

# ZEN NEWS



Readers are invited to submit items of news, articles, book reviews, poetry, artwork, photographs and other material to be considered for publication. Opinions expressed in the items published do not necessarily reflect the editor's own views or the practice of the Tyneside group. It is hoped that by sharing our experience and understanding we may learn to live together in a positive and harmonious way. In this way Dharma may flourish.

It is intended that Zen News will continue to be published at two-monthly intervals. Please ensure that the editor is notified of changes of address. If you have a friend who wishes to receive this publication, please send their name and address. Distribution by post is free, but a small charge is made where available from shops to cover printing costs only. Your financial support is invited; payable to: Tyneside Zen Buddhist Association.

Compiled and published by members of Tyneside Zen Buddhist Association.  
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The cover design is adapted from a greeting card available from Shasta Abbey, California, and depicts Monju, a Bodhisattva representing wisdom. Monju has no fear of the lion on which he sits, since he maintains a continuous attitude of meditation. The lion, which is very much awake, remains inactive while Monju has no fear.

\* \* \*

#### Five Steps to Life

1. Take responsibility for your actions.  
Do not seek to blame others, but know you made the decision.  
This way we accept our humanity and begin to be alive.
2. Ears, eyes and heart open, learning inside and out. Do not seek knowledge.  
The sound of us all eternally here, forever new.  
We move with Flux, which moves before all created things.
3. Do not fight the loss of your hand-holds,  
Or if your world is turned upside-down,  
Or if your knowledge is taken from you,  
Or white becomes black and black become white.  
Do not seek escape.  
This way we learn our life and meet true humility, perhaps for the first time.
4. Have compassion for yourself and for all others.  
Have compassion for others and for yourself.  
This we find our True Heart and deepen. Inside, outside a single Treasure, a single Infinity.
5. Do not fear loss, do not seek gain.  
There is a completeness in one who fears neither richness nor poverty.  
Accept all and forever begin again, forever a beginner.

- Anne Grippe  
(London)

## Right Livelihood, and Industrial Liberation

I gassho and bow to the Buddha,  
I gassho and bow to Roshi,  
I gassho and bow to all at Shasta Abbey, Throssel Hole Priory, Tyneside  
and Durham Meditation Groups.

"The Buddhist point of view takes the function of work to be at least threefold: to give a man a chance to utilise and develop his faculties; to enable him to overcome his egocentredness by joining with other people in a common task; and to bring forth the goods and services needed for a becoming existence. ... To organise work in such a manner that it becomes meaningless, boring, stultifying, or nerve-racking for the worker would be little short of criminal; it would indicate a greater concern with good than with people, an evil lack of compassion and a soul-destroying degree of attachment to the most primitive side of this worldly existence." (P.45)

"Simplicity and non-violence are obviously closely related. The optimal pattern of consumption, producing a high degree of human satisfaction by means of a relatively low rate of consumption, allows people to live without great pressure and strain and to fulfil the primary injunction of Buddhist teaching.. (The Three Pure Precepts: Cease from evil. Do only good. Do good for others.) (P.48)

"...there is the immediate question of whether 'modernisation', as currently practiced without regard to religious and spiritual values, is actually producing agreeable results. As far as the masses are concerned, the results appear to be disastrous - a collapse of rural economy, a rising tide of unemployment in town and country, and the growth of a city proletariat without nourishment for either body or soul". (P.51)

"It is in the light of both immediate experience and long-term prospects that the study of Buddhist economics could be recommended even to those who believe that economic growth is more important than any spiritual or religious values". (P.51)

Extracts from "Small is Beautiful - A study of economics as if people mattered" (1) by Dr. Schumacher: German born. Studied economics at New College, Oxford from 1930. Then taught at Columbia University, New York. British Control Commission in Germany from 1946 to 1950. Economic advisor to National Coal Board for following 20 years. During the past ten years his advice on problems of rural development has been sought by many overseas governments.

For the past three years I have been manager of a small factory producing saucepans at Gateshead. During this time my awareness of Buddhism has been deepening through meditation. This growing awareness I applied to my job, as a way of putting Zen into practice in daily life. As a result there has been a beautiful flowering of humanity throughout the factory. The power of Buddhism is truly immense, even when practiced in the faltering way of which I have been capable. I have no doubt that fully enlightened beings would be capable of moving mountains or melting the polar icecaps if called upon to do so.

