



Berkeley Zen Center



June 2013 Newsletter

Five-Day Sesshin Concludes 2013 Spring Practice Period June 19 - 23

Our Spring practice period will conclude with a five-day sesshin from Wednesday, June 19 to Sunday, June 23. The first four days' schedule is from 5:00 am until 9:05 pm, while the final day's schedule is from 5:00 am until 10:15 am, immediately followed by Shuso Hossen, dharma dialogue with the shuso. Please sign up on the patio bulletin board for a minimum of three days, two of which should be consecutive. Sign-ups close on Saturday, June 15, 12:00 noon.

The Shuso Hossen ceremony will begin promptly at 10:30 am, and will be followed by a reception. All practice period and sesshin participants should make it a priority to support the shuso and come with a question.

If this is your first sesshin at BZC, it is strongly recommended that you first participate in a full Saturday program, have oryoki instruction and that you speak with the sesshin director.

The fee is \$35 per day and should be paid in advance. Leave checks marked "June sesshin" in the kitchen/community room porch door donation slot. If you have questions, contact the sesshin director Carol Paul, caroljpaul@yahoo.com or 510.206.5051.

Photo: Ko Blix



Affirmation of Welcome

Walking the path of liberation, we express our intimate connection with all beings. Welcoming diversity, here at Berkeley Zen Center the practice of zazen is available to people of every race, nationality, class, gender, sexual orientation, age, and physical ability. May all beings realize their true nature.

B Z C S c h e d u l e

June

Practice Period Dinner & Skit Night

Saturday, 6/1, 6:00 pm

Kidzendo

Saturday, 6/1

Half-Day Sitting

Sunday, 6/2, 8:00 am – 12:00 pm

Founder's Ceremony

Monday, 6/3, 6:20 pm

Tuesday, 6/4, 6:40 am

Shosan

Friday, 6/14, 5:40 pm

Monday, 6/17, 5:40 am

Lay Ordination/Zaike Tokudo

Saturday, 6/15, 3:00 pm

Five-day Sesshin

Wednesday, 6/19 – Sunday 6/23

Bodhisattva Ceremony

Saturday, 6/22, 9:40 am

Shuso Hossen

Sunday, 6/23, 10:30 am

July

Founder's Ceremony

Tuesday, 7/2, 6:20 pm

Wednesday, 7/3, 6:40 am

Zazenki (Just Sitting Day)

Sunday, 7/7, 5:00 am – 5:00 pm

BZC Campout

Saturday, 7/13 – Sunday 7/14

Bodhisattva Ceremony

Saturday, 7/20, 9:40 am

Mountains and Rivers

Thursday - Sunday, 7/25 – 7/28

Practice Period Events for Families

There are a couple of special events coming up for families. On June 1, our KidZendo program will include a visit to the zendo to hear the first part of our shuso's talk. After the talk, children and parents will split up so we can have a parent meeting to get input from involved parents.

As our closing event for family programs this year, we are offering a children's service on Friday, June 7 at 5 pm, when Sojun Roshi will teach our young people how we do our service of chanting and bowing.

NOTE: We are cancelling the previously announced pizza dinner, so the KidZendo teachers don't miss all of the shuso talks. We hope to see you at the campout and around BZC over the summer! And we very much look forward to resuming festivities in September.



Photo: Ko Blix

BZC CAMPOUT - Save the date!

You are warmly invited to the annual Berkeley Zen Center Campout, scheduled for July 13 - 14. We've reserved a group campsite in nearby Tilden Park, and will meet for a potluck dinner and possibly a short hike, as well as s'mores and songs around the campfire, followed by oatmeal and coffee/tea/cocoa in the morning. Join us to pass on the campfire rounds we grew up with, tell stories, and learn the latest songs from our own kids. Families and those without children are all welcome. If you prefer not to stay for the night, come for the dinner and company. If you would like to stay but are missing a tent or sleeping bag, let us know, and we can almost definitely find one for you. Contact Katherine O. at klo999@yahoo.com if you have questions, and look for a sign-up on the bulletin board in early July.



