




**An Introduction to the  
Tradition of  
Serene Reflection  
Meditation**

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 Shasta Abbey Press  
Mt. Shasta, California.

First edition—1986  
Second edition—1989  
Third edition revised and enlarged—1990  
Fourth edition revised and enlarged—1994  
Fifth edition revised, with additions—1997  
First printing—1997  
Second printing—2000

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Printed in the United States of America.

*This booklet is also available in a German edition.*

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## Preface.

This booklet will introduce you to the fundamental teachings and practice of the Serene Reflection Meditation Tradition (Soto Zen) of Buddhism. Its purpose is to acquaint you with those teachings and engage your interest in Buddhist training. The booklet includes selections from Buddhist Scriptures as well as readings from books and articles by Rev. Master Jiyu-Kennett, who was the first abbess of Shasta Abbey and founder of the Order of Buddhist Contemplatives.

Our first selection comes from one of the earliest Buddhist Scriptures. In the *Udana Scripture*, Shakyamuni Buddha proclaims the existence of the Unborn, the quint-essential teaching underlying all of Mahayana Buddhism. As Buddhism has developed over the centuries and spread throughout the world, the teaching of the “not-born” has been developed and amplified. You will often find it referred to in these pages by a number of religious terms, e.g., Buddha Nature, Buddha Mind, the Lord of the House, the Eternal, and the Cosmic Buddha.

Next, Rev. Master Jiyu-Kennett explains the doctrinal roots of the Serene Reflection Meditation Tradition in the second selection, “Basic Original Doctrines Essential to Zen.” Here you will find concise explanations of essential Buddhist teachings such as anatta, karma, anicca, rebirth, and the Four Noble Truths.

In the late 1800s, the Soto Zen Church of Japan abridged and condensed Great Master Eihei Dogen’s monumental work of 96 chapters, the *Eye and Treasury of the True Law*, into our third selection, the *Shushogi, What Is Truly Meant by Training and Enlightenment*.

Here you will discover Great Master Dogen’s explanation of the meaning of birth and death and the necessity of understanding impermanence; the necessity of contrition and conversion in order to transform oneself; the importance and urgency of taking the Buddhist Precepts as a secure means to realize the Unborn; developing the attitude of a Bodhisattva and practicing it in daily life; and the importance of gratitude and selflessness in Buddhist training.

Serene Reflection Meditation is an ancient form of meditation and the cardinal religious practice of our church. The fourth reading, Great Master Dogen’s *Rules for Meditation*, will familiarize you with the primary attitude of mind of Serene Reflection Meditation. It describes step-by-step how the Buddhist trainee readies and trains both body and mind in order to become one with Buddha Mind.

As Great Master Dogen says in *Rules for Meditation*, “The means of training are thousandfold....” In the fifth selection, “Every-minute Meditation,” Rev. Daizui MacPhillamy focuses on those thousandfold means—i.e., on how to train in everyday life by bringing the mind of meditation into the work we do and all of life’s varied activities. A simple five-step method for doing this is presented and explained.

The sixth reading, Rev. Master Jiyu-Kennett’s “The Five Laws of the Universe,” explains five spiritual laws which grow out of the basic doctrines of Buddhism. Her explanation of these laws will serve to further clarify your knowledge of the basic doctrines, as well as help you to gain a better understanding of the implications of those doctrines, especially in relation to karma, rebirth, the training of the Bodhisattva, and Buddha Nature.

Buddhism is a moral religion whose Precepts first teach how to restrain, then liberate, oneself from the

self-imposed fetters of greed, hatred, and delusion. For the seventh selection we include Great Master Dogen's *Kyōjukaimon (Giving and Receiving the Teaching of the Precepts)*. This is the text used when the Precepts are taken formally by those becoming lay Buddhists during the Keeping of the Ten Precepts Retreat held each spring.

Faith is at the heart of Buddhism. The eighth selection, Rev. Master Jiyu-Kennett's lecture on "Perfect Faith," explains the difference between the fluidity of perfect faith and rigidity of absolute faith. It gives helpful advice on the master-disciple relationship, especially in the area of assuming responsibility for one's beliefs and actions and not relinquishing one's will to another person.

In the final selection, "The Training of Everyday Life," Rev. Daizui MacPhillamy and Rev. Eko Little provide an outline for putting the teachings of the Serene Reflection Meditation Tradition into practice. Although the teachings may appeal to the intellect, it is only by applying them to our own life and experience that we may discover for ourselves the truth of what the Buddha taught.

We hope that you will find this booklet interesting and helpful. It contains a wealth of information about Buddhism and can be read repeatedly for inspiration. Should you wish to obtain more information about the Serene Reflection Meditation Tradition and the Order of Buddhist Contemplatives you will find a directory of our monasteries and priories printed on the inside of the back cover.

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## **Udana: Verses of Uplift.**

(From chapter VIII, section iii.)

### **An Excerpt from One of the Discourses of the Buddha.**

Translated by F.L. Woodward, M.A.

Thus have I heard: On a certain occasion the Exalted One was staying near Sāvatti...in Anāthapīṭhika's Park.

Now on that occasion the Exalted One was teaching, establishing, rousing and making the monks happy with a discourse according to dhamma that was centred on nibbāna. And those monks, earnestly paying attention, mentally taking it all in, were listening to dhamma with ready ears.

Then the Exalted One at that time, seeing the meaning of it, gave utterance to this verse of uplift:

...Monks, there is a not-born, a not-become, a not-made, a not-compounded. Monks, if that unborn, not-become, not-made, not-compounded were not, there would be apparent no escape from this here that is born, become, made, compounded.

But since, monks, there is an unborn, not-become, not-made, not-compounded therefore the escape from this here that is born, become, made, compounded is apparent....

\* \* \*

From *The Minor Anthologies of the Pali Canon*, Part II (London: Oxford University Press, 1935), pp. 97 and 98. Reprinted with permission. Scholarly footnotes given by the translator in the original have not been included here.



## **Basic Original Doctrines Essential to Zen.**

Rev. Master P.T.N.H. Jiyu-Kennett, M.O.B.C.

### *Anatta (No-soul or individual self).*

Apart from mind and matter which constitute this so-called being, which we know as man, there is no immortal soul, or eternal ego, with which we are either gifted or have obtained in a mysterious way from a mysterious being or force. The Buddhist doctrine of rebirth should be distinguished from the theory of reincarnation, or that of transmigration, for Buddhism denies the existence of an unchanging or eternal soul. The forms of man or animal are merely the temporary manifestations of the life force that is common to all. "Being" is only a concept used for conventional purposes. Birth is simply the coming-into-being of a psycho-physical existence. Just as a physical state is conditioned by a preceding state as its cause, even so the coming-into-being of this psycho-physical life is conditioned by causes anterior to its birth. As one life-process is possible without a permanent thing passing from one thought-moment to another, so a series of life-processes is possible without anything to transmigrate from one life to another. This body dies; there is no less life-force; nothing transmigrates from one body to another. A future being there will be conditioned by the present life force here. A new being is neither absolutely the same as its predecessor (since the composition is not identical) nor entirely different, being the same stream of life-force

Reprinted with revisions from Roshi P.T.N.H. Jiyu-Kennett, *Zen is Eternal Life*, 4th ed. (Mt. Shasta, California: Shasta Abbey Press, 1999), pp. 8–13.

which, like electric current, can be tapped when a new bulb is plugged in, so as to give light, but which is unseen, when the bulb breaks, until a new one is again plugged in. Just as with the electricity there is no lack of current when a bulb breaks, merely the necessity for a new bulb, so with rebirth there is a continuity of a life force which manifests itself in birth and seems invisible in death; just that and nothing more.