It is extremely hard work to put meditation into practice in daily life.

1. Small is Beautiful by E.F. Schumacher. Published 1974 by Abacus, 1976 reprint £1.50.

It must be done in conjunction with daily Zazen and study of Buddhist precepts, otherwise there is little hope. The rewards for success are infinite.

Trungpa, when writing about work says: "You should not look down on someone who works in a factory or produces materialistic things. ... Strangely enough the profound and transcendental are to be found in the factory." (2)

At the end of 1976 (2520 B.E.) the factory moves to Birmingham. Sadly the Gateshead workforce has already disbanded. For a brief moment there was something worthwhile. The traditional barriers between management and workers, absolutely sacrosanct in British industry, were instantly dissolved by Kanzeon (Bodhisattva of Compassion). The release of positive energy truly amazed all. Above everything, many realised that the fourty hours a week spent at work could be part of life, a real enrichment of our brief existences as human beings.

Although I shall be moving to Birmingham to continue as factory manager, I am aware of Dogen's words on 'The Merit of Becoming a Monk'.

" Although it is true that both laymen and monks can realise enlightenment, there is a difference in the relative difficulty each encounters. Because laymen have to make a living, it is difficult for them to devote themselves completely to Buddhist training. If they attempt to do so, their livelihood will be endangered, while if they do the opposite, they must necessarily neglect their practice of the Way." (3)

In reply to Dogen I would ask: is it not better to endanger one's livelihood than to endanger the life of Buddha?

" Do not turn your face away from Buddha, the Lord of the House, for this is indeed to commit spiritual suicide; to kill Buddha is to turn away from Buddha. Man stand in his own shadow and wonders why it is dark, yet only he can turn round. To turn away from Buddha is to say 'My ego is greater than the Lord of the House; my opinions are more right; my wishes are more important.' It is you whom you kill. If you do not listen to the Lord of the House in this life, in what life will you listen to the Lord of the House? Will you for eternity attempt to commit real suicide? If you always face the Buddha you will always know Buddha; if you always listen to the Lord of the House there is no possibility of you every killing anything." (4)

gassho

- Robert Dunnett  
(Tyneside)

- pp 84,85, The Myth of Freedom and the Way of Meditation by Chogyam Trungpa, Shambhala 1976, £2.50.
- Zen Master Dogen by Yuho Yokoi. Weatherhill 1976, £2.25.
- Journal of Shasta Abbey, August/September 1976. The Ten Great Precepts: Number 1 - Do not kill. Jiyu Kennett Roshi. (For membership details write to; Shasta Abbey, PO Box 478, Mount Shasta, California 96067).



A wall painting from the Zen temple Hei-in-sa, Korea, showing the popular story of the meeting of Bodhidharma and his successor, Taisō Eka (Hui-k'o).

After Bodhidharma had been doing Zazen at Shōrinji for nine years, Taisō Eka came asking for entry and teaching. The story goes that he cut off his own right arm to demonstrate his determination. The following mondo is recorded as Taisō Eka offers his arm: My mind is not pacified, pacify my mind.'

Bodhidharma replies: 'If you bring me that mind, I will pacify it for you.'

Taisō Eka says: 'When I search my mind I cannot hold it.'

Bodhidharma says: 'Then your mind is pacified already.'

Eka was accepted as a disciple and Bodhidharma said: 'All the Buddhas, when they seek the Way, forsake their bodies for the sake of the Dharma.'

Photographed by Tony Henderson

### The Realm of the Hungry Ghosts

I thought I'd write about somewhere I've been for a while, the Realm of the Hungry Ghosts, a very painful realm in many ways, but I'm grateful to be able to experience such weakness, because if taken positively it produces strength and resilience.

I started off not facing something in my meditation, so things got a little painful, so as usual I took refuge in food, gradually it got worse and worse, not just a packet of Jaffa biscuits as Daiji puts it, but a whole load of biscuits, chocolate, fruit, milk. I just ate until I could eat no more and still felt hungry, so I'd smoke and read, then the pricks of conscience would come, ... you're not training ... there's so much to do, others will have to do it for you ... you're destroying your body... This made it worse so I'd eat more, then I couldn't sit, because of the pain in the knees, because of too much sweet food and liquid, but I'd try and I'd stop for a while, but that hunger would come again and again. So I decided to face it, it's never as bad as you think, take each moment as it comes, sit and be hungry, be patient just sit and the hunger and pain will go on its own.