Family Activities at BZC

Saturday Morning Supervised Play

Supervised play is offered free of charge on many Saturday mornings (see schedule below) for 9:40 am zazen through lecture. Currently supervising is Berkeley High student Lihong Chan. We need to know by dinner time on Friday if you are planning to avail yourselves of this service on the following day (so she can sleep in if not!). Phone or e-mail Laurie Senauke, 510.845.2215, or lauries@kushiki.org.

Coverage for BZC's 8:45 am zazen instruction and beginner orientation is offered by special arrangement; contact Laurie for more information.

KidZendo

BZC's Saturday program for children three and up usually happens twice a month during the school year, typically on the second and fourth Saturdays, from 9:30 am to 11:15 am (see exact schedule below). Several BZC members are teaching in this program: BZC resident Tamar has been trained in offering a curriculum known as The Toolbox. Nancy Suib and Jin Young, longtime practitioners at BZC, have been trained in the Mindful Schools program. See details on our website. Check the calendar online or below for the exact schedule. As always, RSVP if you plan to attend (lauries@kushiki.org).

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| June 1 | KidZendo |
| June 7 | Children's service |
| June 8 | Supervised play |
| June 15 | Supervised play |
| June 22 | Sesshin - no program |
| June 29 | Summer break begins |
| July 13-14 | BZC Campout |
| July - Aug. | No KidZendo, supervised play by appointment |

Family Practice E-mail Group

To make it easier to publicize, announce and remind ourselves about family practice activities at BZC, we have a Yahoo group. We only send, at most, ONE e-mail per week—just a short reminder of upcoming events. To join, e-mail Laurie at lauries@kushiki.org or Marie at marie_hopper@sbcglobal.net.

The Host Within the Host

Comments from Sojun Roshi

June, 2013

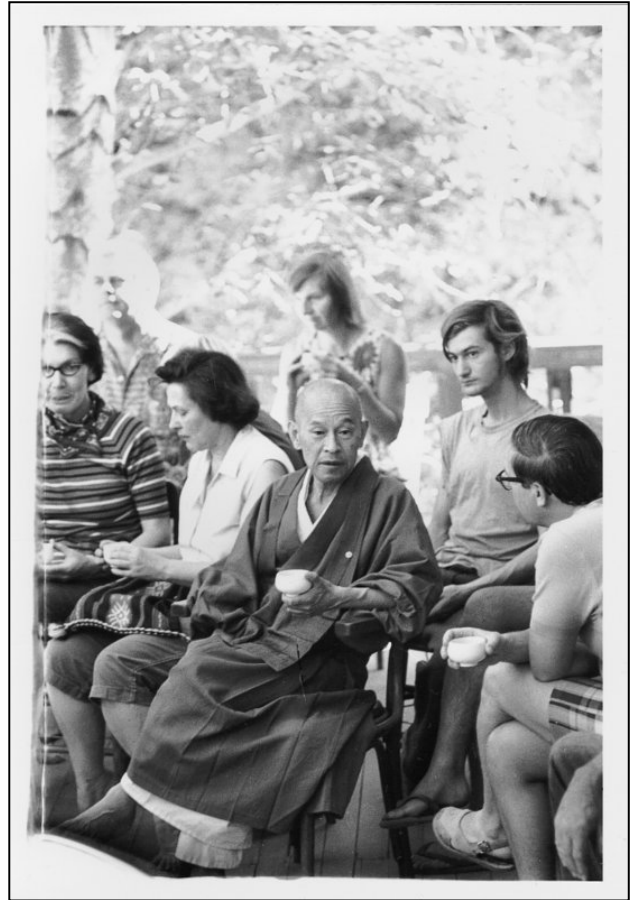
At the conclusion of Master Tung-shan's Precious Mirror Samadhi (Hokyo zanmai), he says to "Work secretly, like a fool or an idiot. To do this continuously is called the Host within the Host." "Secretly" means something like to practice selflessly as an ego tamer without asking for credit. The Buddha said that the purpose of his Dharma is to help people understand how suffering or dissatisfaction arises, what the causes are, how to see them through, and to see through them. Suffering and pain are important components of our life as are happiness and contentment.

