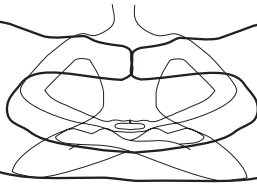


# Sangha Life



**The Missouri Zen Center**

**June-July, 2005**

**The Missouri Zen Center**

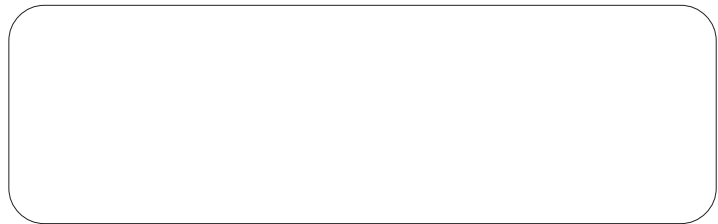
220 Spring Avenue  
Webster Groves, MO 63119  
(314) 961-6138



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## Coming Events

- July 2: One day sesshin
- July 13: Rosan's return
- Sept. 3-5: Japanese Festival



*Address Correction  
Requested*

Visit Our Web Site:  
[www.missourizencenter.org](http://www.missourizencenter.org)

## Rosan returns to St. Louis

Our teacher Rosan will be returning to St. Louis the evening of July 13. We welcome him back and wish him a safe journey. He'll remain in St. Louis through about the end of September (he will be in Minnesota as one of the teachers for the Great Sky Sesshin being held from August 20-27). Please come and enjoy sitting with us this summer!

## Announcement-only email list created

The Zen Center's listserv offers subscribers information on special events, schedule changes, and volunteer opportunities for the Zen Center as well as information of a more general nature, such as questions and answers about our practice, information relating to the Three Pillars of our practice (zazen, voluntary simplicity, and the Global Ethic), events around town related to Buddhism, and so forth. To join it, see the article elsewhere in this newsletter. For those of you who prefer to receive email only about special events, schedule changes, and volunteer opportunities at the Zen Center, an address list has been created. Only those announcements from the Zen Center listserv will be forwarded to the address list.

If you are not already on that list, email Kuryo at [cschossers@yahoo.com](mailto:cschossers@yahoo.com) and she will add your name to it.

## Zen Center works on meeting codes ... help us by taking firewood!

The Zen Center recently underwent an occupancy permit inspection conducted by the city of Webster Groves. The new occupancy permit is the final requirement the Zen Center needs to meet to fulfill the conditions of the use permit it was granted last December. A number of items were identified that are in noncompliance with city codes. The Zen Center is in the process of bringing them into compliance. Thank you to everyone who has been part of the process to obtain the conditional use permit and fulfill its conditions!

One of the items the Zen Center needs to do for its occupancy permit is to remove the woodpile remaining from the tree which fell last year. Anyone who can use the wood in the woodpile may take what they can use. While a small contribution to the Zen Center for the wood taken

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would be gratefully received, it is not a necessity. Please take what you want soon ... the remainder will be chipped by a tree service company before long.

## Sesshin at Zen Center on July 2

A day-long sesshin will take place on Saturday, July 2. Sesshin, an extended period of sitting, allows us to sharpen our awareness by seeing more clearly how the mind operates. The extended sitting during a sesshin can allow the mind to settle more deeply as well. Please join us for the sesshin.

The sesshin schedule is as follows:

6:20 am	zazen
7:00 am	kinhin
7:10 am	zazen
7:50 am	morning service (as on Sunday morning)
8:10 am	zazen
8:50 am	long kinhin
9:20 am	zazen
10:00 am	teisho followed by samu; family sitting also
Noon	oryoki (formal lunch)
1:30 pm	zazen
2:10 pm	kinhin
2:20 pm	zazen
3:00 pm	kinhin
3:10 pm	zazen
3:50 pm	afternoon service ( <i>Shushogi</i> )
4:00 pm	tea and discussion

You may join us for as long as you like. Please enter or leave quietly during kinhin, the morning service, or at any other break such as samu or lunch.

For those who attend the usual sitting at 8:00 am on Saturday morning and cannot stay for the full sesshin, you may wish to join us for the sitting from 8:10-8:50 am and leave quietly following that sitting.

The family sitting will be held as usual at 10:00 am.