The mentality of the Hungry Ghost is one of taking in to make the ego more solid, the food is something to relate to. To be truly open one must continually give. To receive and not give out merely strengthens self conceptions.

If you are grateful for all states of mind they become less of a problem and more of a helping hand, if you use them positively the suffering just deepens your everyday meditation.

So thank you Hungry Ghosts you're one of the best friends I've known.

- Charles Fletcher  
(Blackpool)

### The Stone Lord

The eye recycles all things  
a cloude hump echoes a mountain  
repeats its pattern in hill & hedge  
trees skirting the pool

their leaves fall in  
drawn by breeze dispersing  
water to hills

their mould  
is reused

I cup my hands to the pool

- Richard Caddiel  
(Tyneside)

### Stop Thief?

Something that has worried me is the stress that almost all people I know of who guide others in Zen practice put on formal seated meditation. While I can appreciate what goes into their advocacy of it, I would like to present another angle.

I seem to have been born an oddball, and this has often caused me much distress in the past. Not through any particular contrary intent, it just seems to be 'one of those things'; and plans that run smoothly and work out as planned for others appear almost invariably to be snatched away from me. Many oddballs, failures, misfits and losers feel themselves immensely unfortunate, victims of God's sense of humour (or malice), or their own evil, (which of course, being so evil they are unable to detect), etc., etc. This is a serious article (although it may appear otherwise), as it is likely that anyone who brains will come up against times when they are apparently going against everything they've ever been told, whether they wish to or not. It is ostensibly about formal seated meditation, but its relevance spreads much further.

When I first came to Zen I practised formal seated meditation virtually every day, (if my room-mate had a visitor, the wardrobe wasn't large, but it was adequate - I was too impoverished to travel further afield). Later I moved to other premises where I shared a room with a friend and the friend's friend. However, this friend's friend was in all day doing leatherwork, (which s p r e a d s), and had a never-ending flood of friends and acquaintances milling around, coming, going; liked the music on LOUD; - and there were no wardrobes. I was not amused.

One day I decided that as no-one seemed to care what inconvenience they caused me, I would not care what inconvenience I caused them, so I sat in the only place available, which was virtually in front of the door. Tough luck, you lot! I was FURIOUS.

The following day, however, I began to be greatly concerned over my future, and as I walked home from work I wondered what on earth I could do as there seemed to be nowhere I could go to practice formal seated meditation without becoming a financial and physical wreck, and to continue to 'practice' at home seemed lunacy. However, it occurred to me - is it the truth of my life I want, or the truth of sitting cross-legged? It might be all very fine for other people, but it was the truth of my life, of the moment I wanted, however it happened to run, not somebody else's ideal. Sitting may be the truth of sitting, walking is the truth of walking, neither is more real than the other.

I saw how much I had been using sitting as an escape - things had been a bit rough during the day and so I'd look forward to sitting to regain a sense of calm ("this is where it's at!" Orderly, comfortable, more so-called 'real' - What RUBBISH!). But now I had nothing to look forward to; here, this moment, was all I had, or wanted; no future 'peace-out' to anticipate.

Something all failures and misfits must at some time meet is guilt. What is usually then looked for is an answer to the question. But don't let this be just a looking for an escape or a nice neat ending. Perhaps you may not find an 'answer' or an explanation, and self-condemnation or acquiescence to what you think is expected of you may just be an escape, a coward's way out - no inexplicable loose-ends, ("now everyone will approve of me, I'm part of the gang again" etc.)

You may always be wrong, you may always change your mind, yet if we become sensitive we may well find that what we are hoping for or depending on is a neat pat little answer, an answer to end all answers, to make us untouchable, a nice just-so with a virtuous little bow on it, a land of bliss, of freedom from blame, a weapon, a crutch, an escape, a place to lay our head, God's, Buddha's, our own, or someone or something else's approval, to be right, to destroy the bits of us we don't like, to be the shining example of some ideal, some 'perfection', and all the rest of it. In other words we want a machine, a way out of growing up, meeting our life, and taking for ourselves the responsibility of it. Status, position, security, image.

God has a funny way of making people's luck run out. Heroes lose their courage, tough-guys weep, untouchables blush, well-meaners make a mess of things, high-flyers crash, wise persons can't find an answer, pious persons become enraged, Superman remains plain old bungling Clark Kent. Instead of beating your breast or wishing for escape from it, have another look - perhaps he's just trying to take away a crutch you were hitherto unaware of.

