



O n e n e s s

Quarterly Newsletter of BRIGHT DAWN CENTER of Oneness Buddhism

Vol. 17 No. 2 Summer 2013

RETURNING TO OUR CENTER OF ONENESS

by Sayo Shenphen Sugranes

On May 15th, 2013 I had the great pleasure of returning to Bright Dawn for the Induction of Lay Ministry class five. Returning to Bright Dawn is truly like leaving the world of Samsara and being born into the Pure Land. It's always nice to visit with the Kubose family, who have welcomed us all as part of one big family. A family of Oneness.

It was inspiring to once again meet and spend time with our new brothers and sisters. It was especially nice to put faces to the voices we had heard during facilitation of some of their classes. But it's also nice to get to learn about one another and share our unique paths. At one point, there were some really good rolls on the dinner table. Knowing that David Sensei has a background as a baker, we asked him and he knew exactly what the roll was made of. It's always nice to learn about the unique skills and talents everyone has and can share with the Sangha.

Returning to Bright Dawn, for me, is a time of returning to my spiritual roots. It is my pilgrimage site! Seeing Altar Rock each year reminds me that the Dharma is my rock. That Bright Dawn is strong, like an immovable rock.



Each year is also a reunion of sorts. Time to spend with the new Lay Ministers and time to visit with the Kubose family. One of the greatest inspirations I get is seeing Adrienne's mom every year. This year she is turning 98 years younger. I always have an opportunity to talk with her. And I will always remember how she tells me that "California ... there's no place like it."

The weekend began with the Saturday training workshop. We had David and Linda Wisniewski, Mark Fives and via Skype, Tamu Ngina. We also had Roger Cochran and Dorothy Merrick join us on Sunday for the Induction via Skype. As president of the Bright Dawn Trailblazers group, our lay ministry support and projects group, I was honored to be able to welcome the new class with this message:

"On behalf of the Bright Dawn Trailblazers, I want to welcome you all to our Lay Ministry family. I'm so happy to be back here for another Induction and get to know our new Bright Dawn brothers and sisters. Take in every moment! For nearly two years you have worked hard on getting those reports and glimpses done by each and every Sunday. And here we are today. Take a deep breath and realize how far you have come! Where you are in this moment!"

Today is not the end of the journey, but merely the beginning! Our goal should always be to work together to keep the Bright Dawn tradition alive and thriving. To keep Kubose Gyomay Sensei's vision of a non-sectarian, non-dualistic Way of Oneness alive.

As you engage as a Lay Minister, know that you are part of a strong

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BROKEN DHARMA

By Koyo S. Kubose

During the recent Lay Minister Induction weekend, a bunch of us were relaxing on the back patio. One of the conversations reminded me of a teaching. I told the true story of how a Dharma teacher handled a certain situation. His center in Los Angeles was hosting an important ceremony. One of his disciples was setting up some fine lacquer implements to be used in the ceremony. She dropped one and it got chipped. In a panic, she wondered where she could get a replacement. The teacher said, "Don't get a replacement; the chipped one is more valuable."

I commented that this is an important teaching because it not only states that in life things happen and our expectations are usually not met, but this teaching tells us that each one of us is also chipped or "broken" in some fashion. To accept, nay not only accept, but to embrace one's humanness and value each life unconditionally, is a tremendous virtue. Actually, this profound spiritual teaching is closely related to Naturalness.

I recall an article by my father in which he described seeing a flower arrangement at an exhibit show in which all the arrangements were done by well-known teachers. In one particular arrangement, a branch had a dead leaf,

not only had this dead leaf not been removed from the branch, it was placed prominently at the top of the arrangement. My father commented that this was a great teaching of naturalness.

Back to Coarsegold, California. The morning of the Induction Ceremony, a table was placed in front of the Altar Rock, holes being dug in the ground to make the table surface level. A Dharma Wheel banner was hung down the face of the Altar Rock. I noticed that the table was not centered in front of the banner. I mentioned this out loud and asked whether we should fix it or just leave things as they were. Someone shouted, "The broken one is more valuable!" So we left it that way and I don't know whether anyone else noticed it.

I might mention that the Altar Rock is a large boulder outside in a natural setting. It is not exactly clear where the "center" or middle of the Altar Rock's front surface is because of its asymmetrical shape. The clearing that the Altar Rock is in is not symmetrical either. Nature teaches us that imperfection and asymmetry is how we can go beyond perfection to the "super" perfect of the Suchness of Naturalness.



Returning continued from page 1

lineage, a lineage of YO that includes a rich tradition of great teachers and bold innovators.