So what is a fool or an idiot? Someone who does the secret activity of zazen of course! When you don't understand it, it is a secret. When you do, it is vast open freedom. One who has this freedom is often considered a non-conforming fool. We are taught to build up and depend on our so-called ego; the acquiring mind, the cause of suffering. So when we come to practice we are told to let go of it. But hold on! That's not so easy.

We don't want to kill our ego, we just need to train it. No matter how often we tell ourselves that we don't have one, we constantly refer to it as me, myself, and I. It does after all have a function. It is our inter-actor. It can lead us to kill or nurture. It is the sufferer. It can be blown up like a heavenly balloon, only to pop and send us into depression. It suffers from the effects of its own self-importance. The problem is that we set it up as an icon, place our faith in it, and follow it around like something that smells good.

But the ego should be our servant, not our leader. It has a wonderful and vital function. When we put it to use to serve the Dharma, it becomes the mind of the way. It takes the position of the guest, serving and doing the work of the Host. Master Tung-shan calls this the guest hidden within the host. When guest and Host are not two, this is called the Host within the host. The third Ancestor Sosan said "A hair breadth's difference and heaven and earth are set apart.

No matter how talented or intelligent we are, no matter how well we are educated in the Dharma, or our position in the sangha or our many years of practice or authority inside or outside the gate, if we let our ego take center stage, it has a negative effect on the harmony of the sangha. Every time we completely let go and bow with sincerity to the altar, or to each other, or to those we have a problem with, we enter the big mind of the host and the ego is purified.



Suzuki Roshi, having tea with his students at Tassajara. From shunryusuzuki.com.

June Sounding Board Dollars and Sense

At the board's April meeting, we discussed two financial issues. One concerned the addition of a bond fund to our investment portfolio. The other issue was the difficulty we experience in the collection of sesshin fees.

The board voted to allocate \$20,000 to the Pimco Total Return fund. This is a bond fund which invests in the debt of mostly American companies but also has some international exposure. Bonds are loans to companies and governments. The fund derives income from the interest. Pimco's solid long-term record, low risk and volatility profile, and consistently high ratings were our reasons for choosing it. Pimco joins our other two investment funds. One is Tempelton Global Bond, which purchases bonds from international governments, and the other is Vanguard GNMA, a government backed mortgage securities fund, which we've owned for almost ten years. All three of these funds have been carefully chosen for their low risk, stability, and excellent long-term records. They allow us to collect a very modest return on our various BZC accounts at a time when money market rates are close to zero.

The second issue, collection of sesshin fees, concerns the problem created when people don't pay their fees on time. This results in the office manager having to spend time and effort trying to collect them, while not always being successful. This is especially a problem for multi-day sesshins. Not only do we lose income, but it also puts an added stress on our already busy office manager. We're still discussing possible solutions that will help folks be as mindful with their wallets as they are with their sitting practice.

Note Re: Sesshin Fee Payment

This is a reminder that Sesshin fees are expected to be paid by the time the sign-up sheet is taken down, usually two days before Sesshin. Thank you for doing this.

