
O N E N E S S

Quarterly Newsletter of the Rev. Gyomay M. Kubose Dharma Legacy

Vol. 8 No. 4 Winter 2004

HAPPINESS

Rev. Gyomay M. Kubose

Buddhism teaches us to look into the core of things, instead of looking around. We have to look within ourselves to see what creates happiness. For instance, TO BE LOVED is happiness, but TO LOVE is also happiness. It is happy to receive something; but also to give and share is happiness. The happiness of the giver is more permanent and rich than that of the recipient. In the spirit of real giving and sharing, and loving, there is no limit.

Happiness is the loving or sharing itself, and not necessarily the result. The real enjoyment of work is the working itself rather than the result of the work. Real happiness is not the happiness that is received from without but that which is created within.

Modern people in general are result seekers. Their attitude is that if they will get some benefit, they will do something; but if there is no profit, what is the use? The result seekers are profit seekers. In other words, modern people think the end is more important than the means.

Buddhists are taught that every step and every means are very important. Every means itself is an

end. For artists, musicians, and sculptors the work itself is pleasure and happiness, but for moneymakers, work is only the means to make money. Work is pain and suffering, and the suffering is to be compensated by the spending of money: this is modern life. I feel very sorry for people who live this type of life. The most happy and fortunate person is he who enjoys his work besides earning money.

The real way of happiness is the realization of one's life itself. It is the unfolding of the whole self. The real way of happiness is in the way of giving, rather than happiness in receiving. We must find the way of giving love rather than of being loved. It is the life of always giving, loving, sharing, and the enjoyment of work that is always creative and has no end, while the other ways of happiness often turn into failure or disappointment.

True happiness is not given to us; we create it. If you are unhappy, do not blame others or your environment. It is your mind, your attitude, that make you miserable. Changing place, or work, may help, but that is not the complete cure for your trouble and unhappiness. The

right attitude, and a clear and right mind are the way to happiness. (Adapted from Everyday Suchness, pages 5-7)



HAPPY NEW YEAR

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President's Message

By Rev. Koyo Kubose

What a joy it is to share the Dharma teachings! During the past few months, I traveled several times to California, speaking in Mountain View, Venice, officiating a wedding in Marin County, and being a keynote speaker at a Dharma School Teacher's Conference in Anaheim. During these visits I received much more than whatever I was able to give.

The talks I give are not prepared in detail. Although I know generally what I want to talk about, I've never given the same talk twice. I am always adding or changing something. Yet, my talks are stale, compared to the spontaneous interactions that happen with people. How wonderful it is to talk and laugh together. Things happen or words are shared that really have an impact on me. I will never forget such experiences. They are like precious gems shining in my mind's eye. They warm my heart and I am grateful.

There is a story of a blind turtle swimming in the ocean. He cannot find a place to rest until he just happens upon a floating log. What an amazing stroke of good fortune for the blind turtle to happen upon this log in the vast ocean. This story is used as a metaphor for how fortuitous it is for an individual to encounter the Dharma teachings.

Indeed, I am so fortunate that I have come to live a Dharma-intoxicated life. Perhaps this is an inappropriate analogy but I am indeed "drunk" on the Dharma — I have no regrets about the past or worries about the future. I am liberated in the present moment and am living it so freely and joyfully.

Oneness Newsletter Winter 2004

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The purpose of the Kubose Dharma Legacy is to offer a non-sectarian, non-dualistic approach, the Way of Oneness, to further individual spiritual growth in everyday life for people of all backgrounds.

Reader Replies

Over the Jewish High Holy Day season (just concluded), I saw a deconstruction of the word "atonement" as "at-one-ment" and thought of you (perhaps this is a respect-for-self-and-others Gassho?). There's just no escaping Buddhism!

Shalom, N.C. (Illinois)

Maybe you could put something in the newsletter's Letters to the Editor regarding the apparent irony of the term "non-dualistic" i.e. the irony of espousing non-duality with a term that distinguishes itself from its polar opposite of dualism. Perhaps "a-dualistic" is better?

T.K. (Illinois)

I have been receiving your newsletter for over a year now. I am a member of the ___ Buddhist temple and teach Sunday School there. I just read your last newsletter and I want to share my sincere sense of joy in reading it. Your newsletter, more than any other of its kind, has been very informational and educational for me. I have deferred to your articles many times in my writing for school and our newsletter. In fact, I returned back to school to obtain a degree in Philosophy and Religion. My emphasis will be on Buddhism.

When I read your articles, my questions are answered without further need of explanation. It was the last thing I read before bed last night, and it left me with such joy that I smiled and realized that it was a moment of great "suchness" that overcame me. Thank you so much for being a teacher to me.