We are a family of Oneness and here to support one another. We walk together in Oneness. Always walking the path equally for the benefit of all beings. As Shantideva said: May the Sangha always be in harmony, and may their aspirations be in harmony, and may their aspirations be achieved!

*Congratulation and welcome! And as Koyo Sensei reminds us ... **KEEP GOING!** "*

So this year we welcomed Roger Seiyō Sensei, Mark Kaiyō Sensei, Dorothy Shinyō Sensei, Tamu Hoyo Sensei, David Kakuyō Sensei, and Linda Shoyō Sensei to our family of Oneness.



Wedding at Bright Dawn Center



Wedding bells rang for Sydney Acosta and Eric Wetterstrom at Bright Dawn Center's Altar Rock. Family and friends gathered on a beautiful Spring day in April.

CAM

By Dharma Dan



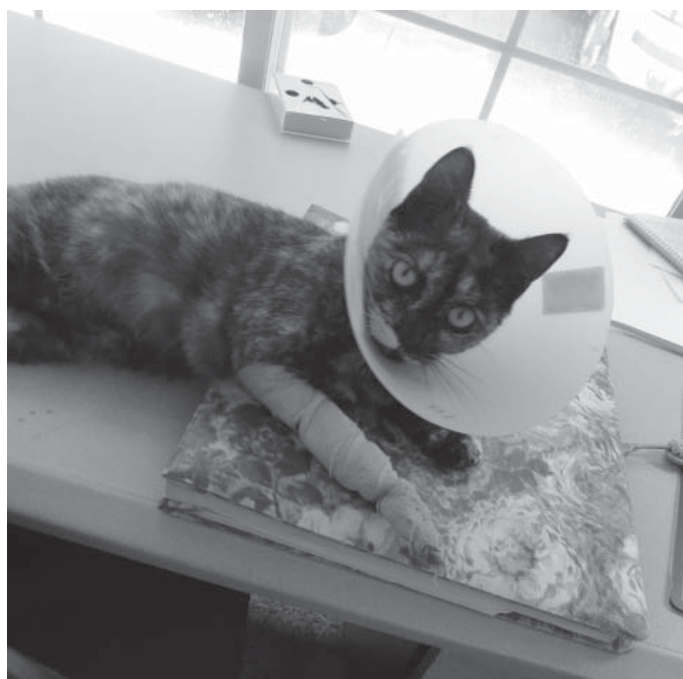
Hi! This is Dharma Dan giving you an update on doings here at the Bright Dawn Center (BDC). One of my animal friends, Cam (short for her camouflage coloring), got bit on her front arm by a rattlesnake. Cats are not as affected by snake bites as dogs and humans but still her skin in the bite area died, turned black, and fell off—exposing a raw area that had to be stitched up. Cam’s arm had to stay bandaged for several weeks until the wound healed. In the meantime, she had to wear a cone around her neck to prevent her from removing the bandage.

Everyone should be impressed by how cats and other animal pets accept whatever conditions happen to them. Although Cam favored her hurt limb and had to hop around on her other three legs, her attitude seemed to be, “I got a bum wheel. So what? I can still get around just fine!”

The other lesson to be learned here is about the presence of rattlesnakes. They are a fact of life in the foothills. They come out when the weather warms up in spring. In the hot summer months they stay hidden in the shade among the rocks. They are less active in autumn when they start to get ready to hibernate during the winter months. Our wooded property is like living in a park paradise. However, along with the abundance of nature comes the trade-off of an abundance of wild critters, including rattlesnakes and tarantulas; not to mention the large mice that make nests in the engine compartment of vehicles and chew up the wiring. Rev. Koyo put up a sign “this motel is closed” but I guess they don’t know how to read. Of course the large vegetable garden is like a fragrant neon sign shouting out “New restaurant opening up.”

The deer, rabbits, birds and gophers sure know how to recognize this kind of sign!

When you really think about it, paradise always has some kind of trade-offs. When this is understood, then we realize paradise is none other than the present world one lives in. One’s attitude is what makes the difference whether it’s hell or heaven. As the Buddhist saying goes, “Samsara is Nirvana.” Sometimes we naively think that the best of all possible worlds would be where everything always turns out the way we want. Well, what a dull world it would be if we knew we would win every poker hand and make a hole-in-one on every golf course. Sure it’d be nice to listen to angels playing their harps... but forever?! Think about it.



Oneness Newsletter Summer 2013

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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

LAY MINISTERS 2013



Mark Kaiyo Fives: As we are all on a journey in this life, I am honored to have found my spiritual home with Bright Dawn. My induction is not an end to my path, but more the beginning of a beautiful journey into the way of Oneness. As I go forth into the horizon of the sun, with limitless opportunities as a lay minister, the bright dawn that greets me will remind me of the light of wisdom that I have received from my beloved teachers, the Kubose Dharma legacy, and the Bright Dawn Lay Ministry Program.