***Karma.***

Action or deed, either good or bad. The law of moral causation; action and reaction in the ethical realm; it includes both past and present actions. It is not fate; not predestination imposed by some mysterious power to which we must helplessly submit. It is one's own doing which reacts on one's own egocentric self so it is possible for us to direct the course of our karma. Karma is action, and *vipaka* is its reaction: thus, cause and effect. Karma, being a law in itself, needs no lawgiver; it operates in its own field without the intervention of an external, independent ruling agency. Inherent in it is the potentiality of producing its due effect: the effect already blooms in its cause. Karma, good or bad, is caused by not knowing things as they truly are, and ignorance and craving are the chief causes. "No doer is there who does the deed, nor is there one who feels the fruit;"<sup>1</sup> this can be understood clearly after deep and true meditation thereon. Our will, or ego, is itself the doer of karma, and feeling is itself the reaper of the karmic fruit; apart from these mental states, there is none to sow and none to reap. Karma is not "stored" somewhere either in the consciousness or in the body; being dependent on mind and matter, it manifests itself at the opportune moment and is an individual force which is transmitted from one existence to another. Not everything is due to karma, otherwise a person would always be bad if it was his karma to be bad. Seasonal

phenomena, the order of germs and seeds, the theory of cells and genes, the order of act and result, natural phenomena such as gravitation and other similar laws of nature, the order of mind and the psychic law such as the processes of consciousness and arising and perishing of consciousness are all laws in themselves. Karma, which is the third of these five universal laws, helps, with the other four, to account for diversity in the world. Karma gives hope, self-reliance, consolation and moral courage to a Buddhist; it teaches individual responsibility and explains the problem of suffering, the mystery of so-called fate and predestination in other religions and, above all, the reason for the inequality of mankind.

### ***Rebirth.***

Past karma conditions the present birth, and present karma, in combination with past karma, conditions the future birth. As stated earlier, rebirth must be distinguished from re-incarnation or transmigration since an unchanging or eternal soul is non-existent; since there is no individual "I" to think, there is nothing to be reborn.

### ***The Four Noble Truths.***

Shakyamuni Buddha saw old age, disease, death (i.e. three aspects of suffering) and the priestly life when He went outside the palace. Thereafter suffering became His all-absorbing problem and He entered the priesthood in order to work on it. He discovered the answer to His problem in the Four Noble Truths and, inadvertently, enlightenment. The first of these Truths was that of the existence of suffering. Birth, decay, death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief, despair, not to get what one wants and existence itself as the world knows existence, are suffering; all these things are karmically

acquired. The Three Characteristics, *anicca* (transiency), *dukkha* (suffering), *anatta* (no separate self), can be understood by experience but cannot be adequately explained in words; the three warnings, sickness, old age and death, must come to all and the beginning of the wheel of existence is inconceivable. The second Truth is that of the origin of suffering, which is craving, and this can be three-fold; it can be sensual, spiritual or material. Whereas the first is clear the other two need some explanation. Spiritual craving is the desire to be reborn in some state better than the one we now occupy, such as in a heaven; material is the outcome of the delusive notion of a more or less real ego which is annihilated at death and which stands in no causal relation with the time before and after death; this craving arises as a result of the senses and consciousness. The doctrine of Dependent Origination may be regarded as a detailed explanation of the second Truth. The third Truth is the extinction of suffering; thus Nirvana is possible in this life for it is the control of greed, hate and delusion. It is the constant cleansing of oneself, even after one has realised one's innate enlightenment and, before it, the dropping of all one's desires, ideas and notions which we ourselves have filled our minds with and thus created waves on the sea thereof which prevent us from seeing the moon, or reflection, of our true essence clearly. When we have utterly discarded all this rubbish, we realise the realm where there is neither the solid nor the fluid, heat, motion, this world or any other world, sun or moon. In this state there is neither arising nor passing away, no standing still, no being born or dying, no foothold, development or basis; this is the end of suffering. There is an unborn, unoriginated, uncreated, unformed; if there were not, the realisation of our true nature would not be possible; we must never cease from meditation and, indeed, Shakyamuni Buddha never ceased from it either for, should we do so, then we will begin to again fill the pond of the mind

with our own ideas and notions, likes and dislikes and, in so doing, hide once more the moon, or reflection, of our true essence. It is for this reason that no true trainee ever says that he has understood Buddhism; nor does he say he does not understand it; just he goes on training himself eternally, always becoming Buddha every moment of his life which turns, therefore, into every minute enlightenment or every minute Zen. He is neither conscious of it nor is he unconscious of it. He just trains in Buddhism, for the sake of Buddhism, just as Shakyamuni Buddha carried His begging bowl and wore His robe every day of His life after His understanding as well as doing His meditation. The fourth Truth is the Eightfold Path which leads to the maintaining of the cessation of suffering. Since most people indulge in one of two extremes, either sensual pleasure or self-mortification, suffering, for them, exists. Buddha avoided both extremes and found, instead, the Middle Path which leads to true peace of mind and which is called Nirvana. Since this Path is explained more fully in the “Kyoju¥kaimon” later on, I will simply give the names of the so-called steps here. They are:– right understanding, right thought, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness and right concentration.

### ***Anicca.***

Impermanence, change; all things change, all life grows old, decays, being ever changing. This doctrine includes the total separation of all moments one from another and leads ultimately to the void of the *Scripture of Great Wisdom* and Dogen's “Uji.”

There are many other doctrines and beliefs in early Buddhism which arose either directly out of original Hindu

teaching or some other source but the above, which are what Shakyamuni Buddha taught, are necessary for the study of Zen. Some of these other teachings can help to clarify some of the difficulties that may seem to appear in the foregoing doctrines. If the reader has difficulties in clarifying the foregoing he should visit or telephone one of the Abbeys or Pories of our Order.

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*Notes.*

1. Narada Thera, *A Manual of Buddhism*, 5th ed. (Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia: The Buddhist Missionary Society, 1971), p. 80.

## **Shushogi.**

### **What is Truly Meant by Training and Enlightenment.**

Great Master Eihei Dogen (1200–1253)

#### Introduction (The Reason for Training).

The most important question for all Buddhists is how to understand birth and death completely for then, should you be able to find the Buddha within birth and death, they both vanish. All you have to do is realise that birth and death, as such, should not be avoided and they will cease to exist for then, if you can understand that birth and death are Nirvana itself, there is not only no necessity to avoid them but also nothing to search for that is called Nirvana. The understanding of the above breaks the chains that bind one to birth and death therefore this problem, which is the greatest in all Buddhism, must be completely understood.

It is very difficult to be born as a human being and equally difficult to find Buddhism however, because of the good karma that we have accumulated, we have received the exceptional gift of a human body and are able to hear the Truths of Buddhism: we therefore have the greatest possibility of a full life within the limits of birth and death. It would be criminal to waste such an opportunity by leaving this weak life of ours exposed to impermanence through lack of faith and commitment.