With a deep bow and deepest gratitude,
K.F. (California)

Editor: We should not pat ourselves on the back too much but this is the kind of Reader Reply that warms our hearts, encourages our efforts, and inspires us to "keep going."

JOKE

Grandson: Grandma, do you know how you and the Buddha are alike?

Grandma: No, how are we alike?

Grandson: You're both OLD.

I Am Not Humble - by Tate Kubose

In the summer of 2003, my wife and I bought our first house. It was in fairly good shape, but as with just about any house, there were several things that could be improved. I've always enjoyed fixing things and building things, so I very easily caught a strong case of "first-time homeowner" syndrome and made plans to do all sorts of small home improvement projects. I completed many of the projects on my list, with varying degrees of success. I quickly found that I was much better at "getting it to work" than I was at "getting it to look good." But, as long as cabinet doors closed, faucets didn't leak, and rain gutters didn't fall off, both my wife and I were satisfied.

In late December of 2003, my wife and I spent the holidays in Los Angeles, where she grew up. She told our friends there about our new house, and told them how I had done so many things around the house, and that I was really good at fixing things and building things. I felt embarrassed by this praise, because I viewed myself as having fumbled through each project, barely completing it, and just being thankful that I didn't do more damage than good. But, like one of my favorite song lyrics that goes: "I know your image of me is what I hope to be", my wife saw my skills and the results of the projects as much better than I did.

Later, when I told my wife how I was embarrassed by the praise she gave my work (praise which I did not feel I deserved), she just said something along the lines of, "You do a good job with everything you do. Stop being so humble." She said it with such confidence that I then said to myself, "Yeah, I guess I am humble."

And that's when I had my glimpse...

I thought, "Wait! How can I say that and still be humble?" Sure, someone else can say that I am humble, but I can't say that about myself! Because doesn't humility lie in not being aware of one's positive attributes? And therefore if you yourself CLAIM to be humble, that would be like saying, "I have positive attributes, yet I am not aware of them". It seemed to me that the mere statement, "I am humble," inherently indicates that you DO know of your positive attributes, which makes you prideful to a certain degree. And isn't being prideful in some ways the OPPOSITE of being humble? So, I changed from my initial thought of "I am humble" to "I am NOT humble. I am conceited!"

I thought about this a lot in the following weeks. I thought about how by merely thinking that I was humble really meant that I was likely more conceited than humble. After all, in order to think you're humble, you have to acknowledge that you are skilled in the first place, and that acknowledgement in itself is prideful. I was thinking about it when I read the New Year's message in the Oneness Newsletter where my father (Rev. Koyo) hoped that we would all live the New Year "in sincere humility." I threw my hands up in frustration with myself. If I were sincerely humble, I would never have said, "I am humble" in the first place! A sincerely humble person would never claim or admit that their home improvement skills were good enough to warrant being humble about. A sincerely humble person would never even think about it, right?

For the next couple of months, while riding my bike to or from work, I would often think about humility. I began to wonder if I was wrong by thinking that the statement "I am humble" actually implies "I am conceited". After all, I don't view myself as a conceited person. I see other people who are much more boastful than I am. But then I realized that although some people may boast to others about their skills and abilities, I am no less conceited than they are. They may be boastful to others, but the statement "I am humble", even when spoken only to myself, still implies that I am conceited, too.

Then the Spring 2004 Oneness newsletter arrived. My father wrote about oneness, and how we should strive to eliminate our dichotomous thinking. How we shouldn't think in terms of black and white, but rather think in terms of shades of gray. I literally smacked my forehead, and said to myself, "Ah ha! It's not about humble versus conceited! It's about trying to be more humble than conceited. It's not about the endpoints on a line, but rather how you walk the line itself!" I may not be able to be truly humble, because if I ever think myself to be humble, it implies conceit. But, I can TRY to be humble. I can try to avoid being conceited as much as I can. I can recognize that I have certain abilities, but always strive to improve. I can recognize that I did an okay job laying down the new brick patio in our backyard, but also recognize that I can always do better.

Please see HUMBLE on page 5

DHARMA SNOWFLAKE LIFE LESSONS By Rev. Koyo Kubose

In your down moments, have you ever felt like you were flawed in some way or that life dealt you a bad hand? I think all of us have experienced such feelings at times. It is unfortunate if one begins to carry such feelings around on a long-term basis. What an unnecessary burden! Through right understanding of life it is possible to liberate oneself to a life of inner peace and contentment. Right understanding is to realize the reality of things as they are. Right understanding is to appreciate the suchness of things. To help us toward the path of right understanding, consider the teachings we can receive from a snowflake.

