



Berkeley Zen Center



March–April 2019 Newsletter

Spring Practice Period

Our 31st annual practice period will begin with a one-day sitting on Saturday, May 11, and continue through the Shuso Ceremony on Sunday, June 23. This year Sojun Roshi has asked Hozan Sensei to lead the period. Sojun and Hozan are pleased to announce that Shiken Seigetsu (Clear Intention/Serene Moon) Carol Paul has agreed to take the Shuso seat this year. Full details and sign-up sheets will be posted in mid-April.

Women's Sesshin

There will be a women's sesshin on Sunday, March 3, led by Reverend Daijaku Kinst.

Daijaku was ordained as a priest in 1988 and received Dharma Transmission from Sojun Roshi in 2005. She is Co-Teacher of the Ocean Gate Zen Center in Santa Cruz, California, and has also taught in many other locations, including Gampo Abbey with the Venerable Pema Chodron. She has a PhD in Buddhism and Psychology and is a core faculty member and director of the Buddhist Chaplaincy Program at the Institute of Buddhist Studies, an affiliated graduate school of the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley. *(Continued...)*



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

March

Women's Sesshin

Sunday, 3/3

Founders' Ceremonies

Monday, 3/4, 6:20pm

Tuesday, 3/5, 6:40am

Sangha Potluck & Budget Meeting

Tuesday, 3/12, 6:30pm

Half-Day Sitting

Sunday, 3/17

One-Day Sesshin

Saturday, 3/23

Bodhisattva Ceremony

Saturday, 3/23, 9:40am

April

Founders' Ceremonies

Thursday, 4/4, 6:20pm

Friday, 4/5, 6:40am

Buddha's Birthday Celebration

Saturday, 4/6

(Saturday program starts at 8:30am)

Hills & Streams Backpacking Sesshin

Friday 4/12 through Sunday 4/14

Bodhisattva Ceremony

Saturday, 4/20, 9:40am

(Women's Sesshin, continued from page 1)

The sesshin will go from 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. and will include periods of zazen, kinhin, lecture, discussion, and a short service. Lunch will be provided. The fee is \$20.00. For more information, contact Karen Sundheim: ksundheim@gmail.com or 510-409-1187.

One-Day Sesshin

Gerry Oliva will lead a one-day sesshin from 5:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. on Saturday, March 23. The sesshin fee is \$35. Place checks marked "2019 March Sesshin" in the slot in the laundry room door or mail to BZC Office Manager, 1931 Russell St., Berkeley, CA 94703. A sign-up sheet will be posted on the bulletin board. For further information, please contact the Sesshin Director, Gary Artim: 510-676-9756 or sesshindirectorbzc@gmail.com.

Buddha's Birthday

Join us to celebrate and appreciate the auspicious day of Buddha's birthday on Saturday, April 6. Family, friends, and especially children are encouraged to participate. The celebration will include bathing the baby Buddha and a wonderful birthday cake prepared by our tenzos.

We will not have our usual early program. Decorating the bower with flowers will begin at 7:30 a.m. Work period to prepare the grounds begins at 8:30. The first period of zazen will be at 9:30, followed by a short lecture and the ceremony.

On Friday, the day before the celebration, donations of flowers from your garden, such as iris, daisy, ranunculus, sweet William, and camellia, are appreciated. There will be a sign-up on the bulletin board to help trim flowers on Friday afternoon.

If you can help with setup and cleanup, please sign up on the bulletin board and arrive by 8:30 a.m. Please also sign up if you will help trim flowers on Friday afternoon, so they will be ready for bower decorators on Saturday.

If you have questions about the flower bower, please contact head chiden Mark Copithorne at copithorne@hotmail.com. For any other questions about the birthday celebration, contact zendo co-managers Hannah Meara (hmeara@gmail.com) or Carol Paul (caroljpaul@yahoo.com).

Hills & Streams Backpacking Sesshin

BZC's 20s and 30s Dharma Group is happy to announce it will be hosting its fifth annual "Hills and Streams" backpacking sesshin. The sesshin will be held Friday, April 12, through Sunday, April 14, with a mandatory orientation meeting on Tuesday, April 9. The sesshin will take place at Sky Camp in Point Reyes National Seashore. Sign-ups and cancellation deadlines are Sunday, March 31.

