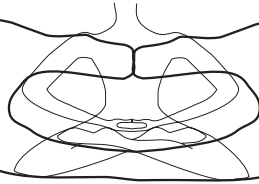


Sangha Life



The Missouri Zen Center

December, 2010-January, 2011

The Missouri Zen Center

220 Spring Avenue
Webster Groves, MO 63119
(314) 961-6138



Printed on recycled paper

Coming Events

- Dec. 19: holiday potluck
- Dec. 31: New Year's Eve sitting
- Jan. 23: one-day sit
- Jan. 30: MZC Board/sangha meeting



Visit Our Web Site:

www.missourizencenter.org

*Address Correction
Requested*

Sangha Life Will Be Quarterly in 2011

During the Oct. 17 sangha meeting we decided to publish *Sangha Life* on a quarterly schedule starting with the next issue, February-April 2011. Going from 6 to 4 issues a year will reduce MZC's paper use and paper and postage costs. Issues of *Sangha Life* will be published in February, May, August, and November.

If you have an idea for an article or have information you wish to include in *Sangha Life*, please check with Kuryo in advance of the deadline for each issue (approximately the 20th of the month preceding the issue date).

MZC Cookbook Seeks Recipes

Some members of our sangha are starting to collect recipes

for a MZC fundraising cookbook. Anyone who has recipes to contribute can put a copy into Kathleen's mailbox at MZC. If you'd prefer to email your recipe, send it to [MZC's email address](#).

Holiday Scheduling

At this time we expect all regularly scheduled zazen periods to take place over the end of the year holidays. We may need to recruit doans to fill in on certain zazen periods. If you would like to doan but haven't done it before, please check with one of the current doans to receive training. Being doan is not difficult and it is an excellent way to support all beings and the sangha. Please watch the MZC e-list for any changes in scheduling and requests for doans to fill in on certain days.

Inside Dharma's Holiday Card Project

by Kalen

Well, it's that time again, when Inside Dharma members and friends send holiday cards to people in prison. I can't tell you how many times I've heard how important all the holiday cards we send are to those who receive them! Some say it was the most important thing that happened to them while inside. You see, mail is a biggie in prison. It means someone cares and you are still connected to the outside world.

Each year we put together a list, make mailing labels, return labels and add the stamps and the cards. All you have to do is pick up a kit and either write your name in a card or a message. Some people have put together a page of messages. What you cannot do is mail stamps, sparkles or sprinkles, cards that have things stuck to them (we have the right kind of cards) or any more than 4 pages of print enclosed in the envelope. You can use only your first name or make up a name. One year we had Rudolph writing!

We have the kits at our center on Thursday nights. Or if you would like the addresses and return address and will supply your own cards and stamps, just email me (kalen1@att.net) and I'll forward the lists. There are 45 names on the list this year.

Rohatsu Sesshin & Lay Ordination, Dec. 3-5

Zen monasteries commemorate Buddha's awakening by holding a weeklong sesshin ending on Dec. 8, Rohatsu, the day Buddha awakened according to Zen tradition. MZC held its Rohatsu sesshin from Friday, Dec. 3 through the Sunday service on Sunday, Dec. 5.

Four people took lay ordination on Sunday, Dec. 5 following family sitting: Erin, Richard, Sheryll, and Steve. Congratulations to all of you!

Holiday Potluck, Dec. 19

Junsho is planning to return to MZC for a few days near the winter solstice. A potluck lunch in his honor and to celebrate the winter solstice is being planned for Sunday, Dec. 19 following family sitting. Please join us to welcome Junsho back and wish him well as he returns to Tassajara following winter break.

New Year's Eve Sitting

We expect to hold MZC's New Year's Eve special sitting on Friday, Dec. 31. At this time we expect that it will follow the usual format: a 40 minute zazen period beginning at 9 p.m. followed by 10 minutes of kinhin, with zazen and kinhin

repeating until shortly before midnight, when the bell is rung 108 times to mark the changing of the year. After the bell-ringing ends, participants enjoy a potluck vegetarian supper. Please check the MZC e-list to confirm the schedule for New Year's Eve and whether or not the 8 a.m. sitting on Saturday, Jan. 1 will take place.

January One-Day Sit, Meeting Dates

The next one-day sitting will take place at MZC on Sunday, Jan. 23, 2011. The next Board/sangha meeting(s) will take place at MZC on Sunday, Jan. 30, 2011 following family sitting. More info on each of these will be posted to MZC's e-list closer to the dates each takes place.

Letter from the Board of Directors

As 2010 ends, the MZC Board expresses our profound gratitude to our teacher Rosan for continuing to embody and promote the Awakened Way, the Global Ethic, and voluntary simplicity. Your ongoing presence and example inspires and strengthens our practice.