It is said that every individual snowflake is unique and that no two snowflake patterns are alike. Doesn't this imply that each snowflake has its own absolute value and doesn't have to be compared to other snowflakes or be judged by some standard of beauty? In a similar fashion, each human being is unique and has absolute value. No individual need feel inadequate based upon comparison to others or to some external standard.

A snowflake travels a path through the air, down to a resting place on the ground. Due to dynamic, changing conditions, there is no way to know what a particular snowflake's path will be or where the snowflake will land. It is certainly arbitrary to suggest that a certain path or landing place is the best one for any particular snowflake. The possible paths and landing places are too numerous to conceive. Philosophically speaking, a snowflake's path and landing place are what they are; they could not be otherwise. The path and landing place are exactly right for each particular snowflake. This viewpoint reflects an understanding of reality that can apply to thinking, feeling human beings too.

We feel we can control the direction of our lives, and that through individual initiative, achieve our goals and reach where we want to go. In many instances it seems that we may be able to do this, but such aspects are played out on a larger stage of life's realities. The

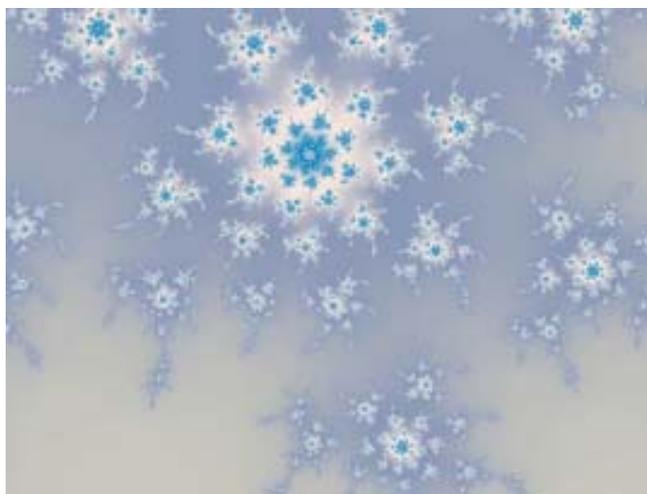
dynamic flow of changing life conditions affect us in unpredictable, uncontrollable ways. Personal and natural tragedies occur all the time. Babies die; children starve; innocent people are murdered. We take good care of our health but sickness can strike at any time. We drive carefully but a drunk driver causes an accident. We work hard but through bad economic conditions we lose our jobs. We do the best we can, but when unexpected things happen, what then?

There are basically two ways of responding to life's problems. One way is to become attached to the relative world that is filled with judgmental attitudes that categorize everything into the dualistic opposites of good-bad, success-failure, win-lose, true-false, love-hate, etc.

This path easily leads to victimizing oneself and living a life full of recurring depression and resentment. In the world of comparison, we human beings are such that each of us feels we've gotten the short end of the stick. Regardless of one's moral justification and logical intellectual rationalization, do you want to live a life of drowning in a quagmire of self pity? Do you want to burn yourself up in the fires of

anger—blaming the devil, God, your parents, your spouse, the terrorists, the political system (the list is endless)?

Another way to respond to life's difficulties is to go beyond the relative world. We do live in a relative world, yet it is possible to live an absolute life in a relative world. Regardless of life circumstances, it is possible through right understanding, to realize the inner peace and joy that come from the spirituality of acceptance and gratitude. A wise person, a deeply spiritual person, does not necessarily live a life free of pain. Quite to the contrary, he or she feels life's realities deeply, but through right understanding, knows how to suffer wisely. How does one learn to suffer wisely? The gates to right understanding are all around us—even in a snowflake. Look around. See the teachings in anything and in any activity. Through honest introspection, go beyond your self-centered views. Keep going.



When the Summer 2004 Oneness newsletter arrived, and I read the passage, "A Buddhist Balloon". It spoke of how a balloon is like an ego. If it's inflated, it can break easily. But a humble ego is like a deflated balloon that can more easily avoid being popped. That the newsletter again spoke of humility was the final sign. I decided to write about my "dharma glimpse". The only problem is...I still don't quite believe I have it right. Can I ever say, "I am humble"? Or is that statement itself a contradiction? Can I even ever say, "I am more humble than that boastful person is"? "A Buddhist Balloon" ended with the question, "How big is your balloon?" The trouble is...I don't know! I actually do believe that I am a fairly humble person. So, this would mean that I have a fairly uninflated balloon. But if I think that I am humble, I still can't shake the feeling that in thinking that I am humble, I am actually showing conceit. Is my balloon really more inflated than I think it is? Does thinking that I am humble actually pump more air into that balloon? Even when I think about how it's not about an absolute, dichotomous label of humble or not humble, conceited or not conceited, I still FEEL conceited when I say, "I am humble".

