
O N E N E S S

Quarterly Newsletter of the Rev. Gyomay M. Kubose Dharma Legacy Vol. 2 No. 1 Spring 1998

The Fresh, Creative Life

by Rev. Gyomay M. Kubose

Many people talk about being busy. Some people say to me, "Oh, you are so busy that I hesitate to tell you or ask you something." In reality, a person is really not busy at all. We cannot do two things at the same time. We are always engaged in only one thing at a time. If we can realize and live this truth, then we will know why the Buddha stressed non-attachment.

You should not become attached to what has happened in the past because life is a process, a becoming; every moment is a new life, a new flow. Of course, past experiences can serve as a good reference when planning what you wish to do tomorrow, or in your lifetime. But when you do it, do one thing at a time. Put everything into it and when it is finished, it is finished. Then start a new thing. What I am talking about is how to take care of your mind. If your mind flows like water you will not experience fatigue. Getting tired is usually due more to mental fatigue than to physical fatigue. Becoming angry or emotionally upset is due to attachment to the past—to something that happened earlier. If someone criticizes you, you become upset. "I didn't do that, but he said that I did." It is the attachment to past words, deeds, or thoughts that hinders what you do in the present.

Observe children in their play, they are completely absorbed in what they are doing. Adults can be the same way. When we do something we enjoy, we for-

get all other things and become completely involved in whatever we are doing. Those minutes and hours are really beautiful. Even the thought of enjoyment is totally forgotten. We become "nothing." The state of nothing is not empty; it is full of life. One's whole life is involved in what one is doing and the self is forgotten. At such times we don't get tired because there is creativity, which is the realization of life itself.

We can quickly recover from physical tiredness by resting but mental fatigue is another matter. Such things as worry, jealousy, and hatred are hard to eliminate; they linger in our minds. Emptying our minds provides a rest. We can accomplish this by doing things one at a time. Do it one hundred percent so that nothing else takes place. This kind of life is important.

The Buddha said, "All things are in constant change; nothing is permanent." This means that life is a process, a continuous becoming. In a limited, relative sense, today is a continuation of yesterday but in reality, today is a totally new day. We live a new life every moment. Why spoil this new life? We should make this new life the best, most beautiful and most meaningful. But most of us spoil this new life because of yesterday's unpleasant affairs. Something disagreeable that happened last night still bothers us. I know some couples who do not talk to each other for two or three days. We are human, so we have these kinds of feelings.

We are unable to wipe them out, unable to forget. Even if we remember to try, it is hard to forget something that has hurt us deeply. However, it is a discipline, if you want to call it discipline, wherein one is able to transcend anger and quarrels, and to start a new day. To be able to control one's own mind is to be able to live each day as a new day. This is what non-attachment means. This is the basis for the fresh, creative life. Do not defile your beautiful life. That is the very reason the Buddha always referred to the lotus flower. It grows and blooms in a muddy pond but the lotus is never defiled by its environment, the muddiness. It always keeps its own purity. When the sun comes, the lotus opens its leaves and buds and fully appreciates the sunshine. Let us all live this kind of fresh, creative life.

Inside:

- ❖ Happy Spring! – Spring-time Messages
- ❖ "Ocean" Book Review & Upcoming Seminar
- ❖ Buddha's Birth and Easter
- ❖ Legacy Dedication Ceremony
- ❖ Views of Spring

President's Message

by Rev. Koyo Sunnan Kubose

Happy Spring! Here in the Midwest we especially welcome spring after the winter season. A robin chirping outside my window also signals spring's arrival. I once (unofficially) designated the robin as the Buddhist bird.

There is a story of how a robin fought a forest fire that threatened its home. The robin flew to a distant pond and filling its beak with water, flew over the fire dumping the water over the raging fire. The robin did this so often, the heat of the fire turned the robin's breast red. So the red-breasted robin can symbolize courage in the face of overwhelming odds. It shows a spirit of "means over end," of doing something 100%, without any thought of "no use doing it if it won't be successful."

