



o n e n e s s



## IN MEMORIUM

Professor Alfred Bloom, one of the world's foremost authorities on Shin Buddhism died at the age of 90 in Honolulu on August 25, 2017. Born Nov. 9, 1926, in Philadelphia, Bloom graduated from Harvard Divinity School in 1963. He was an associate professor of religion at the University of Oregon from 1961 to 1970, a UH-Manoa professor from 1970 to 1986 and dean of the Institute of Buddhist Studies in Berkeley, Calif., from 1986 to 1994. After retiring in 1994, he and his wife, Dorothy Nell Pease Bloom, returned to Hawaii where he continued writing and lecturing.

He founded the Futaba Memorial Lecture Series on Buddhism and supported the Pacific Buddhist Academy. In 2002 Bloom received the Living Treasures of Hawaii Award from the Hongwanji Legislative Assembly. In 2016 he received the Third Annual President's Award from the Institute of Buddhist Studies.

In a 2015 interview, Bloom said he hoped to be remembered for sharing Amida Buddha's compassion for all people through his many books and spiritual articles on the teachings of Shinran Shonin. Professor Bloom's Funeral Service was held in Honolulu on Saturday, September 2, 2017 at the Honpa Hongwanji Hawaii Betsuin.

In an interview before the service, Professor Bloom's daughter said her father was going to get the last word at the service. "He does not want a eulogy. My brother and I will be reading my father's words—it's very positive, very uplifting, and it's very Alfred Bloom—forever the professor, forever the lecturer," she said, with a smile.

Besides Bloom's wife of 66 years and his daughter Lily Bloom Domingo, he is survived by son Ross T. Bloom of Oregon, six grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

Editor's Note: For many years, Professor Bloom was gracious enough to be a guest Sensei supporting the curriculum of our Bright Dawn Center's Lay Ministry Program. He would dial in and join the Sunday group tele-conference and answer students' questions on his chapter on Shin Buddhism in that weeks assigned reading. He was such a valuable resource and added to the richness of the students' learning experience.

On a personal note, Rev. Koyo was honored to be part of a panel for several conferences held in Hawaii. At a conference held in 2000 on the Big Island, the panel included Professor Bloom, Dr. Taitetsu Unno, and Dr. Kenneth Tanaka. In such esteemed company, Rev. Koyo said

he felt like a pair of brown shoes at a formal tuxedo affair. Here is a nice photo of Dr. Tanaka, Rev. Koyo, and Prof. Bloom at a 2012 conference held at the Buddhist Study Center in Honolulu. A humorous exchange from that conference was when Dr. Tanaka commented on Rev. Koyo mentioning how his late father, Rev. Gyomay Kubose, always liked to tell Dharma School children to thank their shoes because they protected their feet all day to the point of wearing out the soles, to which Prof. Bloom quipped, "But Buddhists don't believe in a soul!" This is one of Rev. Koyo's favorite memories of Professor Bloom Sensei.



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## HUMANS, LISTEN UP!

By Dharma Dan



Adrienne Sensei, as the Oneness Newsletter editor, gave me a stack of Dharma Glimpses to look over for inclusion in the coming issue. I was surprised by how often “teaching stories” for humans involve other animals. I chose two Glimpses for this issue, one involved a donkey and the other a lizard. I also noticed that Rev. Koyo wrote an article about the Chicago Stockyard.

There is a whole genre where animals are the main characters; e.g. Jakata Tales, Aesop’s Fables, Disney cartoons, Sesame Street, Mother Goose nursery rhymes, Winnie the Pooh, Barney, Finding Nemo, Peter Rabbit, etc., etc. The list goes on and on. This shows how much human life is influenced by other living beings... both literally and in story.

Humans usually divide the world of living beings into two categories: human beings and (sometimes versus) all other (lower) living things. Such an artificial conceptual division is so unrealistic and shallow!

The only reason the so-called evolutionary tree has humans at the top is that humans drew the tree! There is really no higher or lower. There are many different kinds of “intelligence.”

Do you know the difference between an empirical fact and an arbitrary definition? Is a stallion really a male horse? Suppose a dog “greet” you by jumping up on you. Why is it that if the dog is yours, you call him “spirited?” If it’s your friend’s dog, he’s “wild.” If it’s a stranger’s dog, he’s “vicious.”