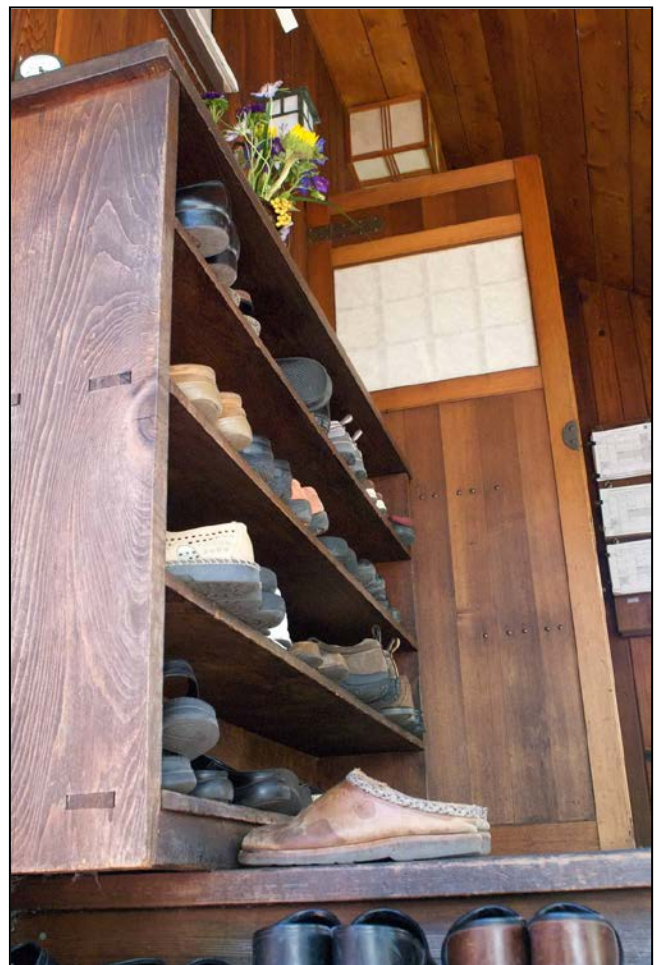
- Sojun

Half-Day Sitting Sunday, June 2

8:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon

Here's your chance for more calm practice this spring! BZC offers five half-day sittings this year. Each includes five periods of zazen, kinhin (walking meditation) and an informal tea. A half-day sitting is a great opportunity to focus on "just zazen" and is appropriate for beginning as well as experienced Zen students. Sojun Roshi asks participants to commit to the entire four-hour schedule.

A \$10 donation is requested for half-day sittings. Please refrain from wearing scented products. If you have questions or if you cannot sign up on the bulletin board, contact the June 2 half-day director Nina Sprecher at 510.848.3585. The next half-day sitting will be on September 8.



Now We're HEAR! (The Harmony, Ethics, and Reconciliation Committee)

What was once EAR, Ethics and Reconciliation Committee, is now HEAR, the Harmony, Ethics, and Reconciliation Committee. We have changed our name to reflect more accurately the work we have been doing. Over the years, we have noticed that most of the situations brought to us by sangha members could best be described as ruptures in relationship between individuals; challenges to policy or the implementation of a policy; or interpersonal misunderstandings.

The name change reflects our desire to make it clearer that a major focus of the committee is conflict resolution: offering sangha members an alternative means of dealing with the (inevitable) conflicts which arise from time to time when people work closely with one another. The other purpose of HEAR remains receiving and hearing complaints about possible ethics concerns or violations of the ethics guidelines (which can be found on [our website](#)).

To initiate an informal process, one may contact any committee member. The initial conversation may be a consultation about whether HEAR is the right vehicle for addressing the problem, including whether there might be other steps to take first; whether and how one wishes to engage with the other person; and, whether to ask for a formal or informal process. The informal process is one in which there is a need for reconciliation. HEAR has used a variety of means to address these issues, determined on a case-by-case basis, and with the permission of the participants: for example, a shuttle diplomacy model prior to a joint meeting; referral to an appropriate forum (e.g., to the Practice Committee when a policy issue is part of the issue) and formal or informal mediation.

A formal process is one in which a formally convened panel reviews the details of the situation, meets with involved parties and makes a determination about whether the complaint is valid and constitutes an ethics violation, then makes recommendations to the Board regarding consequences.

Both the informal and the formal processes are confidential.