All of nature also shows this same kind of courage. In a spring-time spirit of constant renewal, green buds appear on trees and tiny shoots stick their heads above the ground.

We are well into 1998, year of the Tiger, which is another symbol of courage. Whether we are inspired by the ferocious courage of a tiger or the persistent determination of a blade of grass

growing up through a crack in a concrete sidewalk, each of us human beings needs to constantly re-discover and nurture a spirit of courageous living. I believe such a spirit is the birthright that nature has endowed us with.

This same theme of courage was evident in the seminar we hosted earlier this year, "The Feeling Buddha" by David and Caroline Brazier. They are Dharma teachers for the Amida Trust, a non-sectarian socially engaged Buddhist organization in England.

The seminar previewed material from David Brazier's latest book, "The Feeling Buddha." Brazier presents the Buddha as a very human figure whose success lay not so much in perfection as in his courageous way of using the energy generated by the challenges of life.

Brazier offers an interpretation of the Four Noble Truths that is different from the traditional view of Nirvana as the elimination of suffering and craving. Enlightenment is viewed less as tranquil serenity but more as dynamic living.

There should be no guilt associated with the truth that we humans suffer. To the contrary, there is a

nobility in our struggle to meet life's difficulties.

These views are put into the historical context of Buddhist thought, particularly Vasubandhu's contribution and the Yogacara School which lays the foundation for a Buddhist psychology. Indeed, modern psychology can be one of the main gates to understanding the spiritual life.

Brazier presents the spiritual life not as somehow removed from the hustle and bustle of everyday living but views the word "spiritual" more in the sense of "being spirited" or "being full of life." Likewise, the meaning of "right" in the Eight-fold path is viewed as "whole heartedness." Enlightenment is not so much a cognitive change as a change in heart. Buddhism is not so much a belief system one holds to but rather a way of life passionately lived.

All in all, we could do worse than to embrace the theme of courage this year. I hear this message in the robin's song and see it in the green buds on the trees. Instead of passively wishing ourselves and others good fortune—may we actively nurture wisdom and compassion in our lives. May it be so.

Editor of this issue

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Oneness Newsletter Spring 1998

Please send:

Cartoons ♦ Poems ♦ Seasonings ♦ Dear Sensei

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We have made efforts to obtain permission to reprint material. We regret any oversight.

Sensei Says

Dear Readers:

I once saw a photograph of plum buds on a snow-covered branch. The accompanying commentary said we should be inspired by the hardiness and courage of plum buds which emerge very early—even in the midst of snow and cold temperatures. Thus, I always associate early spring with this very vivid image of plum buds on a snow-covered branch. (For one way of using this image, see the March theme of YES, Your Everyday Spirituality, in this issue.) I came across the same theme while visiting at my mother's home. She is a Chanoyu (Way of Tea) teacher of the Urasenke School, and in one of her Urasenke Newsletters I saw the following article:

The world of Nature is first to signal the changing seasons. After the severe cold of winter, spring naturally comes, but it's the plum trees with their fat buds that tell us spring is here. Spring could not come without the severely cold winter. That is nature's law of causality.

In winter, the old plum stands like a dead tree in the cold wind, so human hearts have always been moved seeing the plum blossoms in the first of spring, so noble and sweet-scented. The plum is the king of flowers, and plum blossoms smiling with happiness and brightness are like a painted scroll. Their beauty comes from bearing the winter cold and thus they are so graceful.

The plum blooms on a tree which has shed its leaves and stands naked to the cold, waiting for spring. Such a tree can bloom in spring only when it has withstood the cold winter. Mankind also can know the truth only when they bear up under hardship, then they can discover the way they must follow.

Dear Readers:

Remember, the Dharma truth is green; that is, it is always fresh and new—always "budding out" in the present moment. We too, must have "beginner's mind" and flow with the dynamic truth of this "green" Dharma.