Face it, humans are not rational beings; they are rationalizing beings. And the bias is always in the one’s own favor.

Humans! Please challenge yourself whenever you catch yourself having such a biased perspective. Instead, embrace the dynamic world of the Oneness of all living beings! This is Dharma Dan signing off...

## SMART DONKEY

Source: <http://www.naute.com/stories/donkey.phtml>

One day a farmer’s donkey fell down into a well. The animal cried piteously for hours as the farmer tried to figure out a way to get him out. Finally, he decided it was probably impossible and the animal was old, and the well was dry anyway, so it just wasn’t worth it to try and retrieve the donkey. So the farmer asked his neighbors to come over and help him cover up the well. They all grabbed shovels and began to shovel dirt into the well.

At first, when the donkey realized what was happening, he cried horribly. Then, to everyone’s amazement he quieted down and let out some happy brays. A few shovel loads later, the farmer looked down the well to see what was happening and was astonished at what he saw. With each shovel of dirt that hit his back, the donkey was shaking it off and taking a step up.

As the farmer’s neighbors continued to shovel dirt on top of the animal, he continued to shake it off and take a step up. Pretty soon, to everyone’s amazement, the donkey stepped up over the edge of the well and trotted off!

### MORAL:

Life is going to shovel dirt on you. The trick to



getting out of the well is to shake it off and take a step up. Each adversity can be turned into steppingstone. The way to get out of the deepest well is by never giving up but shaking yourself off and taking a step up.

What happens to you isn’t nearly as important as how you react to it.



### Oneness Newsletter Autumn 2017

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The purpose of the Bright Dawn Center is to offer a non-sectarian, non-dualistic approach, the Way of Oneness, to deepen individual spirituality in everyday life for people of all backgrounds

# SURPRISE!

By Edi Chiyo

As I was raking up the leaves around the grapefruit tree near the garage, I spotted a nearly intact lizard skin, beginning from the neck down to the tail. I don't know how long it had been there, but it was probably left where the lizard shed that outgrown skin and scampered off, sporting its newly acquired custom fitted suit. Although I had not seen any other discarded skins in the yard before this time, I did see quite a few lizards, especially around the shrubs and vegetable garden.

I had not been a big fan of lizards, mainly because they look like snakes. But I had learned there are many impressively interesting facts about them. They come in many sizes, from three inches to ten-foot 150 pounders. They are found in many parts of the world, can be harmless or deadly, come in different colors, can fly, crawl, swim. They have a variety of ways to defend themselves; one of the most interesting is that they can break off the tail which can continue to wiggle around to distract the enemy so the lizard can escape to safety. There are many more attributes which make lizards interesting subjects of study, further increasing my curiosity to observe them more. The following is an example of my change in attitude about lizards.

One afternoon when I rolled back the recycle bin, I was shocked to see a lizard sprawled on the ground near the garage. It looked as though it had been run over it with the wheels on the bin. Its head was skewed slightly in an unusual posture, and its front legs were in a twisted position to the left side of its head. It wasn't moving; it looked dead. I felt fingers of dread spreading through me as I realized that I must have killed it just then. I bent down slowly to get a better look to see if it was still alive. SURPRISE! It suddenly sprang up on all fours and scrambled for cover. OH! I thought I was going to have a heart attack as my heart raced into high gear. I took a deep breath to calm down.

I stood there, replaying the scene in my head, to make sense out of what I had just seen. Was the lizard merely stunned from being run over by the recycle bin? In that instant I thought it was dead and felt sorry for it, thinking it had died because of me. Did I truly

feel a moment of oneness with this seemingly lifeless creature? When it quickly recovered, I wondered, was it only playing possum? What a smart creature! I felt amazed and thankful that it was still living. When my heart pumped up a few notches higher than usual, I was reminded of my own karmic existence. I kill (flies, mosquito, fish, vegetables—unintentionally as well as intentionally-- to live. I was thankful for the lizard's unexpected vitality— which reminded me of our (all living things and beings) mortality and the preciousness of living in the present moment.