Impermanence offers no permanent succour. On what weeds by the road-side will the dew of our life fall? At

Reprinted from *Zen is Eternal Life*, by Roshi P.T.N.H. Jiyu-Kennett, pp. 94-103.

this very minute this body is not my own. Life, which is controlled by time, never ceases even for an instant; youth vanishes for ever once it is gone: it is impossible to bring back the past when one suddenly comes face to face with impermanence and it is impossible to look for assistance from kings, statesmen, relatives, servants, wife or children, let alone wealth and treasure. The kingdom of death must be entered by oneself alone with nothing for company but our own good and bad karma.

Avoid the company of those who are deluded and ignorant with regard to the Truth of karmic consequence, the three states of existence and good and evil. It is obvious that the law of cause and effect is not answerable to my personal will for, without fail, evil is vanquished and good prevails; if it were not so, Buddhism would never have appeared and Bodhidharma would never have come from the west.

There are three periods into which the karmic consequences of good and evil fall; one is the consequence experienced in this present world, the second is consequence experienced in the next world and the third consequence experienced in a world after the next one; one must understand this very clearly before undertaking any training in the way of the Buddhas and Ancestors, otherwise mistakes will be made by many and they will fall into heresy; in addition to this, their lives will become evil and their suffering will be prolonged.

None of us have more than one body during this lifetime, therefore it is indeed tragic to lead a life of evil as a result of heresy for it is impossible to escape from karmic consequence if we do evil on the assumption that, by not recognising an act as evil, no bad karma can accrue to us.



### Freedom is Gained by the Recognition of Our Past Evil Acts and Contrition Therefor.

Because of their limitless compassion the Buddhas and Ancestors have flung wide the gates of compassion to both gods and men and, although karmic consequence for evil acts is inevitable at some time during the three periods, contrition makes it easier to bear by bringing freedom and immaculacy: as this is so, let us be utterly contrite before the Buddhas.

Contrition before the Buddhas brings purification and salvation, true conviction and earnest endeavour: once aroused, true conviction changes all beings, in addition to ourselves, with benefits extending to everything including that which is animate and inanimate.

Here is the way in which to make an act of perfect contrition. "May all the Buddhas and Ancestors, who have become enlightened, have compassion upon us, free us from the obstacle of suffering which we have inherited from our past existence and lead us in such a way that we may share the merit that fills the universe for them, in the past, were as we are now, and we will be as they in the future. All the evil committed by me is caused by beginningless greed, hate and delusion: all the evil is committed by my body, in my speech and in my thoughts: I now confess everything wholeheartedly." By this act of recognition of our past behaviour, and our contrition therefor, we open the way for the Buddhas and Ancestors to help us naturally. Bearing this in mind, we should sit up straight in the presence of the Buddha and repeat the above act of contrition, thereby cutting the roots of our evildoing.

### Receiving the Precepts.

After recognising our evil acts and being contrite therefor, we should make an act of deep respect to the Three

Treasures of Buddha, Dharma and Sangha for they deserve our offerings and respect in whatever life we may be wandering. The Buddhas and Ancestors Transmitted respect for the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha from India to China.

If they who are unfortunate and lacking in virtue are unable to hear of these Three Treasures, how is it possible for them to take refuge therein? One must not go for refuge to mountain spirits and ghosts, nor must one worship in places of heresy, for such things are contrary to the Truth: one must, instead, take refuge quickly in the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha for therein is to be found utter enlightenment as well as freedom from suffering.

A pure heart is necessary if one would take refuge in the Three Treasures. At any time, whether during the Buddha's lifetime or after His demise, we should repeat the following with bowed heads, making gassho:— "I take refuge in the Buddha, I take refuge in the Dharma, I take refuge in the Sangha." We take refuge in the Buddha since He is our True Teacher; we take refuge in the Dharma since it is the medicine for all suffering; we take refuge in the Sangha since its members are wise and compassionate. If we would follow the Buddhist teachings, we must honour the Three Treasures; this foundation is absolutely essential before receiving the Precepts.

The merit of the Three Treasures bears fruit whenever a trainee and the Buddha are one: whoever experiences this communion will invariably take refuge in the Three Treasures, irrespective of whether he is a god, a demon or an animal. As one goes from one stage of existence to another, the above-mentioned merit increases, leading eventually to the most perfect enlightenment: the Buddha Himself gave certification to the great merit of the Three Treasures because of their extreme value and unbelievable

profundity—it is essential that all living things shall take refuge therein.

The Three Pure, Collective Precepts must be accepted after the Three Treasures; these are:— Cease from evil, Do only good, Do good for others. The following ten Precepts should be accepted next:— 1. Do not kill, 2. Do not steal, 3. Do not covet, 4. Do not say that which is untrue, 5. Do not sell the wine of delusion, 6. Do not speak against others, 7. Do not be proud of yourself and devalue others, 8. Do not be mean in giving either Dharma or wealth, 9. Do not be angry, 10. Do not debase the Three Treasures.

All the Buddhas have received, and carefully preserved, the above Three Treasures, the Three Pure Collective Precepts and the ten Precepts.

If you accept these Precepts wholeheartedly the highest enlightenment will be yours and this is the undestroyable Buddhahood which was understood, is understood and will be understood in the past, present and future. Is it possible that any truly wise person would refuse the opportunity to attain to such heights? The Buddha has clearly pointed out to all living beings that, whenever these Precepts are Truly accepted, Buddhahood is reached, every person who accepts them becoming the True Child of Buddha.

Within these Precepts dwell the Buddhas, enfolding all things within their unparalleled wisdom: there is no distinction between subject and object for any who dwell herein. All things, earth, trees, wooden posts, bricks, stones, become Buddhas once this refuge is taken. From these Precepts come forth such a wind and fire that all are driven into enlightenment when the flames are fanned by the Buddha's influence: this is the merit of non-action and non-seeking; the awakening to True Wisdom.

### Awakening to the Mind of the Bodhisattva.

When one awakens to True Wisdom it means that one is willing to save all living things before one has actually saved oneself: whether a being is a layman, priest, god or man, enjoying pleasure or suffering pain, he should awaken this desire as quickly as possible. However humble a person may appear to be, if this desire has been awakened, he is already the teacher of all mankind: a little girl of seven even may be the teacher of the four classes of Buddhists and the mother of True Compassion to all living things. One of the greatest teachings of Buddhism is its insistence upon the complete equality of the sexes.

However much one may drift in the six worlds and the four existences even they become a means for realising the desire for Buddhahood once it has been awakened: however much time we may have wasted up to now, there is still time to awaken this desire. Although our own merit for Buddhahood may be full ripe, it is our bounden duty to use all this merit for the purpose of enlightening every living thing: at all times, there have been those who put their own Buddhahood second to the necessity of working for the good of all other living things.

The Four Wisdoms, charity, tenderness, benevolence and sympathy, are the means we have of helping others and represent the Bodhisattva's aspirations. Charity is the opposite of covetousness; we make offerings although we ourselves get nothing whatsoever. There is no need to be concerned about how small the gift may be so long as it brings True results for, even if it is only a single phrase or verse of teaching, it may be a seed to bring forth good fruit both now and hereafter.

Similarly, the offering of only one coin or a blade of grass can cause the arising of good, for the teaching itself is

the True Treasure and the True Treasure is the very teaching: we must never desire any reward and we must always share everything we have with others. It is an act of charity to build a ferry or a bridge and all forms of industry are charity if they benefit others.