Let's do some spring planting in your Dharma Garden! Here, for your enjoyment, are some seed planting suggestions:

3 rows of turnips — turn up with a smile, turn up with enthusiasm, turn up with determination to make everything count for something good and worthwhile.

4 rows of peas — promptness, practice, peace, patience.

5 rows of lettuce — let us work more for environmental concerns, let us do gassho daily, let us share our serenity with our neighbors, let us respect one another, let us be true to ourselves.

6 rows of squash — squash gossip, squash indifference, squash criticism, squash blaming, squash resentment, squash envy.

Reader Replies

Oneness & Gratitude

The Oneness Newsletter is on my desk, where I pick it up to refresh myself with a few sentences from time to time—and think of you—and know gratitude. These last few years have been rough, and one of the things I have learned from them is that when resentment, anger, or self-pity dominates, gratitude stays away. But gratitude is a much gentler companion, and I thank you for helping me to find her.
CB (NC)



"Buddhist" Prayer Doctors Who Pray With Their Patients

(Good Housekeeping, Jan '98)

Near the end of one day, Dr. S.K., MD, highly regarded breast surgeon in Dallas, TX, saw W.D., a 48-year old woman who had made an appointment because she felt a lump in her breast. Luckily, it turned out to be a harmless cyst. W.D. was still shaken, so Dr.

K. Said they could pray together. When they finished, they hugged each other. W.D. later revealed she was Buddhist but said with appreciation, "Buddhists accept all prayer."

Even without complete comprehension of another's faith, the sincerity should be appreciated.

JK (CA) Edited from Nichiren Sangha News (2/98)

In actual life experiences it is universal compassion, not religious dogma, that rules. (Ed.)

Brazler Workshop

I am writing to say thank you for organizing the workshop with the

Braziers. It was very informative and has given me lots to consider. I have purchased Zen Therapy and look forward to reading it. Being at the temple brought back lots of memories!

Thank you once again and also thanks for the hospitality.

SW (WI)

Everything Speaks the Dharma

A wannabe buddha named Sal yearned for a spiritual pal

After search near and far

By foot, bus and car

She found her cat would do quite well.

SU (AZ)

The Rev. Gyomay Kubose Dharma Legacy is a non-sectarian American Buddhist organization established to perpetuate and develop Rev. Kubose's non-dualistic approach to Buddhism.



Views of Spring

Haiku poems and commentary are from "Haiku, Volume 2, Spring" by R.H. Blyth; Hokuseido Press, 1950.

*The world,
Unseen for three days,-
And cherry-blossoms!* Ryota

This verse is almost devoid of poetry, yet its very commonplaceness may make us suspect an experience that humanity has every spring. We feel the tremendous power of nature that can transform the world in such a short time. There is nothing of interest or joy around us, but after a few days, cherry-blossoms are everywhere, and the minds of men are renewed. We feel the secret, silent, unceasing working of nature. Its sameness and faithfulness always comes as a shock of surprise.

*A basket of grass,
And no one there,-
Mountains of spring.* Shiki

How wonderful the world is, that a basket of grass, by itself, should be able to give us the meaning of spring mountains. The mere fact that there is no one with the basket is enough to throw us back into the arms of nature. When we are entirely alone with nature, and conscious of it, we feel an emotion that can be explained only by a contradiction, yet it is a single, elemental feeling. On the one hand it is a feeling of loneliness; on the other, it is one of fullness. It is like breathing in and breathing out at one and the same time. The spring mountains are so far off and yet so near; infinite, yet in one's breast; eternal, but of this present moment.

*Spring rain;
It begins to grow dark;
Today also is over.* Buson

As the rain falls, and night comes on, time is felt to be passing; and yet in another way, time seems to be standing still, to be no more, eternity at last begun. The day is over, today is over, but there is no feeling that any other day will ever begin, or even that it will not. The verse has the sublimity that only the simple, elemental things can give. The passage of time, perhaps the deepest feeling of man, far deeper than that of space, is felt as such, through the medium only of the dusk and the falling rain.