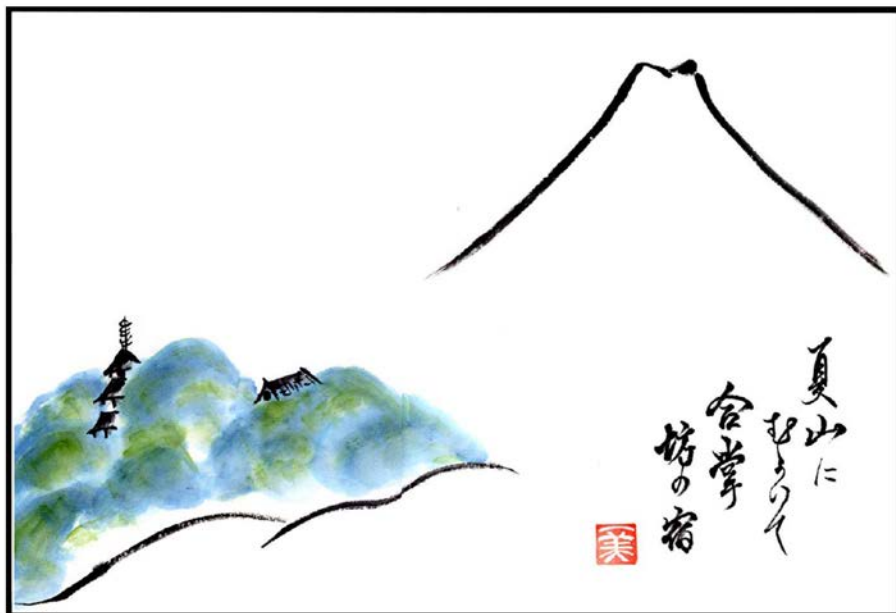
The committee is not a substitute for working with a teacher. We encourage sangha members to consult their teacher as well as attempt to communicate with the individual with whom he/she is in conflict before coming to HEAR. However there may be myriad reasons why an alternative resource is useful.

The 2013 members of HEAR are: Mary Duryee,

Chair; Gerry Oliva, board representative; Stan Dewey; Marty Kovach; Christy Calame; and Hozan Alan Senauke, as senior student/teacher representative.



Mountains and Rivers sesshin community-constructed altar, Ko Blix



*Temple lodging
in the summer mountain —
pilgrims' hands clasped in prayer.*

- Haiga by Kazumi Cranney



Lay Ordination

This year's lay ordination ceremony—*Zaike Tokudo*—will take place on Saturday, June 15 in the zendo at 3 pm. Receiving lay ordination from Sojun Roshi are the following students:

Bruce Coughran
Paul Farber
Susan H.
Mike McVey
Tom Painter
Stephanie Solar

Hozan Sensei is giving lay ordination to Margret Wotkyns.

Congratulations in advance to all who have been studying and sewing diligently with our sewing teacher Jean Selkirk. Everyone is warmly encouraged to attend the ceremony and the reception afterwards. Check the zendo bulletin board for details and please sign up for preparation (tenzo assistance & set up) and clean up.



Photos: Ko Blix

Sojun Roshi's 20's and 30's Dharma Group June - September

Sojun Roshi invites students in their 20's and 30's to join him, usually once a month, for a short period of zazen and open discussion about Zen, Buddhism, meditation, and/or your own practice. We may also discuss selected Buddhist texts. Meetings start at 11:30 am in the zendo on Saturdays following the morning schedule and lecture. People new to BZC are very welcome; it is a drop-in for anyone in their 20's and 30's who happens to be at BZC—not just continuing students.

Coming dates are June (no meeting), July 6th, August 24th, and September 7th. For more information, e-mail Ron Nestor at rnestor1@yahoo.com.

Lightening Your Burden

If you no longer hold a practice position whereby you need either a zendo or community room key, you can lighten your load by turning it in to the maintenance department.

That would be me, thanks.

- Ross



Photo: Ross Blum

Altar Stories

Saturday, June 1, 11:45-12:15

Perhaps you've heard, in bits and snatches, where our altar came from, what our Buddha statue is made of, who the various figurines are and when they were acquired. Maybe you start to tell a curious friend about the clay figure at the Buddha's knees, so gracefully turned, and realize you've forgotten her name. Where might you go to satisfy your curiosity? Google doesn't hold the answers, but Sojun does.

This is why we've asked him take us through the stories once more for the record. After lecture on Saturday, June 1, bring your questions, get your free altar map, share the lore. The session will be recorded and transcribed for archives and website.



Photo: Ko Blix

NEWSLETTER SUBMISSION DEADLINE
Third Friday of the month before each issue

July deadline:
Friday, June 21, 8:00 pm

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