## Volunteers Needed Labor Day Weekend!

Our biggest fundraising event of the year will occur on Labor Day weekend, which this year is Saturday, September 3 through Monday, September 5, when the Zen Center runs a food booth at the Japanese Festival taking place at the Missouri Botanical Garden. For many people in our sangha our presence at the Japanese Festival has been their introduction to the Zen Center or to the practice of Zen. Thus this event is not only an important fundraiser, helping to keep the Zen Center in operation, but is also an opportunity to put our practice into action and to bring it to the wider public. It takes many volunteers to make our food booth run safely and in an enjoyable manner for all involved. Please plan to spend a few hours working at our booth on one or more days during the Festival. More details on how to participate will be forthcoming in the next issue of Sangha Life. Enjoy the Japanese Festival's many activities when you are not working at our booth; the Festival is one of St. Louis' premier cultural events and is a great way to learn more about Japan and Japanese culture.



## Living the Global Ethic Why is Simplicity so Difficult to Practice?

*by Kuryo*

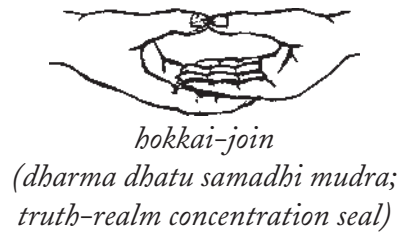
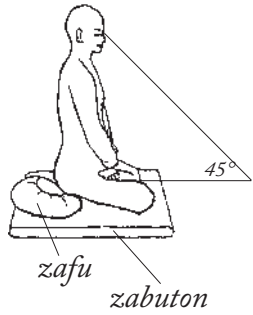
Anyone who has tried practicing voluntary simplicity, whether it be in limiting consumption of goods or in limiting work hours or other activities, quickly comes to realize that despite its name, voluntary simplicity is not simple to practice. What makes simplicity so difficult?

Recently Rachel's Environment and Health News, an online newsletter covering environmental and health issues, published a two part series called The Structure of Harm ([www.rachel.org](http://www.rachel.org), #817 and #818). The author, Skip Spitzer, describes interlocking structures developed by and useful to corporations. He explains how this large-scale structure acts to frustrate efforts to control damage caused by corporate practices and particularly efforts to make fundamental changes that would prevent damaging practices from continuing.

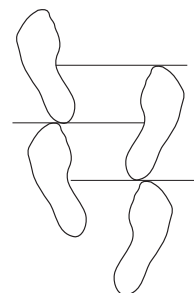
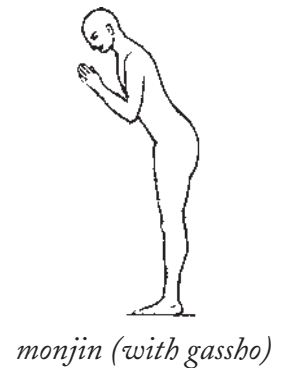
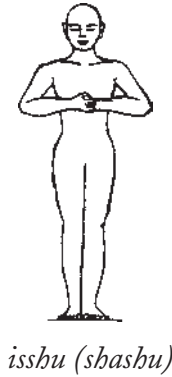
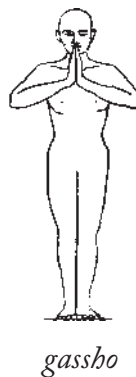
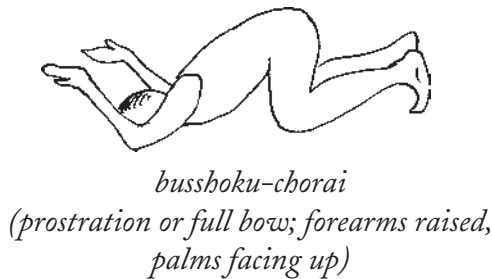
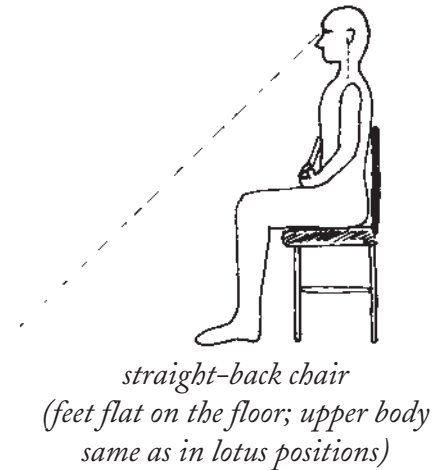
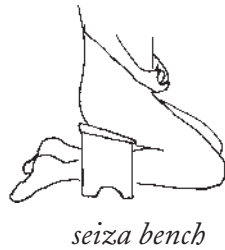
What relevance does this have for voluntary simplicity? Often simplicity is thought of as a purely personal practice, something entirely under the control of the person who decides to practice it. The individualism necessary to the large-scale structure of harm contributes to the popularity of the individualistic approach to simplicity. For instance, if someone is working so many hours that he or she has no time for other aspects of life considered as or more important, the solution offered by many advocates of simplicity is to work fewer hours. They suggest finding a new job with better hours, negotiating with your supervisor to lessen or otherwise change your working hours, and so forth. But they ignore the structural aspects that make it very difficult to reduce working hours: at-will employment for all but some union members, few good part-time jobs and those coming without benefits, the need to drive profits higher by reducing labor costs, mergers and outsourcing leading to fewer jobs, and so on. We are enmeshed in social, economic, and cultural forces that are mostly not of our making and that are very resistant to change. Rosan often reminds us that karma is habit energy: actions that we engage in without awareness of what causes those actions and the effects those actions have on ourselves and other beings. Karma seems to operate on a societal level as well. Corporate karma pushes us to consume ever more, and to work ever longer hours, because that is what maximizes profit for corporations. Corporate managers must continually seek to increase profits, otherwise they will be fired and managers hired who will put profit above all else. Mainstream media presents all this as normal, in fact needed in order for corporations to remain competitive. The culture moves to its current state, where working hours continue to grow and workers remain subject to their workplaces even at home through the use of email, cell phones, and similar technologies that enable far-reaching corporate control of our lives.

