



O n e n e s s

THE DHARMA IS MY ROCK

by Rev. Koyo Kubose

In September of 2013, I was the guest speaker for the O-Higan service at the Midwest Buddhist Temple in Chicago. After the service, I was enjoying a bowl of noodles in the Social Hall when an old friend, May N., stopped by and said (with the usual twinkle in her eyes), “A friend asked me what the difference was from your approach and our temple. I told her that BCA temples like ours have an Amida Buddha statue, while you have a ROCK.”

I knew she was referring to the fact that we hold outdoor services in front of our Altar Rock. Then I thought about how we sometimes used rock offerings instead of incense. I also remembered how I liked the musical lyric of “Like a Rock” in the Chevy commercial. A few years ago, this led me to write a passage, “The Dharma is My Rock.” So, I re-visited that writing, modified it a little, and decided to have a poster made of it. I thought, “Why not feature the passage more prominently?!”

After all, I used to joke that I hoped sometime in the future, this passage would become as common to Buddhists as the 23rd Psalm is to Christians. It reads:

*Many things are happening
In my life right now.
Underlying it all
The Dharma is my Rock.
Beyond sorrow and joy
The Dharma is whispering
Everything is Okay,
Even when things are not going okay.
Eyes full of tears,
Heart heavy with pain,
Stone therapy helps me see
The Suchness of all things.
Being embraced by the Dharma
I will live a life of Oneness
Where the Universal and Infinite
Touch the particular and finite.
Yes, I will struggle;
Yes, things may not turn out
Exactly the way I would like.
Yet, I will keep going with a smile
Because I know
The Dharma is my Rock.*

So, I went to Kinko’s and had a large poster (almost two by three feet) made, and plan to display it in our new sanctuary building that should be completed by the end of this year.

Then, I had a great idea: why not have a cast bronze plaque made of this passage, “The Dharma is My Rock,” and mount it on one of the many boulders near our Altar

Rock. I found a company on the Internet and sent them the artwork for a 22” by 28” cast-bronze plaque. I didn’t realize that it would weigh over 50 pounds! The plaque came with four mounting studs on the back. Measuring carefully, I drilled four holes into the chosen granite boulder, filled the holes with an adhesive, and managed to insert the mounting studs on the back of the plaque into the holes. As you face the Altar Rock, you have to walk to the right side in order to see this bronze plaque. It looks great!



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THOUGHTS ON INDUCTION OF LAY MINISTER GROUP 6

by Morris Sekiyo Sullivan



One of the things I took away from my time in the Bright Dawn LM program is the comment from the Zen koan, “Every day is a good day.” I use that often as a personal turning word. However, I think some days have a unique specialness. I know this is a very special day to you. It’s also a very special day to me.

For one, it’s great to be here in Coarsegold again. Bright Dawn is a spiritual home for me, and I’m sure it will be for each of you. I’m the President of the Bright Dawn Center Trailblazers Association this year, so that makes this induction special to me—to be here on the day some new Trailblazers are born. And this is a special day for me because I’m proud to support my wife, Michelle Jouyo, as she takes this step—and as she becomes the third Bright Dawn sensei associated with Volusia Buddhist Fellowship.

I was inducted in 2010. A couple of years later, Mark Kaiyo, who was one of the first people in our local Buddhist community to go for refuge after my induction, became the second member of Volusia Buddhist Fellowship to become a Bright Dawn sensei. Normally, on this particular Sunday, I would be speaking at a Unitarian church in Palatka, Florida. Mark Kaiyo is covering for me today so I can be here in California with you all.

The first sermon I gave after my induction was at that church in Palatka. Palatka’s a little town on the St. John’s River. I have something in common with Billy Graham, believe it or not—after his ordination, he gave his first sermon in Palatka, too, at a Baptist church there.

I had given other dharma talks of course, but when I stood up that morning to give my first sermon after my induction, I was suddenly hit by an unexpected wave of deep uncertainty. It wasn’t stage fright—it was more existential than that. For the first time, I was standing in front of a church wearing an okesa and being introduced as a sensei. So, ostensibly, at least, I should be a reliable source for dharma teachings.

And the one thought that hit me was, “How arrogant of me to think I deserve to be here!”