We also express our profound gratitude to the sangha for your support in awakening all beings together and for all of your contributions to MZC over the course of 2010. Because of your efforts, MZC remains in good physical and fiscal standing. Thank you to all for your efforts!

For those of you in a position to make an extra donation at the end of the year, please know that we appreciate donations of any size and that we will put them to good and careful use.

Another way you can contribute to MZC is through Schnucks' eScrip program, which donates a percentage of sales made by participating members to up to three nonprofit groups of their choice, including MZC. Please sign up for this program if you have not yet done so. Sign-up materials are available on MZC's kitchen counter or at Schnucks stores. To donate, present your card before the checkout process begins, otherwise your purchase percentage may not properly be contributed.

May our practice sustain and support all beings in 2011.



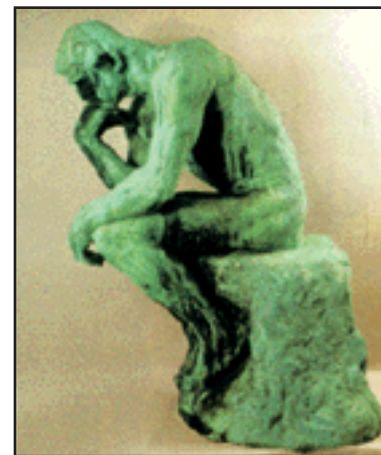
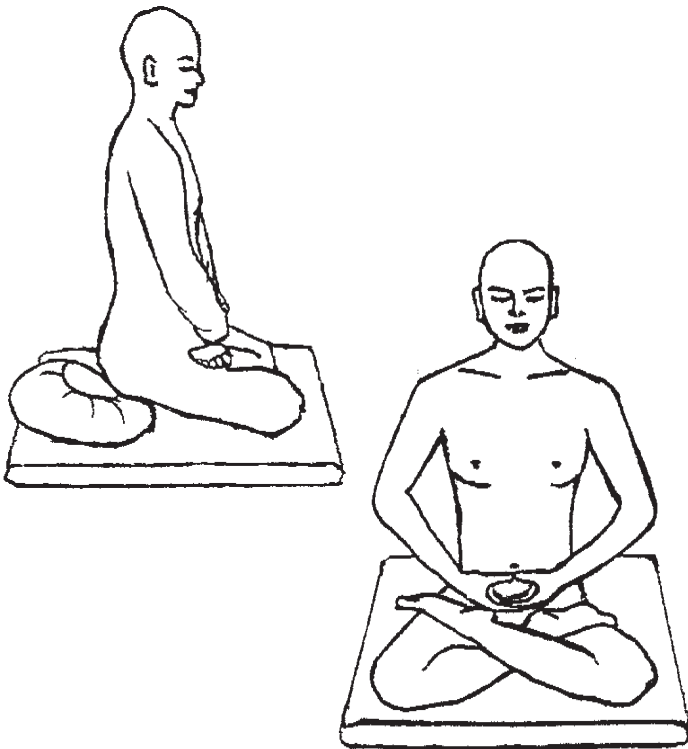
Correction: The title of the article: *How We Can Solve Global Problems in Sangha Life, June-July, 2010* is corrected to: *How We Can Live Every Day A Good Day*

Zazen: Changing Views by Changing Behavior

by Kuryo

David Roberts, one of the editors at Grist.org, has been running a series of articles about how to reduce the amount of energy used in the US. One of his recent posts concerned a commonly-held idea among advocacy groups that education must precede changes in behavior: unless people know why they need to change something they are doing, they won't have the motivation needed to change it. However, research into behavioral change suggests that education alone often does not lead to changes in behavior. Learning exactly what barriers exist to adopting a desired behavior and reducing those barriers, along with increasing the benefits from adopting the behavior, actually do effect behavioral change, according to some of the recent research. Once people change their behavior, only then do they change their view of who they are and why they do what they do.

Reflecting on this article, it struck me that one way to look at zazen is as a form of behavior change that in turn leads to a change in how we view ourselves. Sometimes we joke that instead of doing something, we should just sit there! But those of us who have sat zazen know that it is far from just sitting there. Zazen is active sitting, as opposed to the passive sitting that we do at other times. Zazen fully engages the body-mind in upright sitting. We come to balance. In my experience, what happens in zazen is that whatever thought or mind-state I am having is not immediately followed by the usual unconscious, habitual action. Because I cannot go straight to that unconscious action when I sit zazen - especially when I sit zazen at MZC, as part of the sangha - the link between the thought and the action is broken, at least at that time. Now if that link is only broken once, chances are the next time that thought occurs I'll go straight to the habitual action. But if I sit zazen many times, that thought is bound to come up many times; the link between the thought and action is thus severed many times. Eventually, I will have the thought outside of zazen and, *because the link between thought and action has been severed many times during zazen*, I will, for a change, not go straight to the habitual action. In the resulting spaciousness I will be able to choose a more-appropriate action based on what is actually happening at that instant. Zazen reduces one of the major barriers to changing habitual actions: the tight and usually unconscious link between thought or mind-state and the action that follows it. Now that I have been sitting zazen for over a decade, I have experienced the relief that comes from not going straight from certain thoughts to their linked habitual actions. In turn, my thoughts have changed: less energy goes into maintaining long-held ideas about my perceived shortcomings, leaving me with more space and energy to respond more fully to other people.