To behold all beings with the eye of compassion, and to speak kindly to them, is the meaning of tenderness. If one would understand tenderness, one must speak to others whilst thinking that one loves all living things as if they were one's own children. By praising those who exhibit virtue, and feeling sorry for those who do not, our enemies become our friends and they who are our friends have their friendship strengthened: this is all through the power of tenderness. Whenever one speaks kindly to another his face brightens and his heart is warmed; if a kind word be spoken in his absence the impression will be a deep one: tenderness can have a revolutionary impact upon the mind of man.

If one creates wise ways of helping beings, whether they be in high places or lowly stations, one exhibits benevolence: no reward was sought by those who rescued the helpless tortoise and the sick sparrow, these acts being utterly benevolent. The stupid believe that they will lose something if they give help to others, but this is completely untrue for benevolence helps everyone, including oneself, being a law of the universe.

If one can identify oneself with that which is not oneself, one can understand the true meaning of sympathy: take, for example, the fact that the Buddha appeared in the human world in the form of a human being; sympathy does not distinguish between oneself and others. There are times when the self is infinite and times when this is true of others: sympathy is as the sea in that it never refuses water from whatsoever source it may come; all waters may gather and form only one sea.

Oh you seekers of enlightenment, meditate deeply upon these teachings and do not make light of them: give respect and reverence to their merit which brings blessing to all living things; help all beings to cross over to the other shore.

Putting the Teachings into Practice and Showing Gratitude.

The Buddha Nature should be thus simply awakened in all living things within this world for their desire to be born herein has been fulfilled: as this is so, why should they not be grateful to Shakyamuni Buddha?

If the Truth had not spread throughout the entire world it would have been impossible for us to have found it, even should we have been willing to give our very lives for it: we should think deeply upon this: how fortunate have we been to be born now when it is possible to see the Truth. Remember the Buddha's words, "When you meet a Zen Master who teaches the Truth do not consider his caste, his appearance, shortcomings or behaviour. Bow before him out of respect for his great wisdom and do nothing whatsoever to worry him."

Because of consideration for others on the part of the Buddhas and Ancestors, we are enabled to see the Buddha even now and hear His teachings: had the Buddhas and Ancestors not truly Transmitted the Truth it could never have been heard at this particular time: even only so much as a short phrase or section of the teaching should be deeply appreciated. What alternative have we but to be utterly grateful for the great compassion exhibited in this highest of all teachings which is the very eye and treasury of the Truth? The sick sparrow never forgot the kindness shown to it, rewarding it with the ring belonging to the three great ministers, and the unfortunate tortoise remembered too, showing its gratitude with the seal of Yofu: if animals can show gratitude surely man can do the same?

You need no further teachings than the above in order to show gratitude, and you must show it truly, in the only real way, in your daily life; our daily life should be spent constantly in selfless activity with no waste of time whatsoever.

Time flies quicker than an arrow and life passes with greater transience than dew. However skillful you may be, how can you ever recall a single day of the past? Should you live for a hundred years just wasting your time, every day and month will be filled with sorrow; should you drift as the slave of your senses for a hundred years and yet live truly for only so much as a single day, you will, in that one day, not only live a hundred years of life but also save a hundred years of your future life. The life of this one day, to-day, is absolutely vital life; your body is deeply significant. Both your life and your body deserve love and respect for it is by their agency that Truth is practiced and the Buddha's power exhibited: the seed of all Buddhist activity, and of all Buddhahood, is the true practice of Preceptual Truth.

All the Buddhas are within the one Buddha Shakyamuni and all the Buddhas of past, present and future become Shakyamuni Buddha when they reach Buddhahood. This Buddha Nature is itself the Buddha and, should you awaken to a complete understanding thereof, your gratitude to the Buddhas will know no bounds.

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## **Rules for Meditation.**

Great Master Eihei Dogen

Why are training and enlightenment differentiated since the Truth is universal? Why study the means of attaining it since the supreme teaching is free? Since Truth is seen to be clearly apart from that which is unclean, why cling to a means of cleansing it? Since Truth is not separate from training, training is unnecessary—the separation will be as that between heaven and earth if even the slightest gap exists FOR, WHEN THE OPPOSITES ARISE, THE BUDDHA MIND IS LOST. However much you may be proud of your understanding, however much you may be enlightened, whatever your attainment of wisdom and supernatural power, your finding of the way to mind illumination, your power to touch heaven and to enter into enlightenment, when the opposites arise you have almost lost the way to salvation. Although the Buddha had great wisdom at birth, He sat in training for six years; although Bodhidharma Transmitted the Buddha Mind, we still hear the echoes of his nine years facing a wall. The Ancestors were very diligent and there is no reason why we people of the present day cannot understand. All you have to do is cease from erudition, withdraw within and reflect upon yourself. Should you be able to cast off body and mind naturally, the Buddha Mind will immediately manifest itself; if you want to find it quickly, you must start at once.

You should meditate in a quiet room, eat and drink moderately, cut all ties, give up everything, think of neither

Reprinted with revisions from *The Liturgy of the Order of Buddhist Contemplatives for the Laity*, compiled by Rev. Master P.T.N.H. Jiyu-Kennett, M.O.B.C., 2nd ed. rev. (Mt. Shasta, California: Shasta Abbey Press, 1990), pp. 97–100.



good nor evil, consider neither right nor wrong. Control mind function, will, consciousness, memory, perception and understanding; you must not strive thus to become Buddha. Cling to neither sitting nor lying down. When meditating, do not wear tight clothing. Rest the left hand in the palm of the right hand with the thumbs touching lightly; sit upright,<sup>1</sup> leaning neither to left nor right, backwards nor forwards. The ears must be in line with the shoulders and the nose in line with the navel; the tongue must be held lightly against the back of the top teeth with the lips and teeth closed. Keep the eyes open, breathe in quickly, settle the body comfortably and breathe out sharply. Sway the body left and right then sit steadily, neither trying to think nor trying not to think; just sitting, with no deliberate thought, is the important aspect of serene reflection meditation.

This type of meditation is not something that is done in stages; it is simply the lawful gateway to carefree peace. To train and enlighten ourselves is to become thoroughly wise; the koan appears naturally in daily life. If you become thus utterly free you will be as the water wherein the dragon dwells or as the mountain whereon the tiger roams. Understand clearly that the Truth appears naturally and then your mind will be free from doubts and vacillation. When you wish to arise from meditation, sway the body gently from side to side and arise quietly; the body must make no violent movement; I myself have seen that the ability to die whilst sitting and standing, which transcends both peasant and sage, is obtained through the power of serene reflection meditation. It is no more possible to understand natural activity with the judgemental mind than it is possible to understand the signs of enlightenment; nor is it possible to understand training and enlightenment by supernatural means; such understanding is outside the realm of speech and vision, such Truth is beyond personal opinions. Do not

discuss the wise and the ignorant, there is only one thing—to train hard for this is true enlightenment; training and enlightenment are naturally undefiled; to live in this way is the same as to live an ordinary daily life. The Buddha Seal has been preserved by both the Buddhas in the present world and by those in the world of the Indian and Chinese Ancestors, they are thus always spreading the Truth—all activity is permeated with pure meditation—the means of training are thousandfold but pure meditation must be done. It is futile to travel to other dusty countries thus forsaking your own seat; if your first step is false, you will immediately stumble. Already you are in possession of the vital attributes of a human being—do not waste time with this and that—you can possess the authority of Buddha. Of what use is it to merely enjoy this fleeting world? This body is as transient as dew on the grass, life passes as swiftly as a flash of lightning, quickly the body passes away, in a moment life is gone. O sincere trainees, do not doubt the true dragon, do not spend so much time in rubbing only a part of the elephant; look inwards and advance directly along the road that leads to the Mind, respect those who have reached the goal of goallessness, become one with the wisdom of the Buddhas, Transmit the wisdom of the Ancestors. If you do these things for some time you will become as herein described and then the Treasure House will open naturally and you will enjoy it fully.