Because lizards have survived the millions of years since the time of the great dinosaurs, I had the opportunity to experience a moment of oneness with a lizard who gave me a SURPRISE to remind me of the value of all life and to re-examine my attitude toward my likes and dislikes. A lesson reinforced here is that the essence of life is oneness, a lesson learned from a lizard's "SURPRISE!".



## MY WAY

By Levi Shinyo Walbert

My way is not the way of my Sensei Koyo Kubose, Sensei Koyo's way is not the way of his Sensei Gyomay Kubose. Sensei Gyomay's way was not the way of his Sensei Haya Akagarasu, and Sensei Akagarasu's way was not that of his Sensei Manshu Kiyozawa.

The Way must be your own. I want to see the spirit which is more than words! Which is more than title! More than master or student! I want to be the spirit which connects us! We are a lineage not by name and rank, but in the spirit of Suchness! In such Suchness our lineage knows no bounds. I have no master when all are my master! I am a master to none when I am a student to all!

If you walk in the footsteps of those who came before, you will always be led to a corpse. Go off in your own way. There is no other.



# TRAILBLAZERS AND PROSPECTORS

by William Toyo Holland  
(2017 Trailblazer President)

Coarsegold, California had several names through the years: Coarse Gold, Gold Gulch, Michaels, Oro Grosso, Texas Flat, and Coarse Gold Gulch. It was first called Texas Flat after two miners from Texas who discovered gold there in 1849. It is said the two brothers found a single nugget worth \$15,000. It was said that a miner could always get enough gold from the river to grub stake themselves into better times.

Coarsegold, one hundred and fifty plus years later, now has a new community called Bright Dawn Center where I believe we can always get enough Dharma to grub stake ourselves into better times.

The Bright Dawn Lay Minister Trailblazers Group are like prospectors searching for gold. Each prospector/Trailblazer deposits their nuggets (Dharma Glimpses) at the Bright Dawn Center of Oneness. Each prospector/Trailblazer contributes their knowledge and spiritual nuggets for everyone to share, and what they have learned on their prospecting (spiritual) path. This allows Bright Dawn Center to prosper and grow.

The Dharma is like the pan prospectors use to pan gold from the stream bed by putting material into the pan and shaking it causing the gold, which is heavy, to work its way down toward the bottom of the pan leaving nuggets to be discovered. So we, as Bright Dawn prospectors, use our spiritual pan to collect our Dharma nuggets that are always available to us each day of our lives, each moment, left to shine, as do the gold nuggets at the bottom of the pan.

There is a creek that runs through the Bright Dawn Center property. I haven't found any gold nuggets, but I do feel an energy coming from its flow and nights when camping out in the Sanctuary it is very peaceful and meditative.

So I would like to thank everyone for their contributions. I am very grateful. Just as the town of Coarsegold prospered from the gold prospectors as they panned for their gold, Bright Dawn Center continues to grow from all the Trailblazers that continue to share their nuggets with the Sangha.



## WE GOT MAIL!

Brightdawn@kubose.com email dated  
Wednesday, August 16, 2017, 11:35pm:

Long time listener, first time caller, as the saying goes. lol

I just wanted to say thank you to you and all your lay ministers, Rev. Kubose, for the time you all put into the teachings each week and for putting them online. I know you've heard it before but for someone like me who can't go to a sangha for one reason or another, your weekly broadcast is my primary way to learn about Buddhism and, most especially, how to put it into practice.

I lost my job today due to my own fault. I typically deal with anxiety and issues with self-confidence but, despite the events today, I'm almost at peace, I'm "ok" with things. I'm not happy with my actions that led up to this, nor am I ignoring the reality that things in my life are about to become more difficult, but for once I feel like I'm truly in the here and now where normally

I'd be shutting down trying to avoid the situation. While I know I am the one who has to continue reading and do quiet sitting, the Bright Dawn's Live Dharma Sunday broadcast gives me inspiration and for that I'm incredibly grateful. Your way of speaking and the practical applications of the teachings by you and the lay ministers help keep all the immensities of Buddhism in a "one step at a time" perspective.

This is definitely an awakening moment for me in many ways, emotionally, mentally, and spiritually and I just wanted to say thank you.

-M.B.