BOOK REVIEW

By Rev. Koyo S. Kubose

Rev. Kenneth K. Tanaka's new book "Ocean: An Introduction to Jodo-Shinshu Buddhism" is a great introduction of Shinran's Pure Land Buddhism to Americans. How many Jodo-Shinshu Buddhists have been embarrassed by being unable to confidently enter into interfaith dialogue and talk about Buddhism in social situations? How many non-Buddhists have had their interest frustrated by a lack of easy-to-understand answers to their questions? This book can help Jodo-Shinshu Buddhists understand their own religious tradition and also help the in communicating this to others.

The book is organized into four sections. The first deals with the basic Buddhist teachings. The second section outlines the historical development of Jodo-Shinshu Buddhism as it traveled from India to China, Japan, and America. The third section explains Jodo-Shinshu spiritual understanding through such concepts as shinjin awareness, Amida Buddha, and the Pure Land. The fourth section relates Jodo-Shinshu Buddhism to human activity in individual life and in society.

Rev. Tanaka's style is particularly appealing because of the simple question and answer format. His colloquial, informal approach effectively communicates the material to the average lay person. Rev. Tanaka uses many examples that are related to questions frequently asked by non-Buddhists. His involvement in interfaith work enables Rev. Tanaka to present the salient points that need clarification. "Ocean" is the kind of book that is needed as Jodo-Shinshu Buddhism finds its place in the pluralism that characterizes American religions in today's society.

SPRING EDUCATIONAL SEMINAR SERIES

Heartland Sangha has requested the Kubose Dharma Legacy to offer a seminar on "Ocean." The Rev. Koyo S. Kubose will lead a four-session seminar series that will meet monthly on Sundays from 1:00 - 3:00 P.M. at Heartland Sangha President Cynthia Brooke's residence (5043 W. Warwick, Chicago; 773-545-9972). The book is divided into four parts and one part will be covered at each meeting.

The four meeting dates "to go swimming in the Ocean" are: **March 29, April 26, May 17, and June 14. Register by March 20, 1998; space is limited!**

There is a one-time registration fee of \$20 per person (includes lunches). Cost of the book is \$15 plus \$3.00 for shipping. To register, make checks payable to Heartland Sangha and send to: Cynthia Brooke, 5043 W. Warwick, Chicago, IL 60641. Please include your telephone number in case you need to be contacted. A copy of the book will be mailed to you. Read Part 1 and see you on March 29th!

NOTE: If you cannot attend the Seminar series but wish to purchase a copy of the book, you can use the Book Order Form in this Newsletter.

Buddha's Birth and Easter

April 8th we celebrate Hanamatsuri (Flower Festival) to commemorate Siddhartha Guatama's birth in Lumbini Garden. The spiritual meaning of this religious holiday is that it must refer to one's own spiritual rebirth. This is the only true meaning in commemorating Siddhartha Guatama's birth.

I believe that the kind of spiritual rebirth I'm referring to is what is also meant by Jesus's resurrection—in which a particular human being becomes a universal spirituality (that is, Christ). My view of the only real way for Christians to commemorate Easter is to find Christ within themselves. The commemoration is not just something of a historical nature—but it centers on one's own resurrection. In his book, "The Center Within," Rev. Gyomay Kubose writes:

Jesus carried the cross up to Calvary. This is very important. Even though he was crucified, he lived up to his true life. He could not be dishonest to himself. Let the rulers of society kill him. In the face of execution he was unafraid. He had something beyond death.



To add a little flavor to life

The mind, like land, does not care what we plant. Good or bad, it returns what's planted.

R.R. Pharr

The flowers of all the tomorrows are in the seeds of today.

