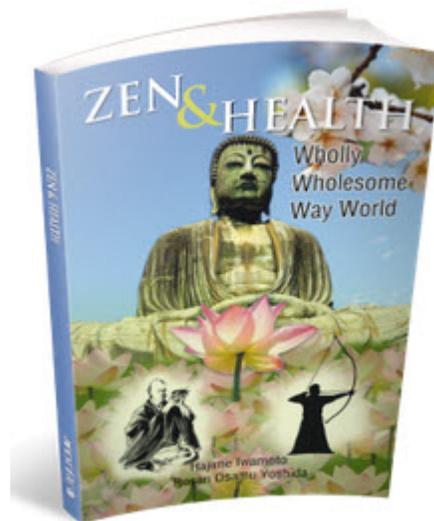
*Because this profits not, nor has to do with the fundamentals of religion, nor tends to absence of passion, cessation, quiescence, the supernatural faculties, supreme wisdom, and Nirvana; therefore have I not said it.*

*And what have I said?*

*Dissatisfaction have I said; the origin of dissatisfaction have I said; the cessation of dissatisfaction have I said; and the path leading to the cessation of dissatisfaction have I said [i.e. now called the Four Holy Truths]. And why have I said this? Because this does profit, has to do with the fundamentals of religion, and tends to absence of passion, cessation, quiescence, knowledge, supreme wisdom, and Nirvana; therefore have I said it.*

This tells me that Buddha was eminently practical and saw no real value in discussing and arguing metaphysics and the mind's abstractions. Primarily I see that he only cared about activity which could transform lives now.

*An alternative translation can be found at <http://www.accesstoinight.org/tipitaka/mn/mn.063.than.html>, which puts it in context and also provides the famous simile of the poisoned arrow.*



[www.zen-and-health.com](http://www.zen-and-health.com)

## **ZEN & HEALTH** **Wholly Wholesome Way World**

By Hajime Iwamoto & Rosan Osamu Yoshida

This book tells the true significance, necessity, merits, and possibility of the practice of Zen, Awakened Way, and the wholly wholesome way in everyone's all daily activities and throughout one's whole life in a new, original perspective and prognosis of them. Zazen, sitting meditation, stops all karmas (physical, verbal, mental actions and action results, which became our psycho-physical beings and behaviors), thus witnesses primordial purity, peace and prognosis. Zen is the core practice (cultivation/verification) of the Awakened Way (Buddhism), realizing unconditioned peace (nirvana) and unsurpassed awakening (anuttara sambodhi) into existence and wakeful life by them in the wholly wholesome way and world. From this vantage point it pervades and penetrates through all actions in harmonious, healthy, happy breathing, body-mouth-mind bearing, cooking, eating, executing errands, cultivating capacities, sporting in skills, etc. Anyone can come and see the detailed description of how Zen is applied and appreciated in breathing, calming and clearing minds and hearts, cooking, eating, sporting, doing duties, transforming the life ways and world in this book.

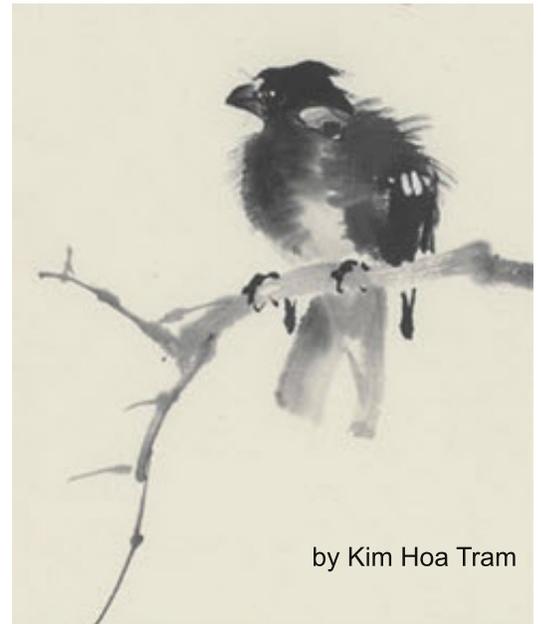
## Thoughts On Time's Turning

The turning of the seasons, the movement of the earth around the sun, the spiraling of the sun around the galaxy, the movement of the galaxy through the totality – here near the solstice and the perihelion when the culture celebrates change – death and rebirth – sitting and thinking. The culture has been doing it for thousands of years – a remnant of sunlight's waxing and waning, the changing of the angle of the sun's rays upon the earth and the heat it provides, and the growth of plants. So many cultural practices have developed around these events.

Past, present, and future merge, or don't. How can one review a past year without getting stuck and leaving awareness of the present? How can one plan, intend, or steer oneself into the future without losing the openness of presence? What does the Tathagata, the One Thus-Being, say about these questions? Is it possible that the three times all reside in one? Does the middle way include the utilization of all three? Maybe they all move in spirals like all matter in the cosmos – like electrons around protons, planets around stars, stars around black holes. In the end there is only the present. In Dogen's *Yuji* (sporting play) all phenomena possess time or are possessed by time in so far as karma determines their future based upon their past. Time and space are both interpenetrated and interpenetrating in dependent origination.

How does this effect the homeless guy staying in the back room? Or the events in my journey that play out in dreams at night in strange series of puzzling encounters. Driving to the zendo and hearing Southpark's Mr. Hankey's Christmas Classic "Dead, dead, dead" song - "Dead, dead, dead, someday we'll all be dead, . . ." - now that's a worthwhile contemplation, but there's no charnel ground where I can meditate upon a rotting corpse, but the memory of my deceased mother's open bed sore with it's exposure of muscle and sinew, which developed at supposedly one of the best retirement places in the city, is quite enough. But rarely do I give it sustained thought, a moment now and then, and off to a new thought or mind process.

Now the sun is out, it's rather warm, the light vibrates with a thousand colors and grows stronger. All over the earth the anthropocene era is playing out in myriad ways.



by Kim Hoa Tram

Two-leggeds arrogantly assert themselves over all other living organisms, though some do attempt to steer spaceship earth into a more enlightened way of being.

I arrive at the zendo, turn off the motorized machine that carried my water-bag body, walk up to the white building past the remains of the summer plants, doff shoes, enter, bow, sit, settle down, stretch, hang my head on the ceiling string, and let it all go – empty the mind, allow pure awareness to emerge as the vibrations of the gong fade away. The body breathes, eyes see, ears hear, mind does its thing - thoughts go and go again - only now . . . . . *may all beings be well, may all beings be happy, peace, peace, peace.*

Winter solstice eve 2013

Rick

Abandon all relations  
and put all concerns to rest,  
not thinking of good and bad,  
not entertaining right and wrong.  
Still the driving of your heart,  
mind, and consciousness. Stop the  
measuring of memories, ideas, and  
meditations. No design, even that of  
becoming a Buddha, should be harbored.

Dogen Zenji (1200 - 1253)