*Note.*

1. We have removed the sections that describe meditation in cross-legged positions from the *Rules for Meditation*. Rev. Master Jiyu-Kennett explains: “We found that this type of sitting, when practiced by people who sat alone, injured too many legs and backs. If there are persons who would really like to learn this method we can show it to them but we are keeping it out of the *Rules for Meditation* from here on so that people do not suffer from the idea that this is the only way to go; there are other methods and they are just as effective and a lot safer for western people.”

## **Every-minute Meditation.**

Rev. Daizui MacPhillamy

Most students of Buddhism know that the practice of meditation is not something which is limited to the times each day we spend in formal seated meditation. But to bring the mind of meditation out of the meditation hall and into our everyday world of work and daily living is not always an easy thing to do. I would like to share with you a method for helping to do this. It is a practice common to many schools of Buddhism and is known variously as “mindfulness training”, “working meditation”, or “every-minute meditation”. The method can be summarized in five steps:

1. Do one thing at a time.
2. Pay attention to what you are doing.
3. When your mind wanders to something else, bring it back.
4. Repeat step number three a few hundred thousand times.
5. But, if your mind keeps wandering to the same thing over and over, stop for a minute; maybe it is trying to tell you something important.

That is all there is to it. It is incredibly simple and requires nothing more than the willingness to do it with some persistence, yet, at least for me, it has been second only to formal seated meditation as the most important method of practice in my training.

The reason for step number one is not hard to see: if we accept that Truth is One and undivided, then It can only be

Reprinted, with changes, from *The Journal of Shasta Abbey*, vol. XII, nos. 5 and 6: 18–22.

realized by a mind which is itself unified and aware. Such one-pointedness and mindfulness are, by definition, impossible when you are doing two things at once or are not paying attention to what you are doing. Thus, if you choose to try this practice, it means no more eating breakfast, talking to your spouse, and watching “Good Morning America” all at the same time; planning your ten o’clock meeting while you drive to work is out; so are thinking about skiing while you do the dishes, reading a magazine while you’re on the toilet, and worrying about your finances while you plant your garden.

This practice, you will note, is exactly what the schedule, rules, and ceremonial of a training monastery help one to do. For the new trainee in a monastery, the opportunities to learn this art are considerable. He or she does so naturally if he simply follows the schedule and keeps his mind on what he is doing. The postulancy and novitiate are times in a monastic career when the method of every-minute meditation can be most easily practiced. Not all of us, however, are attracted to a monastic vocation, and even those who are so inclined do not remain beginning trainees forever. For most people, therefore, the task is a little harder because there are usually many things which we could (or, worse yet, should) be doing at any given time, and the temptation to do more than one of them is great. A person in this position may find it helpful to add a “step zero” before the first step. Step zero is to decide what is the one most important thing to be doing at this particular moment; then, do it.

Not only must we do one thing at a time, but also we must pay attention to the one thing that we are doing. This attention should be the same as that used in formal seated meditation. One must not exclude thoughts, perceptions, emotions, etc.; yet whenever one is aware of having become attached to, or enmeshed in, them, one brings one’s mind

back to focus on the task at hand. It is very important to understand this statement. Mindfulness training is not the same as focusing the concentration upon one object to the exclusion of all other things. That would be simply a different way to create a duality, to divide up the world. It would also be dangerous: people who exclude things from their awareness tend to deceive themselves and to have accidents. This, by the way, is one means the teachers in a Buddhist monastery have of knowing if the students are doing the practice of mindfulness correctly. If they are doing it right, they become more efficient at their jobs; if they've got it backwards, they start having accidents or become inefficient. So, you exclude nothing from awareness, but when you realize that you have become distracted, then your attention is gently returned to the present activity. This is repeated hundreds, perhaps thousands, of times a day, and there is a certain amount of trial and error involved in learning how to do it correctly.

So much for steps number one through four. They are not hard to understand; with them it is really mostly a matter of whether or not one decides to do them. Step five, however, requires more exploration. Occasionally a thought just will not leave you alone. No matter how many times you bring your mind back to the business at hand, this thought keeps insisting itself upon your consciousness. There is sometimes a good reason for this: the thought is trying to tell you something. What I do in this circumstance is to stop what I am doing and take that "bothersome" thought seriously for a moment. In other words, I make thinking about that topic the one thing I am doing: I switch my attention to it and cease doing what I was doing before. The most common causes for such persistent thoughts are that there is something else that you could be doing which is more urgent than what you were working on at the time, that

there is something left unfinished or wrong or dangerous in what you are doing, or that there is a nice ripe insight waiting to come into your awareness. If none of these things seem to be the case and there does not appear to be anything further to be learned from examining the thought, then switch your attention back to what you were doing before. If the thought still keeps coming up, allow yourself to stop again after a while and look at it another time, and so forth.

This ability to switch one's attention from one activity to another readily and without attachment does not come easily for most of us. With practice, it can be cultivated. In a training monastery the schedule is designed to help one learn this: when the bell sounds one stops what one is doing, bows, and goes to the next thing. You might think of certain aspects of your life as this bell: "intruding" but important thoughts, the boss's request to change everything you've just done, or the baby's crying. They are signals to "bow" and switch your attention to something else. I sometimes liken mindfulness training to driving on an icy road: keep a gentle, smooth control of the wheel, keep your eyes on the road—but don't ignore your peripheral vision, and when you see a truck skidding towards you, change course gently and don't insist on the right-of-way!

There are two common objections to the practice of every-minute meditation. The first is, "I'll never get my work done if I do only one thing at a time." This is a reasonable concern; fortunately it is usually unfounded. What actually happens for most people (after the initial few days of awkwardness when the whole thing can seem a bit strange and disruptive of one's habitual patterns of living) is that they can actually do more and better work by doing one thing at a time. I think what happens is that the time saved when one does several things at once is more than compensated for by the increased efficiency (and decreased

tension) that results from devoting all of one's attention to the task at hand.

The second objection is that doing this is a lot of work and it interferes with customary social interactions. This is true, and it is for these reasons that I do not recommend doing it all the time, at least not for most people. Even in the monastic setting, a certain rest from this practice is built into the system, and the monks enjoy social conversation while drinking tea or eating an informal meal in the refectory. So, perhaps you may choose to eat breakfast and talk to your spouse at the same time, after all. Go ahead, and enjoy the meal together (but I'll bet you enjoy it more if you don't also try watching TV at the same time).

My advice, therefore, is to do one thing at a time (and pay attention to it) as much as it seems wise to do so, bring your mind back gently each time it wanders, but don't be so strict on yourself that you find the practice unpalatable. Done properly, the exercise of every-minute meditation is refreshing, liberating, and energizing. Together with formal seated meditation, it can make a significant contribution to increasing one's religious understanding. It is my favorite form of meditation.

\* \* \*

## **The Five Laws of the Universe.**

Rev. Master P.T.N.H. Jiyu-Kennett, M.O.B.C.