This is not to suggest that we should give up on attempts to live more simply. On the contrary, we can seek to understand how we get caught in corporate karma as well as our individual karma and awaken from both. Where we can make efforts to reduce overconsumption and direct that which remains to products made in more socially just and environmentally benign ways, we can do so. We can seek to reduce work hours when possible and resist the tendency to overschedule ourselves and other family members, especially children. Spitzer suggests that we also seek to connect our personal struggles to the larger structures of harm. One way to do this is to read analyses such as Spitzer's, so that we understand the

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*agura*  
(*both feet beneath the thighs*;  
*this posture is very unstable*  
*unless you place cushions to*  
*support the knees*)



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large-scale structures that constrict our actions. Then, when we discuss our choices with family and friends, we can explain what we are doing and why it is so difficult, for ourselves and others. When we act in concert with others to stop an immediate harm, we can connect what we are doing to the networks of power that helped to create the harm and support people and organizations who are working to dismantle the structure of harm. If possible, we can devote some of our own activism to longer-term projects to deconstruct those structures. In so doing, we can practice simplicity to the extent possible, serve as an inspiration to family members, friends, and colleagues, and also change the large-scale structures that make it so difficult for all of us to live simple, sane, joyful lives.

## LIVE LIBERAL LIFE!

*Rosan Daido*

Latin *libere* is related to *love*. Liberal is to love; lend all and let all live. Stingy is selfish, sinful and serves for nothing. The Buddha said that people look up to the liberal. People look down on the selfish. Liberal ones live limitless life, enjoying limitless truth, beauty and goodness. Selfish ones shut themselves in small shells, spoiling themselves and others.

## Zen Center E-mail List

All members and friends of the sangha are invited to subscribe to the Missouri Zen Center e-mail list. To subscribe, send an e-mail message from the address you wish to use for list messages to:

missourizencenter-subscribe  
@buddhistcouncil.us

The message field should remain blank.

You will receive a message asking you to confirm your subscription. Follow the directions in that message and your address will then be added to the list. If you encounter difficulties, consult the list owner at this address:

missourizencenter-owner  
@buddhistcouncil.us



## Regular Zendo Schedule

### Sunday

6:20-7:00 am	Zazen
7:00-7:20 am	Service (sutras)
7:20-8:00 am	Zazen
8:00-8:10 am	Kinhin
8:10-8:30 am	Zazen
8:30 am	Talk/discussion, work period, tea

*You are welcome to come throughout the morning, but please do not enter the zendo during zazen. Enter quietly at other times.*

### Monday

6:00-6:40 am	Zazen
6:30-7:00 pm	Instruction
7:00-7:20 pm	Zazen
7:20-9:00 pm	Discussion/questions

### Tuesday

6:00-6:40 am	Zazen
7:00-7:40 pm	Zazen
7:40-9:00 pm	Tea/discussion

### Wednesday

6:00-6:40 am	Zazen
7:00-7:40 pm	Zazen
After sitting	Writing Practice

### Thursday

6:00-6:40 am	Zazen
7:00-7:40 pm	Zazen

### Friday

6:00-6:40 am	Zazen
7:00-7:40 pm	Zazen
After sitting	Dinner out

### Saturday

8:00-8:40 am	Zazen
8:40-9:30 am	Discussion
10:00-10:30 am	Family Sitting

Work periods may be scheduled following zazen. Any changes to this schedule: please contact the Zen Center.