I have to remind myself everyday that it is not about the end, but rather about the journey itself. "A Buddhist Balloon" also talked about how sometimes the means by which you strive for a goal are often as important as the goal itself. In this case, I think that my striving towards sincere humility is a journey, and I shouldn't be upset that I haven't achieved it yet. So, how big is my balloon? Am I humble? No, I am not humble. But I am trying to be, and that's what's important. And if I ever achieve sincere humility, I hope I never realize it.

A THOUGHT WAVE FOR PEACE

We invoke the blessings of all enlightened and realized beings.

We dedicate all the power of positive deeds that we have done and will do.

We fervently wish the ending of violence and bloodshed in this world.

May we respect the varieties of peoples, cultures, and beliefs.

May we be kind and not harm one another.

May we learn to live and let live.

American Buddhist Services

The Heartland Sangha holds 11 A.M. Saturday services at Lake Street Church, 607 Lake Street, Evanston (use courtyard entrance on Chicago Avenue). For more information, please call Heartland Sangha at 773-545-9972. Rev. Koyo Kubose's upcoming Dharma Talk titles are:

Jan 1	Year of the Rooster
Jan 15	A Dharma Snowflake
Feb 5	Dharma of Love
Feb 19	Nirvana Day
Mar 5	Teaching of the Plum Blossom

Legacy Resources for Individual Spiritual Practice



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Seasonings



sayings to add a little flavor to life

Looking back, you'll find that the moments
you've really lived are the moments you did
things in the spirit of love.

Nothing is more difficult, and therefore more
precious, than to be able to decide.

No matter how well you nurse a grudge, it will
never get better.

Shizuko Tanaka

In Memory of Riichi Yada & Sam Yada

Haruye Yada

In Memory of Riichi Yada & Sam Yada

Sadami Hamamoto

In Memory of Riichi Yada & Sam Yada

T. Nakagawa

In Memory of Uncles and dog Oscar

Elizabeth Plotnick

In Memory of Irma Oppenheimer, Jeanette Notardonato

Kikuye Yasukawa

In Memory of Rev. Gyomay M. Kubose

Kanai Family

In Memory of Yukio Kanai

Lloyd George

In Memory of Amy Taniguchi

Alice Fukuyama

In Memory of Dick Fukuyama

Michiko M. Imai

In Memory of Akio Rodney Imai

Gail Shintaku

In Memory of Edwin H. Fukuda

Bruce & Georgia Shimizu

In Memory of Lillian Shimizu

Miyoko Oye

In Memory of George Taniguchi

Chihiro Sameshima

In Memory of Rev. & Mrs. G.M. Kubose

Namiye Hanamoto

In Memory of husband Henry and his father

Wayne & Tomiko Fujiwara

In Memory of Eric Fujiwara

Yoshi & Lee S. Tanaka

In Memory of Miyano Hashimoto

Muramoto & Yamada Families

In Memory of Asano Muramoto

Janet Lipner

In Memory of Minnie Kubose

Gail Shintaku

In Memory of Pat F. Fukuda

TWO REDS

Red on the ground: here,
from a rose bush; in Iraq,
from a soldier's vein

S.U. (Arizona)

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YES YES Your Everyday Spirituality YES YES	
DEC	Theme: Group Solidarity Purpose: Expressing group support in a contemporary way Method: "Wave-Gassho:" person on one end of a group puts hands together in Gassho; next person follows suit, this continuing in turn down the line. (This Gassho was suggested at a Buddhist conference in Anaheim, California, but never has been done yet; sounds like fun!)
JAN	Theme: Gratitude Purpose: To be grateful even when paying one's bills Method: "Paying-Bills Gassho:" Instead of viewing bill paying as drudgery, be grateful you have a telephone, a warm house, water, etc. Stack up your paid bills and Gassho. (Courtesy of Maria, Chicago, Illinois)
FEB	Theme: Gratitude Purpose: To be grateful even when having to do tons of laundry Method: "Doing-Laundry Gassho:" Be grateful you have a good washing machine, that you have a healthy, active family, etc. Hit the start button on the washing machine and then do Gassho. (Shared by S.C., Anaheim, California)

Mailing List Update

Our mailing list has welcomed new additions from many sources and referrals. We are happy to continue sending our newsletter to all interested persons. One reason for staying on the mailing list is to find out when new books come out. Also, you never know when you might want to order a book for a relative or friend in a future time of need. If you know someone who would like to be added or removed from our mailing list, please indicate below and send to:

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