In contrast to zazen posture, the thinker is weighed down by the thoughts and worries occupying the front of the head. The arm is used as a support, placing undue pressure on the chin and wrist. The lungs are unable to fill completely. The position is not stable, tending to fall forward off the stone base.

Why We Must Attain Ultimate Truth and Unconditioned Peace

by Rosan Daido

Problems: We have been talking about how we can attain ultimate truth and unconditioned peace. Now we must talk about why we all must attain them. Unless we do so, we are doomed to death and destruction, individually and collectively. Humans are now the source of the entire global problematique and in the terminal stage of it, as epitomized in global mass extinction including of our own species, even feared within this century due to 40% phytoplankton (major organism, food chain source, oxygen source and sink) decrease, etc.

Causes: Humans are deluded in truth and destroying peace. They are the most selfish due to their physical movements and mental fabrications. Languages separate inseparable, interrelated reality and reify dynamic, impermanent phenomena. The fundamental delusion is the constant (self-same) independent (self-sovereign) "self." This is the first mismatch of button and buttonhole for all following mismatches. Delusion leads to bondage, discrimination, exploitation, extermination (five calamities).

Solutions: Humans must be awakened from delusions and act in truth and peace. Humans are dangerously driven by karmas (past/present, physical/mental actions/action-results); they must constantly and continuously stop them to return to truth and peace. Self-centered, self-claimed delusions, doctrines, dogmas, etc. are neither universal, ultimate truth nor unconditioned, absolute peace, thus cannot be solutions. Only stopping karmas, seeing selfless wholly truth and settling in indestructible wholesome peace can be conducive to a real solution. Holiness (wholly wholesome) is essential for truth, goodness, and beauty as well as peace and happiness.

Methods: We talked about the Eightfold Noble (better rendered Holy from etymological cognate *arya*) Way. Right seeing or view is the right (actual, existing: *sammâ* from *sat*, being) observation (as in natural sciences) and right philosophy (not doxa or dogma). This must be followed by right thinking (inference). These procedures (*paññâ*, prognosis/ intellectual realm, criterions of truth) are followed by actual physical right speech, action and living (*sîla*, morality/volition realm). These lead to and are supported by striving, mindfulness and concentration (*samâdhi*, concentration/emotion realm). These must be walked step by step. Freedom (*philia-domos*, *priya-dhâman*) means friendship, true familiarity.

E-mail List

Subscribe to our e-mail list at:

<http://groups.google.com/group/mzclist>

Once you are signed up, you can send messages to the list using this address:

mzclist@googlegroups.com

Regular Zendo Schedule

Sunday

6:20 am Zazen
 7:00 am Service (sutras)
 7:20 am Zazen
 8:00 am Kinhin
 8:10 am Short Zazen
 8:30 am Lecture (Teisho)
 9:30 am Work period (Samu) & tea
You are welcome to come throughout the morning, but please do not enter the zendo during zazen. Enter quietly at other times.
 10:00-10:20 am Family Sitting
 10:20-11:00 am Children's activities

Monday

6:00-6:50 am Zazen & Heart Sutra
 Beginner's Night Registration required (at least 24 hours in advance)
 6:30-7:00 pm Instruction
 7:00-7:20 pm Zazen
 7:20-8:00 pm Discussion/Q&A

Tuesday

6:00-6:50 am Zazen & Heart Sutra
 7:00-7:40 pm Zazen
 7:40-9:00 pm Tea/discussion

Wednesday

6:00-6:40 am Zazen
 6:40-6:50 am Kinhin
 6:50-7:40 am Zazen & Heart Sutra
 7:00-7:40 pm Zazen

Thursday

6:00-6:50 am Zazen & Heart Sutra
 7:00-7:40 pm Zazen
 7:50-9:00 pm Dharma Study
 Group (call for details)

Friday

6:00-6:50 am Zazen & Heart Sutra
 7:00-7:40 pm Zazen

Saturday

8:00-8:50 am Zazen & Heart Sutra