Linda Shoyo Wisniewski: I first was introduced to the Bright Dawn Sangha when I was part of the Heartland Sangha in Evanston, IL in 2001. However my husband David and I moved to Plymouth, Wisconsin and live on the same land as the Bright Dawn Homespread which is a meditation center that is part of the American Buddhist Association. After a few years in Wisconsin, I was reconnected to Rev. Koyo and Adrienne Sensei through their newsletter and joined Lay Ministry Program. During Induction weekend I was given a Dharma name that reflects the legacy of Bright Dawn. My Dharma name is Shoyo which means smiling sun. Although we were inducted in May, I am going to continue doing the new program addition, 3rd year practicum, to the lay ministry program.



David Kakuyo Wisniewski: I live in Wisconsin. I look forward in the coming years to be the type of man I wish to be. I started my journey when I was 33 years old and am still plugging away. This program opens areas I never knew I had inside me. Gassho and thank-you



Tamu Hoyo Ngina Kemp: I'm a 42 year old mother, artist, Spiritual Minister and Bright Dawn Lay Minister. As a Spiritual Minister I have facilitated women's meditation groups and Reiki healing training. As a Bright Dawn Lay Minister I look forward to organizing meditation classes, Dharma talks and hopefully a regularly meeting Sangha focusing on the Way of Oneness.

The Bright Dawn course changed my emotional/mental life for the better. I was not looking to "become a Buddhist" when I signed up for the course. But through the presentation of the Dharma in a way that spoke directly to my heart I was captured and could not be happier. In Dec. 2011 I took refuge in the Three Treasures with Rev. Koyo Kubose sensei officiating the ceremony. I have learned so much and grown in ways that I did not know was possible. The Lay Ministry classwork taught me how not to focus on myself, always be in gratitude and be more compassionate not only to others but to myself. I know now that Buddha is in every direction and I can learn from all situations. My life and view on the world is different, fresh and new. And for that I am thankful. I look forward to continued education courses, connection with the Bright Dawn family and the year of Practicum that starts in June.



Dorothy Shinyo Merrick: The connections between my family and the Kubose family go way back. My parents met Rev. Gyomay Kubose over 50 years ago when they heard him speak at a Unitarian service. As a family we drove the hour trip from Kenosha, Wisconsin to Chicago to attend meditation on Sunday mornings. Both Rev. Gyomay and Koyo Kubose have officiated funerals and weddings for members of my family. When my husband Roger decided to start the Lay Program, I joined him and we did it together. It was a rewarding journey of self reflection and of putting teachings into action in my daily life. I put my hands together in Gassho.



Roger Seiyo Cochran: There were several changes resulting from my involvement in the Bright Dawn Center's Lay Program. One was a "letting go" of my negative resentment toward my Southern Baptist upbringing. Another change was an "opening up" of my narrow views of how I identified myself as a Soto Zen follower. Both changes led me to a better understanding of how attachment to limiting ideas had been restricting my spiritual growth. This was a liberating realization and I now can see an ever-broadening path before me. The course, and my fellow students, gave me a much broader understanding of the many forms of Buddhism and of the people who are traveling this path with me. Yes, I can and will "Keep Going."

FOR THE ALL IN US

By repus

*Could you please help us turn the "m" in me
Upside-down, creating the "w" in We;
Effectively smashing this egotistic enemy,
Bringing into light some form of tranquility
We've been pining for in life?*

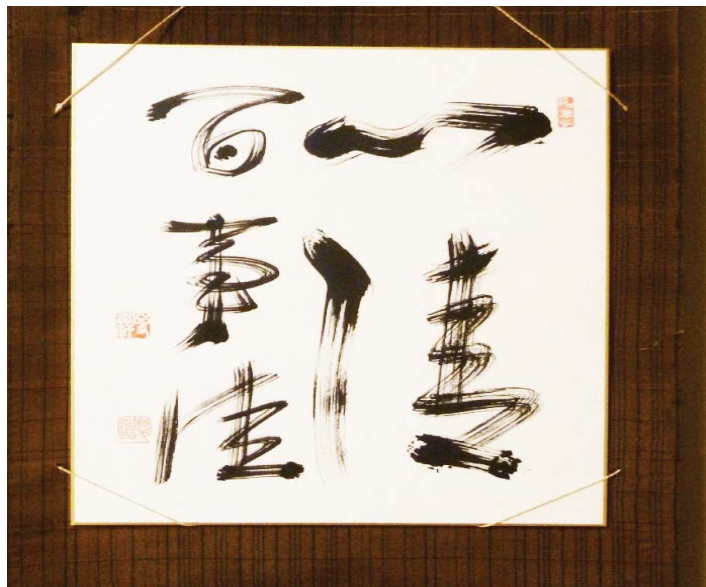
*For it has now been revealed that We
Are all holding onto very similar keys
To everything in life, including insecurities,
Suffering, strife and also the abilities
To change all that's wrong to right.*