*Law 1. The physical world is not answerable to my personal will.*

I am not the Cosmic Buddha<sup>1</sup> and there is nothing in me that is not of the Cosmic Buddha. Thus no Zen Master ever says he is either enlightened or unenlightened. That Which Is is not a personal God.

*Law 2. The Law of Change.*

There is no such thing as a separate, individual “soul” or “spirit”<sup>2</sup> that goes to a God or a Buddha to live unchanged in its individuality at the time of physical death. The physical body parts from the seemingly individual part of the Buddha Nature<sup>3</sup> which man mistakenly calls his soul or spirit at the time of what is presently described as death. The body in its present form is unplugged, as it were, from the apparent life force and disintegrates into various components which turn again into other life forms or life-sustaining forces, e.g. worms, maggots, compost, water, etc., nothing whatsoever being wasted, all being recyclable.

*Law 3. The Law of Karma is inevitable and inexorable.*

The spiritual aspect of the so-called individual “spirit”<sup>\*</sup> which a being, male or female, has thought of as himself

\*The term “spirit” must be clearly understood, as it is used here as an approximation. For a full description of its meaning, please read footnote 2.

Reprinted with revisions from Roshi P.T.N.H. Jiyu-Kennett and Rev. Daizui MacPhillamy, *The Book of Life* (Mt. Shasta, California: Shasta Abbey Press, 1979), pp. 4–8 (out of print).



returns to the Source, called herein the Buddha Nature (the third Body of the Trikaya<sup>4</sup>), in its entirety only if all past karma, both of the life-existence just ended, and those life-existences prior to it, has been purified. For example, a person who has lived an exemplary life during this lifetime may still not become one with the Buddha Nature if he has not looked deeply within himself and purified the karma he inherited from former lives.

That part of the karma that is purified, however, returns to the Buddha Nature and becomes one with it, so that which is being thought of as an individual spirit becomes divided up, like returning unto like: the purified part of the spirit returns to the Buddha Nature and the unpurified part is reborn into whatever is a suitable form for its presently unpurified state. It should be noted that spirit, however uncleansed, is still spirit and herein lies its ability to bring life into existence no matter how debased the form may seem. Thus, a person who kept all the Precepts<sup>5</sup> except the prohibition against carnal lust would find only the lustful nature of himself reborn as we know life, probably, but not necessarily, in animal form or as one of those unfortunate humans who are always in trouble for carnal acts they have not committed, the purified karma of his former life returning to its rightful home in the Buddha Nature.

For centuries the argument against rebirth has always been statistical, i.e. if a person dies another must be born in his place, so why is the world population always changing? Rebirth does not work this way. The physical body disintegrates and becomes recyclable material for use by the as yet unpurified karma-carrying sparks of spirit. These sparks become living organisms exactly in ratio to their own unpurified karma and are thus again given a chance to transcend that karma by purification, thereafter returning

directly to the Buddha Mind, sometimes called the Buddha Nature.<sup>6</sup>

Because of the above it is impossible, and even stupid, to expect a baby human to be born every time another human dies. Anything can be born as the result of any death, whether human or animal and, because every being in the world has done totally different things from everybody else, there is no formula that can be laid down as to what will happen specifically to anyone. Only the individual can do something about that, for himself, through meditation. All that can be truly said is that certain acts will have adverse effects on new life and other acts will have beneficial ones. The Buddhist Precepts are the nearest a person can get to a working formula for this purpose.

Nor is just one being likely to result from the death of a previous being. An unconverted carnal lust may be reborn in animal form, an unresolved confusion at the time of death may be reborn in a muddle-headed human and a secret and hidden evil act may cause the birth of a fixed or wandering ghost, just to give a few examples. Thus the death of one human could result in the rebirth of an animal, a human and a ghost all out of the unpurified part of that human's karma which will then become purified in its own way to become a beautiful part of the Buddha Mind. Such unpurified karma becomes a karmic debt which the new-born creature inherits.

Thus Buddhism says, with absolute truth, that that which is reborn is not the same spirit as that which died nor is it different from it. No being keeps his imagined "spirit" intact at death. In the case of one who has purified every karmic jangle within that "spirit" from the time that it was part of the original Buddha Nature before the universe began to the present, that which was his or her spirit returns in its

entirety to the Buddha Mind at the time of death, for it is indeed the whole of that Buddha Nature, and loses its individuality therein leaving nothing whatsoever to be reborn. Therefore there is no individual soul and, thus, the Zen Master can say with truth that enlightened action leaves behind it no speck of dust.

Very occasionally a person may be the inheritor of a lot of the karma from one particular previous existence and it may seem to him that he has inherited the equivalent of a whole previous personality. This is the main cause of the belief in reincarnation, however one should know that however much karma a person may inherit from one place, he still will not inherit an individual soul since that which was purified in the former being will have returned to the Cosmic Buddha.

*Law 4. Without fail evil is vanquished and good prevails; this too is inexorable.*

Periodically it is necessary for the Buddha Nature to give more of Itself to a new-born being than is usual, otherwise there is no way in which that being will have sufficient purified spirit to be able to cleanse its present load of karma. For this purpose there comes forth from the Buddha Mind that which is termed a Bodhisattva<sup>7</sup> who works for the conversion of the unpurified karmic stream in order to bring it to the Bodhisattva state. The following is a typical example. A person whose nature alternates between extremes of cruelty and compassion in his or her present existence begins to meditate deeply. He finds within himself two distinctly different natures and longs to be undivided. As his meditation deepens he experiences past lives wherein that which he has inherited has been sadistic time and again down the centuries starting with little acts of excessive love

which eventually, several lives later, became cruelty. For such a person the next step would be to be born mad had it not been for the fact that, at the hour of death, he or she had begun to doubt the wisdom of his or her actions. This doubt, constituting the equivalent of he or she saying “I could be wrong,” is sufficient to cause the Buddha Nature to pour out compassion; thus there issues forth a stream of pure spirit which picks up the impure stream and converts it from within. Herein the truth of the Fourth Law is proved:—without fail evil is vanquished and good prevails. No matter what a being has done, either in this life or in a past one, if he or she truly repents, or so much as even doubts, the wisdom of his or her evil acts as late in life as the moment of death, he or she opens the door to freedom. If, however, he or she willfully persists in his or her evil there will be born, soon after his or her death, some unfortunate being who will, through no fault of its own, carry that karmic stream and, unless it is converted either from within by a Bodhisattvic stream, or by meeting a priest or doctor who possesses such a stream, that unfortunate being will be born mad and remain mad.

*Law 5. The intuitive knowledge of Buddha Nature occurs to all.*

All beings have the intuitive knowledge of the Buddha Nature<sup>1,2</sup>—hence the creation of religions and Precepts down the centuries. When man does not heed this intuitive knowledge, body and spirit separate and the cycle of birth, old age, disease and death becomes as a binding cord from which he cannot be free until he again decides to heed the still, small Voice within which is the voice of that intuitive knowledge which comes directly from the non-personal Buddha Nature. As a result of modern thinking man educates his children away from this and, with the spread of

materialism, man is increasingly looking for the cure of physical and mental illness outside of himself rather than within and the young become steadily more confused at an earlier and earlier age.

\* \* \*

*Notes.*

1. Cosmic Buddha. The Buddha Shakyamuni said, "There is an Unborn, Uncreated, Undying, Unchanging." A term for the Dharmakaya, Eternal Nature, Buddhahood or Amitabha Buddha. The Buddha who appears in every place and time and in all beings; also called by various other names such as Vairocana Buddha, Amitabha Buddha, Dharmakaya, Buddha Nature, Lord of the House, That Which Is. It can be revealed by genuine training but It cannot be explained as existing or not existing or in any other dualistic way.