Editor's Note: We print this feedback not so much to pat ourselves on the back but as a means of encouraging others to check out the Live Dharma Sunday broadcasts at 8:00 AM Pacific; (347) 945-7953.



# Shhhhh.

By Christopher Kakuyo Leibow

Have you ever met someone who could not stand silences, always filling any pause with sound? I work in customer service and I am constantly reinforcing the idea that communication can only take place when there are silences. It is something they have the hardest time comprehending. Any time there is any silence longer than 1 or 2 seconds they are running to fill it with nothing. But it's not just at work, most of us constantly have some form of noise creation machine working throughout the day? With the proliferation of "personal sound environments" otherwise known as iPads, pods and smartphones, we live in a noise polluted world, cut off from the world. Why is it that we need to fill in the quiet spaces with noise? The irony is the more we hear the less we listen.

Trying to get my mind around this idea, I decided as part of my periodic automobile Dharma practice (an idea I got from Koyo Sensei), I would turn the radio off while driving. I was surprised at how hard it was. Driving in silence was more difficult than I imagined. We love our noise. We humans are a noisy bunch are we not? It is hard for us to be quiet.

I really started thinking of these things after reading *The Center Within* by Rev. Gyomay and the chapter

on Quietness. I appreciate the idea that there are two types of quietness, the one that is dead with no life within it and another kind of quietness that is dynamic alive with awareness, an awareness of an underlying tranquility in ourselves and in the world. (p. 66) The dead kind of quietness was the quietness I experienced the first few times I drove to work with the radio off. Funny how it was a part of a new dharma practice, but all I could do was sit in the silence bored and judging all the drivers. It was during this practice that I came to understand that quietness is not synonymous with silence. Quietness is more of a state mind, a slowing down, a stillness. It is the stillness that allows you to listen and experience more deeply. I also came to realize that quietness is also a naturally dynamic response to awe and beauty, there is nothing passive about it. There is a receptivity inherent in quietness. I appreciate what Gyomay Sensei says, that through the awareness cultivated through quietness we are able to come to the realization that we are one with the world. I especially appreciate the following line, "During quietness you breathe together with the whole world. We breathe as one."

May it be so.



## DEAR SENSEI

Dear Sensei,

Thank you for agreeing to address this question. If it helps, I am an American from a Judeo/Christian background and I've been studying Buddhism for a few years now.

In the *Everyday Suchness* chapter "Non-Dichotomization" your father writes about the Prajnaparamita description of "non-ego" and how "nothingness" indicates complete negation. He emphasizes that in Buddhism, negation or negativeness is not relative to affirmation or postiveness. Buddhist negation means that negation itself is also negated.

Please explain what your father means by "negation itself is negated."

Thank you,

D.A.

Dear D.A.

Awareness is usually a good thing but it can cause problems when it is a self-conscious kind of awareness; that is, when you conceptualize and judge your awareness. For example, suppose you negate your attachment to something and then think yes, it's great that I have been able to negate that and how proud I am of my non-attachment. In effect, you are now attached to the idea of non-attachment! So, the upshot is that when you are truly non-attached, it has to be an absolute non-attachment. Another way to describe this is that you need to transcend the dualism of subject-object; there has to be a naturalness or oneness.



## Dear Sensei

I never had the pleasure of meeting Sensei Gyomay; however, I feel blessed that I can be in touch with him through his writings. I have his books “The Center Within” and “Everyday Suchness” on the nightstand next to my bed. At the end of each day, I flip open one of the books and receive a meaningful reminder of a teaching. I do not hesitate to say that even when the reminder helps me to become

aware of my many shortcomings, I still can say a grateful Namu Amida Butsu.

The following message was enclosed in his letter to me many years ago:

“Listening to Dharma talks and reading about spiritual teachings are fine, but then you should relate what you have learned to your everyday life. By actively doing this, you will begin to produce your own insights.

You will discover new ways to experience the Dharma teachings.”

Lastly, I am so happy to be receiving your newsletter “Oneness.” Thank you and no doubt Sensei Gyomay is proud of you.

In Gassho, C.U.



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When submitting donations, please list your name exactly as you wish it to appear in the Oneness newsletter. Acknowledgments are current as of September 12, 2017. Donations received after this date will be listed in the next issue. If we have missed an acknowledgment, please let us know by email at: [brightdawn@kubose.com](mailto:brightdawn@kubose.com).