- Anne Cripps  
(London)



Image of Shakyamuni Buddha situated at the Tendai Sect Temple, Soso, in central Japan.

Photographed by Tony Henderson.



### The Dharma as Proclaimed by Jack Kerouak

The gent who introduced me to the ideas of Zen was one Jack Kerouak of the U.S.A. Now Kerouak was given the appellation of Beatnik because of his unorthodox activities, outward bound as he was in living life, an American, footloose, anti-morality, suck-it-dry kind of attitude. This led to the death of himself, and his close friend, 'Dean', in the celebrated novel 'On The Road'.

Here truth was displayed, showing to the bone, without moderation, the extremes ever further reaching, until the ties with life were loosed completely and there was no more of him. Yet he found in the literature about Zen reason for his excess, the truth overflowed the container and spilled into the universe, life was 'too much' for Kerouak and Kerouak 'too much' for life.

Now can Kerouak be remembered, or thought of, as a Zen monk? For myself the answer is yes, he is the monk who look on America and succumbed to the ordeal, no is the drunken dancer in the night, the reveller in the white blinding truth.... one reason for this is the simplicity of his creative/destructive confusion of a life lived, well, one way!

Through all the epics of over-drink, of mad friends and cross country drive-rounds, of three day parties celebrating the birth of themselves and the fact of being alive, there remained a sincerity of purpose, an underlying knowledge that things were as well as they might be and that all is reflected in the one mad eye of Buddha, for this was, after all, only a distillation of usual life, revered and venerated by the action of direct living and pedestal raised as an example of modern life's tendencies and possibilities.

The sadness was totally sad, the joy was deep, the long night dark. Loneliness proved of great depth and Li Po's poems were a redeemer, giving strength to the great push forward and proving that art does have value.

No rest, no contentment, no deviating from the path of being himself. After his insight into what actually is, in the great forests where he took on a fire watcher's job for the summer and engaged in daily walking meditation in a clearing, he didn't find cause to retreat into a hermit shell or become a meditative Taoist, but rushed headlong into city life and its tumult, to delve the red lights and shimmering glass reflections of that which needed the great purge.

There were no lecture tours, or university meditation groups, or soft sentimentalising over Christianized sutras, instead there was lone wood retreats and shouting the seven names of Buddha in actions beyond and above usual law, mountain singing and gentle sipping of the moon for reassurance of the soul with its own voice against a laughing silence and there was the immediate response of a thousand like-images in friends and diggers everywhere on his well documented road.

Ah Jack, you lived and you died - what else? There remains the story, the back alley holler, the tin can finally rolling to a halt.

America continues in her rollicking song, if Jack failed so did the Buddha, and Christ too. Is it how one fails that matters, or is it the attempt, the spirit of engagement, for each is alone in the chase and to go it alone is to resurrect the Dharma and no one sees.

It is alright to exteriorise in sentimentality another way about the Buddha, with like minds, but to grab life and hang on is for the elsewhere seekers. Kerouak's end was an obvious conclusion, yet there was a smile on that particular cross, an energetic light beam that fills and fortifies, that instills a sense of the pace of modern life, every instant changing, the total immersion, the bountiful and wondrous nature of this existence.

- Tony Henderson  
(Tyneside)

## Meetings

Aberdeen Meets on Tuesdays at 7pm. For further information from Mark Hill, 163 King Street, Aberdeen. (29669)

Edinburgh Information available from Richard Zahler, 8 Starbank Rd. Edinburgh

Tyneside Wednesday meetings as follows:

15 Hallington Mews, Killingworth		Jan 12	Feb 9
16 Sunderland Road, S. Shields	Dec 15	Jan 19	Feb 16
20 High Shaw, Edgewell, Prudhoe		Jan 26	Feb 23
4 Field Lane, Felling		Feb 2	

Meetings include periods of Zazen, reading of texts, informal discussion and refreshments. Beginners are welcome and basic meditation instruction is available.

For further information contact David Brazier, 20 High Shaw, Prudhoe. (32140)

Durham Meditation meetings on Mondays at 7.30pm in lounge 2, 38 Old Elvet, continue until December 20, and re-start on January 10. Further information available from Stewart McFarlane, Dept. of Oriental Studies, Elvet Hill, Durham.