2. What people usually think of as their "self," "soul," or "spirit" is actually an impermanent combination of several components. Some components, such as the ego, the sense of self, the body image, and the like are personal and individual but are continually changing and do not survive death. Another component, the Buddha Nature, because it is one with the Buddha Essence of the Universe, is unchanging and eternal and yet, for the very same reason, is neither personal nor individual. A third type of component is what is known as karma; this is the spiritual force set in motion by all volitional actions, whether good or ill. When we speak of a person's karma, we refer to the sum total of all such forces currently remaining effective which he or she has produced in this lifetime or has acquired at the time of conception from other beings which have left it unfulfilled at the times of their deaths. Positive volitional acts produce positive karma, sometimes called merit, which has positive effects on the lives of beings. This positive karma, already being at peace by its very nature, is at one with the infinite Sea of Merit of the Cosmic Buddha upon the death of the individual and thus provides no basis for an immortal soul. Negative karma, if not exhausted or purified in this lifetime, continues on after death and conditions the conception of a new being who will have an opportunity to allow it to run its course or to purify it, thus setting it to rest. Once its force is spent, negative karma ceases to exist, hence it, too, cannot produce an immortal and individual soul. The karma produced in this life and the karma inherited from other

beings are not of different types: they both act in the same way and are indistinguishable. Thus, in Buddhism, there really is no such thing as an individual and immortal soul; we use the term “spirit” here to refer to the entire matter described above, as a paragraph such as this cannot be inserted each time the concept is used.

3. Buddha Nature, Bussho (J), Buddhata (S). That which is shared by oneself with the Cosmic Buddha. One’s own True Nature, True Self. After Shakyamuni Buddha was enlightened He said, “All beings without exception have the Nature of Buddha.” One’s own Buddha Essence. Buddha Nature also implies Cosmic Buddha.

4. Trikaya (S), Sanshin (J). The Three Bodies of the Buddha which are unified throughout the universe as well as in one’s own body. “I am not Buddha and there is nothing in me that is not of Buddha.”

5. Precepts, kai (J), sila (S). The ways of living that are in accordance with the Dharma. The second Paramita. One of the fundamental practices of the Bodhisattva training along with meditation, compassion and wisdom. The Precepts include the Three Refuges (I take refuge in the Buddha, I take refuge in the Dharma, I take refuge in the Sangha), the Three Pure Precepts (cease from evil, do only good, do good for others) and the Ten Great Precepts (do not kill, do not steal, do not covet, do not say that which is not true, do not sell the wine of delusion, do not speak against others, do not be proud of yourself and devalue others, do not be mean in giving either Dharma or wealth, do not be angry, do not defame the Three Treasures).

6. The reader should be aware that this statement, like all statements about the operation of the Law of Karma, is an oversimplification and an approximation. The full scope and operation of this Law is so vast and complex that it can be understood fully only by the Mind of a Buddha. Karma is not a substance which has a physical location and the use of the words “sparks” or “karmic residues” does not imply a material existence for them although they can be recognised through meditation.

7. Bodhisattva (S), bosatsu (J), pu-sa (C), “enlightened (bodhi) being (sattva).” A being which seeks enlightenment not only for itself but for all living beings as well, devoting itself to the Precepts, Four Wisdoms and Six Paramitas. A being which undertakes training to become a fully enlightened Buddha for the benefit of all beings including itself. The Bodhisattva ideal is the central aspect of Mahayana Buddhism. Bodhisattvas come forth for many reasons other than those given here.

**Kyojukaimon.**  
**Giving and Receiving the Teaching  
of the Precepts.**

Great Master Dogen

*Preceptor:—*

The Great Precepts of the Buddhas are kept carefully by the Buddhas; Buddhas give them to Buddhas, Ancestors give them to Ancestors. The Transmission of the Precepts is beyond the three existences of past, present and future; enlightenment ranges from time eternal and is even now. Shakyamuni Buddha, our Lord, Transmitted the Precepts to Makakashyo and he Transmitted them to Ananda; thus the Precepts have been Transmitted to me in the eighty-fifth<sup>1</sup> generation. I am now going to give them to you, in order to show my gratitude for the compassion of the Buddhas, and thus make them the eyes of all sentient beings; this is the meaning of the Transmission of the Living Wisdom of the Buddhas. I am going to pray for the Buddha's guidance and you should make confession and be given the Precepts. Please recite this verse after me:—

*Preceptor followed by congregation:—*

All wrong actions, behaviour and karma, perpetrated by me from time immemorial, have been, and are, caused by greed, anger and delusion which

Reprinted with revisions from *Zen is Eternal Life* by Roshi P.T.N.H. Jiyu-Kennett, pp. 211-214.

have no beginning, born of my body, mouth and will; I now make full and open confession thereof.

*Preceptor alone:—*

Now, by the guidance of the Buddhas and Ancestors, we can discard and purify all our karma of body, mouth and will and obtain great immaculacy; this is by the power of confession.

You should now be converted to Buddha, Dharma and Sangha. In the Three Treasures there are three merits; the first is the true source of the Three Treasures; the second is the presence in the past of the Buddha; the third is His presence at the present time. The highest Truth is called the Buddha Treasure; immaculacy is called the Dharma Treasure; harmony is called the Sangha Treasure. The person who has realised the Truth really is called the Buddha Treasure; the Truth that is realised by Buddha is called the Dharma Treasure; the people who study the Dharma Treasure are called the Sangha Treasure. He who teaches devas and humans, appearing in the sky and in the world, is called the Buddha Treasure; that which appears in the world, in the Scriptures, and becomes good for others, is called the Dharma Treasure; he who is released from all suffering, and is beyond the world, is called the Sangha Treasure. This means that, when someone is converted to the Three Treasures, he can have the Precepts of the Buddhas completely: make the Buddha your teacher and do not follow wrong ways.

*The Three Pure Precepts*

Cease from evil.

This is the house of all the laws of Buddha; this is the source of all the laws of Buddha.



Do only good.

The Dharma of the Samyaku Sambodai<sup>2</sup> is the Dharma of all existence.

Do good for others.

Be beyond both the holy and the unholy; let us rescue ourselves and others.

These three are called the Three Pure Precepts.

### *The Ten Great Precepts*

Do not kill.

No life can be cut off; the Life of Buddha is increasing; continue the Life of Buddha; do not kill Buddha.

Do not steal.

The mind and its object are one; the gateway to enlightenment stands open wide.

Do not covet.

The doer, the doing and that which has the doing done to it are immaculate therefore there is no desire; it is the same doing as that of the Buddhas.

Do not say that which is not true.

The wheel of the Dharma rolls constantly, lacks for nothing and needs something; the sweet dew covers the whole world and within it lies the Truth.

Do not sell the wine of delusion.

There is nothing to be deluded about; if we realise this we are enlightenment itself.

Do not speak against others.

In Buddhism the Truth, and everything, are the same; the same law, the same enlightenment and the same behaviour. Do not allow any one to speak of another's faults. Do not allow any one to make a mistake in Buddhism.

Do not be proud of yourself and devalue others.

Every Buddha and every Ancestor realises that he is the same as the limitless sky and as great as the universe: when they realise their true body, there is nothing within or without; when they realise their true body, they are nowhere upon the earth.