This is an intensive meditation retreat which will involve significant hiking and will maintain (to the extent possible) a sesshin atmosphere and practice. This includes long periods of silence, sitting zazen, and shared responsibilities (cooking, cleaning, etc.). If you are new to backpacking or to sesshins, please contact the directors, Kelsey Hosei Hermann and Chris Frost: backpacksesshin@gmail.com.

This sesshin is a wonderful way to connect with other young sangha members and to experience practice in the wilderness. If you are interested in attending, please fill out an application at <https://bit.ly/2TJdbpW> or email the directors. We hope to see many old and new faces there!

Position Changes

Ten Bartholomew has replaced Rhiana Wiggins as Kitchen Keeper. Rondi Saslow has replaced Peter Carpentieri as Community Room Porch Monitor. Hannah Meara has replaced Jed Appelman as Friday afternoon Doan. Troy DuFrene has handed off his Tenzo position to a three-person team: Susan Marvin, Laurie Senauke, and Leslie Bartholic.

Thanks to you all for your dedication! 🙏

Oryoki Training

The next lessons in our formal meal procedures (“oryoki”) will be Saturday, March 2, and Saturday, April 27, 11:30 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. in the zendo. If you would like to schedule another time to learn or fine-tune your oryoki practice, contact Sue Oehser at 510-339-0243 (voice only) or soehser@earthlink.net.

You can also receive briefer instruction during any full Saturday morning program that is not a sesshin. After the first period of Saturday zazen, the director will ask if anyone would like instruction in eating in the zendo. Raise your hand and meet the director on the porch, who will assign someone to give you oryoki instruction in the community room before service and breakfast.

Addition to Ethics Guidelines

The Harmony, Ethics, and Reconciliation (HEAR) Committee has recently addressed several conflicts which arose between sangha members when one person hired another to do work that resulted in a series of misunderstandings, unclear and unspoken expectations, anger, and general distrust. These resembled situations in the past when sangha members engaged in arrangements with other sangha

members that involved the exchange of work and money or rental arrangements.

Until now, the guidelines addressed professional relationships between helping professionals and other sangha members. The HEAR Committee felt there should be some strengthening of that guideline. The Committee also wanted to add that all business relationships among sangha members are potentially fraught and should only be entered mindfully.

Therefore, on the recommendation of the Committee, the BZC Board passed the following revision to section 3 of the BZC Ethics Guidelines, which deals with Sangha Relationships:

3.d. Professional or Business Relationships Among Members

Sangha members are discouraged from using the community as a source of business, contract work, or professional clients. BZC teachers and sangha members who work as physicians, psychotherapists, or attorneys should avoid entering into professional relationships with other sangha members.

Problems have sometimes arisen when one sangha member enters a business relationship with another member. All sangha members should be mindful of the delicate balance between worker and client and the complexity of these connections when both parties practice at the same dharma center.

A complete copy of the Ethics Guidelines can be found on the BZC web site (berkeleyzencenter.org). If you have questions or comments about the Ethics Guidelines or these revisions, please contact any Board member or the chair of the HEAR Committee, Stan Dewey (standewey@comcast.net).

Family Practice at BZC

BZC Family Practice is offered on many Saturdays (check the schedule below and RSVP so we can share late-breaking news) from 9:30 to 11:15 a.m. See details at our section of the BZC website:

www.berkeleyzencenter.org/family-practice.

By prior arrangement, BZC also offers childcare while parents are attending Zazen Instruction (8:45 a.m. Saturdays) or taking part in Practice Discussion.

To RSVP for Saturdays, to make arrangements for childcare at other times, or to sign up for BZC's Family Practice email group, please contact Laurie Senauke: lauriesenauke@sonic.net.

Family Practice Schedule

March 2:	No program
March 9:	Family Practice
March 16:	Family Practice
March 23:	Sesshin — No program
April 6:	Buddha's Birthday (kids welcome!)
April 13:	Family Practice
April 20:	No program
April 27:	Family Practice

Please RSVP for ALL family activities.

Friday Tea Time

Our Friday Tea begins every Friday at 4:45 p.m. It takes place on the patio or in the community room (depending on the weather) and is open to everyone. Please join us as we discuss and question Dharma practice while sipping tea and opening our body and mind to harmony and lightness of being.

Saturday Speakers, 10:15 a.m.