York Simon Fell and Jane Mellor of 20 James St, York, would like to hear from anyone in the area interested in starting a weekly Zazen group.

Bradford - Leeds For information contact Helen Percival, 31 Harrogate St., Bradford. (0274 632393)

Hull Meets on Thursdays at 7.30pm at the Friends Meeting House, Percy St. Further information from Robin Baker, 19 Park Grove, Hull.

St Annes - Blackpool Meets every Thursday at 7.30 at 107 Blackpool Road North, St Annes-on-Sea. Contact Charles Fletcher at the same address. (B'pool 724905)

North Staffordshire Meets on alternate Mondays at 8.30pm and occasional Sundays at 6.00am. For more information contact Alan Clayton, West View, Blackenhall, Nantwich, Cheshire. (Betley 292)

Nottingham Meets on Mondays at 8pm at 26 Millicent Rd, West Bridgeford, Nottingham Contact Alan MacCormick at the same address. (813351)

Shropshire Meets every Tuesday at 8pm at Boreatton Park, Baschurch, Salop. For further information contact Stephen Sambrook at the same address.

Knowle Robert Dunnett of 103 Lodge Road Kowle, Solihull wishes to start a Zazen group in the area. First meeting on January 18 at the above address. Open house at 7pm Tuesday evenings for 7.30 sitting and 8.30 refreshments. (Knowle 4918)

South Staffordshire Information from Nich Churchill, 154 Netherstone Lane, Litchfield, Staffs.

Warley Meets on Thursdays for Zazen at 7pm at 41 Barclay Rd., Smethwick, (Bearwood) Warley, West Midlands. Contact Dorothy Bailey at the same address for further information. (021 429 4080)

Northampton Meets on Thursdays at 7.30pm at 93 Lutterworth Rd., Northampton. Contact Mr. K. Cooley for more information.

Reading Zazen group now underway meets every Tuesday at 7.30pm at 40 Waylen Street, Reading. Contact John Danvers at the same address or just come along (with a thick cushion).

Andover Stephen Close would like to hear from anyone in the area interested in group Zazen. Contact him at: Bungalow 1, Longbottom, Biddesden, Nr. Andover, Hants.

Dublin Meets on Wednesdays at 7pm at 61 Butterfield Ave, Rathfarnham, Dublin. Contact Moira Jones at the same address for further information.

At all the above groups it is possible to practice Soto Zen meditation. This does not necessarily mean that all groups follow this practice exclusively.

## News

Throssel Hole Priory Work is progressing on the new Zendo, both interior and exterior walls are going up. The outer stone 'skin' is proving rather slow due to the removal of lichen from the old stone walling.

The priory has the following items for sale: Slightly damaged copies of 'Zen is Eternal Life' - £3.00. Hardback copies of 'Selling Water by the River' - £2.00. 'Zen Meditation' booklets - 80p. 'Becoming a Buddhist' booklets - 80p. Meditation Benches - £3.50. Posters, hand printed on rice paper, 60p each - 'Bodhidharma' or 'The Buddha Leaving Retreat'. All items are post paid, and some are slightly less if bought at the Priory.

Retreats are to be held at the Priory as follows:

Weekend Retreats -	Jan 8-9
	Jan 22-23
	Feb 5-6
	Feb 19-20
	Mar 5-6
Week Retreats -	Dec 17-23
	Mar 21-27
	Jun 1-7

Anyone wishing to attend the Priory should write for an application form to the Guestmaster, Throssel Hole Priory, Carr Shield, Nr. Hexham, Northumberland. Visitors can attend without prior notice on Sundays at 11am for a lecture.

Aberdeen Day Retreat Sunday 7th November. Without doubt the location was superb. A large farmhouse some five miles up the Dee valley, approached an estate road flanked by trees and rhododendron bushes. Rev. Daishin Morgan from Throssel Hole Priory began by describing the posture and attitude of mind for Zazen meditation, before the first periods of meditation.

The air was crisp as the seven or eight entirely voluntary participants assembled for the morning allocation of work. The tasks involved the overdue mucking out of the goathouse and tending the vegetable garden.

Both lunch and dinner were taken in the formal Zazen positions after meditation and scriptures in the Zendo. Two of the group served the others with wholesome food. Tea, and lectures by Daishin. The day drew to a close with a reading of Zazen Rules and further Zazen.

People Moving Thanks Robert. We wish you well for the future. Gassho.