Chinese proverb

Though he died physically, he did not die. He lived all the more by dying. Our life is something like that. There is something worthy in all of us. It can be called the true self, the Buddha, or Christ . . . it doesn't matter. Each of us has something to live up to. Compared to this something, death doesn't matter. Confucius said, "This physical body is lighter than a single hair of the ox." It is life which has weight. We will give up the physical body for this kind of life. If one finds the Way in the morning and dies that same evening . . . life was worthwhile. One should not be afraid to die. One should be afraid of killing one's own true life. Resurrection means the

awakening of this true life. This was Christ's greatness. He accepted all conditions and was never defeated by circumstances; he lived his true life. This spirit has provided great inspiration.

Spring is a time when dormant seeds buried in the ground "come alive." All seeds embark on one sole pilgrimage. Their great mission is to stand before the face of the sun.

Within every person lies latent a spirituality that yearns for unity between the secular and sacred. Regardless of religious tradition, we can say that spring is calling us to move from a seed to a beautiful flower, from darkness to light, from ignorance to wisdom.



Legacy Dedication Ceremony

A formal Legacy Dedication Ceremony will be held on April 4, 1998 to celebrate the establishment of the Rev. Gyomay M. Kubose Dharma Legacy which is a non-profit religious organization dedicated to perpetuating and developing Rev. Kubose's non-dualistic approach to Buddhism: The Way of Oneness. The Celebration will begin with a taiko performance by Kokyo Daruma, followed by a Luncheon at 1:00 P.M. The Dedication Ceremony will include a Transmission of Spiritual Authority in which Rev. Gyomay M. Kubose, as Spiritual Head of the Kubose Dharma Legacy, will formally transmit his spiritual authority to his son, Rev. Koyo S. Kubose. The Celebration will be held at the Terrace Restaurant in Wilmette, Illinois. For those interested in making reservations to attend or to request more information, please call the Kubose Dharma Legacy at (847) 677-8211.

COMING EVENTS

Ocean Semtnar

A four-session seminar series on Rev. Tanaka's new book "Ocean" will be held monthly, March-June. See announcement in this issue.

Legacy Dedication Ceremony
Celebration of the establishment of the Rev. Gyomay M. Kubose Dharma Legacy will be held on April 4, 1998. See announcement in this issue.

SPOT Workshop Report

A SPOT (Special Place of Tranquility) Workshop led by Shauna Kubose was held in Fowler, California on December 20, 1997. A SPOT video was shown to introduce how a SPOT could be set up and used in one's home.

Typical usage of a SPOT involves lighting a candle and

incense; ringing a bell and doing something meaningful in that moment (e.g. sitting silently, putting hands together in gassho, or simply reflecting on a teaching). Additional items that could be used in conjunction with a SPOT are displaying "Dharma cards" (mini teachings for everyday inspiration), writing in a spiritual journal, etc. The December Workshop in Fowler involved creating customized journal books using Japanese art paper. Other work-

shop possibilities include making incense stick holders, ojuzu bead holders, Dharma card holders, etc. Having a SPOT in one's home is helpful for daily spiritual practice because it provides a physical place or spot to make time in one's busy day to put things in perspective, increase awareness, cultivate gratitude, etc. To receive more information on SPOT workshops, contact the Kubose Dharma Legacy.

BOOK INFORMATION / ORDER FORM

Name: _____

Address: _____

City / State / Zip: _____

I WOULD LIKE TO MAKE A CONTRIBUTION (tax deductible) \$ _____

I WOULD LIKE TO ORDER THE BOOKS MARKED BELOW

Title	QTY	Price	Total
<i>Everyday Suchness</i>		\$ 12.00	
<i>The Center Within</i>		\$ 12.00	
<i>The Center Within Audio Tapes</i>		\$ 18.00	
<i>American Buddhism</i>		\$ 5.00	
<i>Tan Butsu Ge</i>		\$ 7.00	
<i>Heart of the Great Wisdom Sutra</i>		\$ 6.00	
<i>The Fundamental Spirit of Buddhism</i>		\$ 8.00	
<i>Invisible Eyelashes</i>		\$ 12.00	
<i>Ocean</i>		\$ 15.00	

Shipping - \$3.00 first two books and 50c per item thereafter.