March 2	Ross Blum
March 9	Hozan Sensei
March 16	Sojun Roshi
March 23	Gerry Oliva
March 30	Ron Nestor
April 6	Hozan Sensei
April 13	Leslie Bartholic
April 20	Sojun Roshi
April 27	Hannah Meara

Friday and Monday Talk Schedule

March 1	Fri 5:50pm	Ken Knabb
March 4	Mon 6:25am	Open Discussion
March 11	Mon 6:25am	James Kenney
March 18	Mon 6:25am	Cheryl Gordon
March 25	Mon 6:25am	Heiko John Lake
April 1	Mon 6:25am	Open Discussion
April 5	Fri 5:50pm	TBA
April 8	Mon 6:25am	Michael McVey
April 15	Mon 6:25am	Maria Winston
April 22	Mon 6:25am	Hosei Kelsey Hermann
April 29	Mon 6:25am	Penelope Thompson

Come Sit with Us . . .

Monday through Friday:

5:40–7:00am: Zazen, service, soji

5:40–6:30pm: Zazen, service

Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday:

Noon–12:30pm: Informal zazen

Zen Training

January is a time when we can take a look at our activity of the past year and recommit ourselves to practicing together over the next year. We have the opportunity to consider what Zen practice is and to remind ourselves of the value of the training we are receiving. We may ask ourselves, what are we being trained to do? How does our training serve us?

When I was young, I learned to parachute from an airplane, but the jump and landing did not go as expected. There were some very real moments of uncertainty in which I relied on the thorough and specific training I had received. Facing danger, I was terrified, but I remembered to return to that training, and following it, I landed safely in a tree.

We may not always understand how our Zen training works, and we are instructed to sit with no gaining ideas, so how should we think about this practice as training? Suzuki Roshi tells the story of meeting a young girl who saw him sitting and said, "I can do it." After she sat with crossed legs, she said, "And what?" Suzuki Roshi laughed because he said Zen students ask the same question after coming every day and practicing Zen, "And what?" He explains that through formal sitting practice we come to experience something physical, but it is difficult to explain in words. Ours is not a practice of experiencing by mind or teaching, but by direct physical practice for each of us. Being able to fully practice this way, we should be able to express it in some other way too. He says that this happens quite naturally when we can express the same feeling of sitting, the same state of mind in which we do not stick to anything, and this is the purpose of practice. I think this takes a long, long time!

Zazen is at the center of our practice, and to learn not to stick to anything, we return to breath and posture. No matter what arises in the mind or body, we train ourselves to come back to breath and posture, over and over again. This is letting-go practice, or not sticking to anything. Additionally, we train in a variety of practice positions, rotating through them for short and longer periods of time, so nothing becomes "my" territory to protect and defend. This gives us the opportunity to bring zazen right into our daily activities, and when likes and dislikes present themselves, we train ourselves to return to breath and posture. Over time, we begin to see that we can practice in this same way outside the gate. Coming back to breath and posture in the middle of discomfort or uncertainty or disagreement or conflict creates a gap, a STOP, a moment of stillness. We do not know how our training may inform us in that brief span of time; in fact, a possibility may present itself. Our faith in this process grows, as does our confidence.

Sangha is the jewel of our practice. We learn together, observe one another, and develop relationships with our teachers, practice leaders, and each other. In this way, we train in community, encouraging and inspiring others, slowly revealing Buddha's way, creating harmony.

Along the way, we make many mistakes, which is quite natural. Mistakes are the stuff of life; every single one of us makes mistakes. Mistakes give us the opportunity to see just where we are. Sojun Roshi says that recognizing our mistakes is the most important thing. We do not waste time chastising ourselves for a mistake; instead, we return to the activity, coming back to our upright position. This return to activity is the enlightened moment, remembering, recollecting, coming back; this is what our life is about.

I think the word "training" sometimes gets a bad rap. It may sound harsh, strict, too disciplinary, but the mystery of our practice lies in the training we receive. Zen training leads us without really leading us to a spirit of practice, a state of mind and body harmonizing in a way that makes it possible for us to practice not sticking to anything. We learn to be serious but light at the same time. Over time, this experiential approach to our lives supports us finding our comfort in any situation in which we may find ourselves.

Lecture by Susan Marvin (January 5, 2019)

NEWSLETTER SUBMISSION DEADLINE
is the Third Friday of the month before each
issue. Please submit items to
knabb@bopsecrets.org.

May–June 2019 deadline:
Friday, April 19.

Berkeley Zen Center
1931 Russell Street
Berkeley, CA 94703