But since I was standing at a lectern with sermon notes in front of me and a group of people looking at me expectantly, I smiled, said good morning, and started to talk.

I don’t remember what my topic was, but after church, I found myself on the receiving end of so much gratitude. One man came to me with tears in his eyes and shook my hand. “I never thought I’d get to hear the dharma here in my home town,” he said. So at that point, I realized this “sensei” thing wasn’t about me at all—it was about bringing the dharma to others.

What I learned during the two years I spent in Bright Dawn had an incalculable effect on my own practice. Yes, it also gave me a credential that many people look upon with some respect and which lends credibility to what I say. But with that credential comes a lot of responsibility, and ownership of that responsibility was another gift this program gave me. Even when I’m not wearing the robe and okesa, I have to remember I’m a sensei.

Boy! Talk about mindfulness practice. When you’re trying to live up to that title, that really makes you want to watch what you’re doing, saying and even thinking. People who call you “sensei” are giving you a great gift, reminding you to let go of your “self,” but to take your practice very seriously. I find it hugely humbling, and I learn more about the quality of my own Buddhist practice every time I hear that word, “sensei.”

Soon, you will go back to your own hometowns and stand or sit in front of churches or civic groups or dharma groups or just take your seat in front of your altar at home. If there’s only one thing you take back with you from this morning, I hope it will be to constantly remember the moment when you first feel the full weight of that okesa on your shoulders. I hope none of you---none of us, because I include myself in this—ever get to the point we start thinking we’re teachers and forget we are all truly beginners.

Congratulations!

INTRODUCING 2014 BRIGHT DAWN LAY MINISTERS!

Richard Doyo Hamling



My inquiry to the Buddhist teaching began in the very early 1970's. Later, the subject or Buddhist thought kept entering my life. I found that I had been a "Buddhist" in my leanings as long as I can remember, the earliest

recollection dating about the age of six. Needless to say, this created a considerable amount of personal conflict and family strife. I was deeply struck by the contradictions within my religion of origin. Many years later, while in college and through personal teachings with Thich Nhat Hanh in 1989, my exposure continued to grow. I felt a resonance with the philosophy and comfort with like-minded people. In 1993 I became a member of the Buddhist community, sitting with a Tibetan group in Rochester, New York. I have never considered myself a Tibetan Buddhist but do enjoy the fellowship and friends. I do not participate in the "bells and whistles" of their practice as it intrudes on reflection at times. Nevertheless, I am able to take away from those moments something enriching. I have been a trustee for two terms.

For many years, I hoped to deepen my personal practice which led to finding the Bright Dawn Institute of American Buddhism. What I read made sense to me, once again resonating. I did not feel qualified for the program, though my values are clearly rooted in Buddhist directions and have been so for decades. Despite my insecurity, I leaped into the program. My experience has been varied and not anchored in one lineage, which has pluses and minuses. For me, it is a plus, indeed. The notion of Oneness and American Buddhism seemed practical, approachable within my depth of understanding when removed to some degree from the cultural component that I experienced in my Tibetan Sangha.

There, I took what I needed and left the rest. I remain active within this community in my personalized way. It is only natural that Buddhism coming to the west has uniqueness. With gratitude, I can now feel much a part of the movement.

Bright Dawn Institute has deepened my understandings. My hope was a closer, personal examination of Buddhist thought that validated and opened a more authentic way of living, being the experience in contrast to having an experience. Aside from this most personal way of being, I had hoped to bridge Dharma teachings in my orientation to Depth Psychotherapy (sorely missed in the HMO world).

Bright Dawn Institute has given much more than I could expect. I was challenged by the assignments to such an extent much more time was required than suggested. This was not a bad thing but an adjustment. The assignments were meaningful at the moment and more so on continued reflection. One should not assume that upon completing an assignment or listening to group conversation or Dharma talk, the assignment is complete; it was not for me. Spiritual dimensions arise through more than a simple but important glance at self and life. Thus, there is a great deal of "work" beyond formalities of learning. Dharma teachings are everywhere. For me the LM program sharpened the focus, a heightened awareness of self and other, which gives rise to one's potentials and opportunities.