## BOOK LIST

### Book by Rev. Koyo Kubose

**BRIGHT DAWN: Discovering Your Everyday Spirituality.**  
Describes the author's daily morning ritual and how ordinary things and activities can deepen one's spirituality. 152 pages.

### Books by Rev. Gyomay Kubose

**EVERYDAY SUCHNESS.** A classic collection of short articles first published in 1967, hailed as one of the most significant books in Buddhism because of its simple explanations and reference to everyday life. 142 pages.

**THE CENTER WITHIN.** Continues the approach of "Everyday Suchness." Collection of 58 essays of down-to-earth teachings for a richer, more meaningful life. 134 pages.

**AMERICAN BUDDHISM.** Covers a brief history of Buddhism in America, problems in terminology and misunderstandings common to Westerners. 29 pages.

**ZEN KOANS.** Commentary on over 200 classical and modern koans. Insights and life teachings applicable to all Buddhists. 274 pages.

### Translations by Rev. Gyomay Kubose

**THE FUNDAMENTAL SPIRIT OF BUDDHISM** by Haya Akegarasu (Rev. Gyomay Kubose's teacher). Translated by Rev. Kubose. 99 pages.

**TAN BUTSU GE.** (Translation and commentary). This sutra tells the story of Dharmakara who became Amitabha, the Buddha of Infinite Life and Light. 56 pages.

**HEART OF THE GREAT WISDOM SUTRA.** (Translation and commentary). This sutra deals with the teachings of non-self and nothingness. 35 pages.

### Other Recommended Books

**BUDDHIST SYMBOLS.** Handy brochure explaining common Buddhist symbols. Quad-fold.

**BUDDHISM: Path of Enlightenment.** Simple, concise introduction to basic Buddhism. Teachings are superimposed on beautiful full-color photographs of nature scenes such as water ponds, rock gardens, a bamboo grove, etc. 20 pages.

**COFFINMAN** by Shinmon Aoki. This diary of a mortician invites the reader into the fascinating world of Buddhist spirituality which sees the extraordinary in things ordinary, mundane, and even repugnant. 142 pages.

**DISCOVERING BUDDHISM IN EVERYDAY LIFE** by Marvin Harada 2011. In commemoration of his 25 years of ministry at the Orange County Buddhist Church, over 40 essays by Rev. Harada were selected from past monthly newsletters. 128 pages.

**RIVER OF FIRE, RIVER OF WATER** by Taitetsu Unno. Introduces the Pure Land tradition of Shin Buddhism using personal anecdotes, stories, and poetry. With spiritual insight and unparalleled scholarship, this book is an important step forward for Buddhism in America. 244 pages.

**THE ART OF TAKING ACTION** by Gregg Krech. Draws on Eastern philosophy, Buddhism, Japanese psychology, Zen, and martial arts to offer an approach to ACTION that goes beyond productivity and time management. 216 pages.

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**YES YES Your Everyday Spirituality YES YES**

<b>SEP</b>	Theme: Football/Life Analogy Purpose: Referee Your Life Method: "Holding-Penalty Gassho:" Using one hand, clasp the wrist of the other hand. Think, "Why am I holding myself back?" Motivate yourself with this Gassho whenever you find yourself procrastinating at doing your necessary worktasks.
<b>OCT</b>	Theme: Football/Life Analogy Purpose: A Fresh Start Method: "First=Down Gassho:" Raise your arm in front of you, shoulder high, with forearm bent in vertical position, index finger pointing up. Then swing forearm so entire arm is pointing forward; make this movement in a bold, dramatic manner. In football, a first down means you get more chances to move towards a touchdown. In the midst of life struggles, a "first-down" gesture can remind you not to give up but to keep going forward with renewed confidence.
<b>NOV</b>	Theme: Football/Life Analogy Purpose: Celebrate to Motivate Method: "Touchdown Gassho:" Throw both arms straight up above head in a celebratory spirit; slightly bend elbows and throw arms up again as a way to repeat gesture with emphasis. Do anytime you make progress, not just at the end of an accomplishment. Finish off with regular Gassho and the thought, "Keep Going."

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