*So, let us begin by changing our ways,
Starting with our thoughts and everything that we say,
Therefore turning over every night into day,
Creating this bright spark of light that just may
Conquer this draining darkness*

*With promises of an everlasting love
Showering upon us from the heavens above,
Warming up our souls, like a hand inside a glove;
Attaining the peace and serenity of a dove
Flying high above the abyss...*

GYOMAY M. KUBOSE MEMORIAL

On March 29 the 14th Year Memorial Service in honor of Gyomay M. Kubose was held via telephone conference. During the sharing portion of the service, Rev. Gyomay's daughter Joyce Kubose Prosis said that at her tea gatherings she often uses the shikishi pictured here painted by Koyuken of Tofuzodo. The characters read KOKORO KIYOKEREBA HYAKU JI YOSHI which translated into English means "Heart if it is pure, 100 Things Good." In other words "If one's heart is pure then all things are good" which the family feels characterizes how Rev. Gyomay lived.




GRADUATION TIME

By Naiyo

It's graduation season and I find myself congratulating various graduates and saying how although they have finished high school or college, that it is really a new beginning. How great it is that a graduation ceremony is called a commencement, which means to begin. Then as I was preparing this newsletter, I came across something Rev. Koyo wrote about "Linear vs Circular" that seemed to expand on this end/beginning idea:

"Compare a straight line vs. a circle as differing models of a philosophy or approach to life. Starting at the left end of the straight line as ones starting point and moving down the line to the end point or goal at the far end at the right side of the line. In this dualistic model, the starting and ending points are two different points; one's

progress is always judged in relative terms where comparisons are made as to how far one has progressed along the line. For example, if one is stopped at the half way point, one is disappointed that one did not make it all the way to the desired end. In contrast to this model, the Buddhistic approach is like a circle. In a circle, any point is a starting point and any point is an ending; in fact, any given point that is an ending is simultaneously a beginning point as one travels along a circle. The relevant point here (pun intended) is that wherever one is can be one's liberation point; and by the way, that liberation point is very dynamic because it is also a beginning point for one to continue traveling. You just Keep Going." 

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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, 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.

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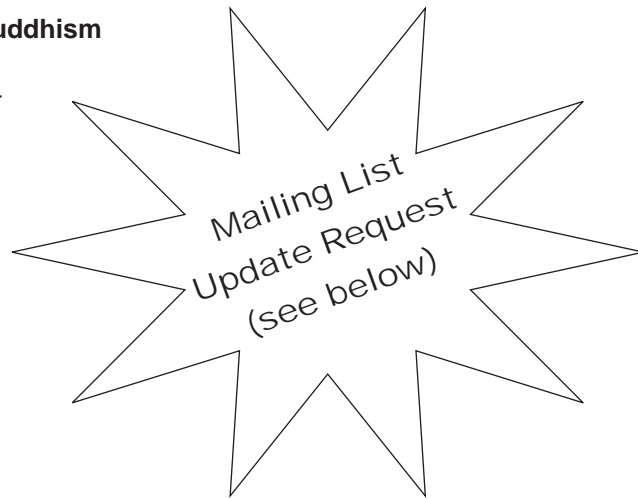
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YES YES Your Everyday Spirituality YES YES

JUN

Theme: Calmness
 Purpose: Dealing with stress
 Method: "Breathing-in Gassho:" With arms apart and palms facing each other, bring palms together while taking a big inhale; then hold your breath for awhile before exhaling. It is a known paramedic fact that when having trouble catching your breath due to stress, holding your breath helps restore getting your breath back.

JUL

Theme: Tranquility
 Purpose: Pausing during hectic times
 Method: "Breathing-out Gassho:" With palms together after a big inhale, exhale slowly while spreading arms out. As arms spread wide, try either lowering head or bending head backward to the sky and see which way you like best. I like bending head backward, like a flower blooming and facing the sun.

AUG

Theme: Bliss
 Purpose: Experience the benefits of smiling
 Method: "Accordion-breathing Gassho:" Co-ordinate arms coming in and spreading out with breath inhale and exhale. Repeat three times very SLOWLY while smiling throughout. Finish by shaking shoulders up and down, and add a big smile.

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