The LM program is not over with Induction. How we come to full bloom is our responsibility and how we use our personal LM experience is also an immense responsibility. By virtue of this program we (I) must take the basic tenants of Bright Dawn Institute and have them come alive through our actions, to be become engaged. As you may surmise, this has been a wonderful opportunity and experience. I recall a lyric, "Somehow I have grown, in ways yet to be shown," It summarizes a great deal.

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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

Douglas Sanyo Reagan, Ph.D.



Originally from Austin, Texas, I came into contact with Bright Dawn in 2012. I earned my M.Th. (Master of Theology) in 1997 at St. Patrick's College in Maynooth, Ireland, and earned my Doctorate in Medieval History at the University of

London in 1999. It was during my studies that I met Venerable Gyomay Kubose at the Parliament of World Religions in Chicago. I am also a veteran of the US Army Medical Corps working in Emergency and Trauma medicine. After working the Emergency Department of a Level 1 Trauma Hospital in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, for several years, I returned to Atlanta to assist my elderly mother. I recently returned from teaching at National Taipei University in Taiwan. Last November I committed myself further in my practice by taking the Bodhisattva Vows at Fo Guang Shan monastery in Kaochung, Taiwan. I have been practicing both Jodo Shu and Chan Buddhism for over 20 years. When not in the classroom, I serve as a Life Event Officiator and a Volunteer Chaplain at the VA Hospital in Atlanta. Eventually, I soon hope to establish a non-sectarian Sangha in the Metro Atlanta area.

William Toyo Holland



I was born on July 4, 1945 and live in San Marcos, CA. I was a Navy veteran of the Vietnam era. I was first introduced to Buddhism during the 70's and later followed the teachings of Shunryu Suzuki Roshi at the San Francisco Zen Center.

The past 10 years I have been practicing Buddhism under the guidance of Rev. Marvin Harada at the Vista Buddhist Temple, a Jodo Shinshu Temple in the Buddhist Churches of America. I also do mindfulness meditation at Deer Park Monastery (Thich Nhat Hanh). I am very grateful to be part of the Bright Dawn family and to have the opportunity to study with Rev. Koyo Kubose as a student of the Lay Ministry Program. I hope to use this experience as a Dharma Teacher and to continue my involvement in Engaged Buddhism and to promote American Buddhism. This has been one of the greatest learning experiences of my life. I intend to continue my involvement and support of the Bright Dawn Sangha and contribute in any way I can. I am very grateful for all the Wisdom, Loving Kindness, Compassion and support of all the members of the Bright Dawn Sangha.

Michelle Jouyo Sullivan



I first really discovered that I was a Buddhist back in 2000, when I started reading some books by the Dalai Lama. Their emphasis on kindness and non-judgment had an astounding effect on me, and I felt like I had finally found something I could really get

behind. Just a couple of years later, my husband and I started leading weekly meetings of what would later become Volusia Buddhist Fellowship, our own local Sangha. As our first major endeavor, we put together the first Central Florida Change Your Mind Day event, bringing together teachers of different lineages to talk about the Dharma. We'll be hosting our 10th annual Change Your Mind Day next year.

In 2004, I met Than Chaokhun (the abbot of a Thai temple), who would become my teacher. He opened up this whole new world of Buddhism that I never knew existed, and it spoke to me on a visceral level. He and the other monks at Wat Florida selflessly helped and encouraged me in my studies. I now also have a second spiritual home at a Vietnamese Zen center led by Ven. Khai Thien. With my experiences at Bright Dawn and the addition of a third teacher in Rev. Koyo Kubose, I truly feel like I have a more well-rounded view of Buddhism than I have ever had before. My goal is to try to be a good ambassador for the Dharma. I owe a huge debt of gratitude to my teachers for encouraging and helping further my spiritual growth and practice, and I feel that the best way to repay that debt is to continue to grow and help others do the same.

Roberto Keiyo Velez



I was born on the Island of Puerto Rico and grew up in New York City. I have a master's degree in education and have taught in New York City for many years. I have been studying many spiritual paths and taught in different spiritual groups and was a Franciscan monk. I worked for the Three Spring's Program in a juvenile detention facility in Florida as well as have my own pool company. I am affiliated with the Wat Florida Dhamaram Buddhist Temple in Osceola County Florida. I am currently retired and write for a blog called evolutionsangha.com and have written a book. I am dedicated to teaching and spreading the Buddhadharmā. The Bright Dawn Lay Ministry Program has enriched my life in so many ways it is hard to find one thing which has really impacted me. I will say that Oneness in my interactions with other beings has been the most important aspect that I have experienced as part of this Program.