SHIPPING \$ _____

TOTAL \$ _____

 Payable to: **Kubose Dharma Legacy**
8334 Harding Ave., Skokie, Illinois 60076

Books by Rev. Gyomay M. 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" and speaks directly to the ordinary layperson. Collection of 58 essays reflects Rev. Kubose's unique, down-to-earth presentation of the Dharma teachings which offer to all people a richer, more meaningful life. 134 pages.

THE CENTER WITHIN audio cassette; 3 hours.

AMERICAN BUDDHISM. Covers a brief history of Buddhism in America, the Four Noble Truths, Eightfold Path, problems in terminology and misunderstandings common to Westerners. 29 pages.

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

THE FUNDAMENTAL SPIRIT OF BUDDHISM by Haya Akegarasu (Rev. G.M. Kubose's teacher). Translated from Japanese by Rev. Kubose; gives an idea of Rev. Akegarasu's life (1877-1954) and teachings. 87 pages.

Highly Recommended Books

INVISIBLE EYELASHES by Rev. Nikkyo Niwano. Combines time-honored Buddhist teachings and stories with examples from modern life to show how attitude affects happiness and how flexibility of mind helps us grow spiritually, making us more productive at work and better able to relate to others. 175 pages.

OCEAN: AN INTRODUCTION TO JODO-SHINSHU BUDDHISM IN AMERICA by Rev. Kenneth K. Tanaka. Uses a question and answer format to present Jodo-Shinshu Buddhism and to answer questions frequently asked by non-Buddhists. 270 pages.

Legacy Services

Spread the Dharma



The following is a sampling of presentations provided by the Legacy:

- Basic Buddhism
- Short History of Buddhism
- Buddhism in America
- Buddhism and Christianity
- Buddhism & Psychology
- Buddhist Symbols & Rituals
- Introduction to Meditation Workshop
- Daily Dharma Workshop
- Buddhist Standup Comedy Video

For further information, please contact the Legacy.

Dial - the - Dharma

(847) 677- 8053

This telephone service began in 1982 with a collection of over 150 recorded talks by Rev. Gyomay Kubose. His wife, Minnie faithfully changed the cassettes in their home until 1995, when due to her health problems, it was moved to Rev. Sunnan's home. Subsequently, over 200 talks by Rev. Sunnan were added to the cassette library and the tapes are currently changed daily as a Legacy service.



Call Dial-the-Dharma everyday to hear a recorded 2-3 minute teaching.



Daily Dharma

The Daily Dharma is a personalized program to facilitate starting an everyday spiritual practise. It focuses on developing a natural way of expressing Oneness in everyday living.

The program facilitates creating a personal SPOT (Special Place of Tranquility) in your home. Additional enhancement/enrichment activities are provided which build upon the foundation of daily MAGs (Moments of Gratitude). YES (Your Everyday Spirituality) is included in every Oneness newsletter. See next page.

For further information, please contact the Legacy.

Acknowledgments with Gratitude Supporters from Books and General Donations

Eddie & Dora Ando (CA)
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YES YES YES YES YES Your Everyday Spirituality	
MARCH	<p>Theme: Courage Purpose: Be open, vulnerable, take in life's lessons Method: "Plum-Bud (An opening up) Gassho": (1) Start with fists together; (2) Extend fingers until palms are together; (3) Keeping heel of hands to other, open hands to "V" shape; (4) Extend "V" shape by spreading arms above head.</p>
APRIL	<p>Theme: Centering Oneself Purpose: Restore Spiritual balance whenever you feel "knocked off" your center Method: "Daruma Doll Posture": Clasp hands just below navel; move slightly side to side to "re-center yourself," feel "weighted" in your gut. Remember the saying, "7 times down; 8 times up."</p>
MAY	<p>Theme: Telephone Etiquette Purpose: Slow down and communicate compassionately Method: "Telephone Gassho": When the phone rings, bow or gassho to it; take a mindfulness breath; and answer after the 2nd ring or later (never on first ring). Try to talk to callers with respect.</p>