William Seiyō Shehan



I grew up all over the world and was raised by my Protestant grandparents. My grandfather was a minister and his grandmother was a missionary, so I was exposed to various cultures and religions. In the 7th grade I was introduced to the martial arts, which I still study today, by a friend who gave me a copy of *Go Rin No Sho*, "The Book of Five Rings." This book by Miyamoto Musashi was also my introduction to Buddhism. Later on while in the U.S. Army I had a chance to travel to Asia and see many of the Buddhist temples and continue studying martial arts. Finally 20 years later I wandered into Chicago and took Shodo ("Calligraphy") classes at the Buddhist Temple of Chicago. Here I felt a connection and a home. Today I am very active in the Buddhist community and Veterans Hospital and plan on continuing forward to achieve ordination as a Jodo Shinshu minister. I am following in the footsteps of the Kubose family to whom I owe much gratitude.



SUMMER SERVICE VIA TELEPHONE

Rev. Koyo Kubose invites you to listen to a short Summer Solstice telephone service on Thursday, June 19, 2014 at 6PM Pacific; 8PM Central Time. Dial 1-716-273-1200, and when prompted, the access code 5805842#. This is a long-distance call so make sure you use “free” minutes of your calling plan or use a calling card. Call in a few minutes early to not miss an important five-minute introduction of the theme for the service. The introduction will elaborate on the theme of how summer heat can be used metaphorically to melt or make one’s hard ego more flexible. After ten minutes of sutra chanting, the service ends with five minutes of concluding comments. All callers will be on “mute” to eliminate distractions.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Applications are now being accepted for our non-residential, Internet-based Lay Program that begins in August, 2014. Weekly small group tele-conference sessions are held on Sundays to discuss assigned readings. There is a new streamlined curriculum, with added emphasis on Practicum exercises on how to apply teachings to everyday life. No tuition fees; heavy sweat equity commitment required. Limited enrollment space; apply now to reserve a slot. For more information and an Application Form, please contact Adrienne Kubose, Administrative Program Director, at email address, brightdawn@kubose.com. Bright Dawn Center of Oneness Buddhism, 28372 Margaret Road, Coarsegold, CA 93614; telephone (559) 642-4285.

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Not only is making a memorial donation a way to remember and honor a loved one, it is a karmic action that fosters awareness of the two main teachings of interdependency and impermanence. Acknowledging one’s “roots” also nurtures a feeling of gratitude, which is the foundation of a spiritual life. A memorial donation does all this and at the same time helps support the mission of a worthy organization of one’s choice.

When submitting donations, please list your name exactly as you wish it to appear in the Oneness newsletter. Acknowledgments are current as of May 25, 2014. Donations received after this date will be listed in the next issue. If we have missed an acknowledgment, please let us know.

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.

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Change Service Requested



YES YES Your Everyday Spirituality YES YES

JUN	Theme: Graduation Purpose: Moving On Method: When June's graduation spirit is in the air, move the tassel from one side to the other of your pretend graduation cap; this can signify your graduation (from ignorance to awareness of your limitations; from arrogance to humility; from _____ to _____).
JUL	Theme: Freedom/Liberation Purpose: Shining a light on stubbornness Method: Whenever you catch yourself repeatedly doing something "stupid" due to ego-stubbornness, tap the index finger of one hand into the palm of your other hand several times, like a fly hitting its head against a window pane, even though other windows are wide open. Resolve to change your ways.
AUG	Theme: Anger Purpose: Cooling Off Method: When suffering from summer heat, you know how great a cooling breeze feels; Use this to remind yourself to "cool off" and nip rising anger in the bud. So, whenever you start to get upset, imagine the "cooling" effect of a nice breeze of patience; or if you need to, switch on your high-powered Dharma air conditioner!

Mailing List Update: If you are already on our mailing list and wish to remain on the list, no action is necessary. We are happy to continue sending our newsletter to all interested persons. If you know someone who would like to be added or removed from our mailing list, please email us at brightdawn@kubose.com or indicate below and send to: Bright Dawn Center, 28372 Margaret Road, Coarsegold, CA 93614

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