Do not be mean in giving either Dharma or wealth.

There is nothing to be mean with; one phrase, one verse, the hundred grasses, one Dharma, one enlightenment, every Buddha, every Ancestor.

Do not be angry.

There is no retiring, no going, no Truth, no lie; there is a brilliant sea of clouds, there is a dignified sea of clouds.

Do not defame the Three Treasures.

To do something by ourselves, without copying others, is to become an example to the world and the merit of doing such a thing becomes the source of all wisdom: do not criticise; accept everything.

These sixteen Precepts are thus.  
Be obedient to the teaching and its giving; accept it with  
bows.

\* \* \*

*Notes.*

1. Traditionally, at this point in the text, the priest conferring the Precepts gives the number of his/her own generation; in keeping with this tradition, Rev. Master Jiyu-Kennett has included the number of her generation here.
2. Shakyamuni Buddha's Enlightenment.

## Perfect Faith.

Rev. Master Jiyu-Kennett, M.O.B.C.

*The following is Rev. Master Jiyu-Kennett's closing lecture to trainees attending the Denkoe or Transmission of the Lamp retreat in the spring of 1980. During her earlier talks, Rev. Master Jiyu-Kennett spoke of Great Master Keizan's Denkoroku (Record of the Transmission of the Light) as "that by which the perfection of faith may be clearly understood.... It is a series of road maps with signposts. As a result of having perfect faith, even for only a fraction of a second, the road map will appear." She pointed out how perfection of faith requires going beyond the opposites: "I am saddened by the number of times I am asked, 'How do I get beyond the doubt? How do I get beyond the fear?' The day that I shall really rejoice will be when people ask, 'How do I get beyond the certainty and freedom?' Doubt and certainty are just as much opposites as are fear and freedom; and certainty and freedom, although they sound so desirable, are mere opposites.... The Denkoroku tells us not merely how to live beyond the opposites but how to find the perfection of faith, how to see all things as absolutely possessing Buddha Nature—man or animal, animate or inanimate." Rev. Master Jiyu-Kennett's talk of May 18th, 1980, appears here in a slightly edited version. [Ed.]*

Homage to the Buddha,  
Homage to the Dharma,  
Homage to the Sangha.

During this Denkoe the one very important point I have been endeavouring to make clear is the difference between perfect faith and absolute faith. Far too many people feel that, if you come to a monastery, you have to give up your will and blindly follow everything you are told. Perfect faith, however,

does not require this. What it does require is that you accept everything with a positive attitude of mind. Absolute faith, which is a requirement of many religions, differs from perfect faith in that “absolute” implies a hardness, with no means whatsoever of allowing for softness or change. It is absolute—there can be no differences or movement within it. Absolute faith is rigid and results in bigotry, fear and frequently in the giving up of the will. In perfect faith there is a give-and-take on the side of both master and disciple, a willingness of the master to ask the help of the disciple and a willingness of the disciple to ask the help of the master, all with a positive attitude of mind. If it becomes hard or heavy, it is not perfect faith.

Perfect faith is full of lightness and acceptance. It is softer than a cloud yet harder than a diamond. It is all of these things and changes constantly in a positive direction. The law of anicca applies, as well as the law of no-self and, since there is no-self, there can only be a mutual sharing. In absolute faith the residual hardness is as some-thing rather than no-thing. It is extraordinarily difficult to explain how the master-disciple relationship works but, as a rule of thumb, it must be understood that if the master requires the disciple to give up his will and/or surrender his body to him, then he is no master and there is no spiritual relationship. If the master tells the disciple that he must have perfect faith in that which is greater than both master and disciple, which is indeed the true master, the disciple is in a totally different situation; this true master should not be understood as a god or other entity; it is the essence of all things; totally empty, the fullest emptiness. When you leave the Abbey you must be very careful of any person who wants to give up his will to you (there are many who believe that this is the way of Buddhism and, in particular, the way of Zen, but this is not the case). The master neither collects “souls” nor takes away wills. If he

wants to or tries to, beware of him; you must keep your individual will, to surrender only to the greater master if it be required of you (I have yet to see it required of anyone although I have seen it freely given in perfect faith). There is absolute free will in Soto Zen. Please be very careful of this point.

Perfect faith is always changing and always the same, always interesting and always joyful, never seeing an opposite because it has indeed gone beyond opposites. Opposites can only exist when we have not yet transcended them; when they have been transcended, every day is a good day, as Keizan says, and all work is the work of the Buddha. At this time there is no such thing as good and bad, like and dislike; there is only the positivity that lies beyond these opposites. Remember also it is a positivity that does not require positivity, a truth that does not insist upon truth. It is a love that does not insist upon being loved but loves for the sake of loving. This is why we should be very careful of not judging ourselves. Since the Lord of the House does not judge us, why are we so stupid as to live within the opposites and judge ourselves? We need to have a faith that does not insist upon faith—this is what the master must teach. That the disciples do not yet, and perhaps never will, believe what the master says is not the master's problem. He has shown what he knows to be the truth—a truth that does not insist upon truth. The master's rightful occupation can be likened to his holding out his arm to the disciple, who is trying to swim in a river; the disciple can hold onto that arm if he fears he is going to sink. As soon as the disciple can swim, it is the master's duty to retract his arm, allowing the disciple to swim on his own. If the disciple bumps into a rock and asks for some salve for his head it is the master's duty to give it to him but not to get in there and make sure that the disciple bumps his head into the rock so as to be able to give the salve. Please be clear on what

I am saying here. Once the disciple has truly entered the stream there is no more master and disciple in the old sense and yet the master and disciple will always exist in the old sense. There is a giving and receiving, a sharing and being shared, an acceptance and being accepted. When we enter into this state, which is known as That Which Is, the Lord of the House, the Cosmic Buddha, then we know that the perfection of love requires nothing, wants nothing and knows nothing. It just is and gives constantly, requiring nothing. Pure faith is the same thing—existing constantly and giving constantly; it is and that is all. It does not say, “Give me your will, give me your body, give me your faith, give me proof of your faith.” These things are as foreign in perfect faith as are dross and gold. Be very careful. So many people want you to take their wills, saying that in Zen you must surrender to the master, but they do not know who the real master is. They worry and cry, “How do I find a master? How do I recognise someone to whom I can surrender?” As the Ancestor Kabimora told Nagyaarajyuna, “Do not worry whether I am a true saint or not. Just have faith.” Do not play tricks with or rob yourselves. Just have faith and learn together with all living things. The master that is a true master does not insist upon his mastery, any more than the truth that is real truth insists upon itself.

This is all I have to say to you for today....I have enjoyed having you here very greatly and hope you will come back soon. Thank you for sharing the Denkoe sesshin with us.

Homage to the Buddha,  
Homage to the Dharma,  
Homage to the Sangha.

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## **The Training of Everyday Life.**

Rev. Master Daizui MacPhillamy  
and Rev. Master Eko Little

People often think of Zen as something difficult, paradoxical, and hard to understand; there are many books of “Zen stories” that contribute to that impression. But this is only true when one tries to go about it the wrong way: by trying to “figure it all out” in one’s head instead of living it in everyday life. It is not difficult to understand what has been described in this booklet, but simply reading it and comprehending what it says will have little effect on anyone’s spiritual life. The tradition of Serene Reflection Meditation is only effective when it is put into practice wholeheartedly, day-in and day-out. And that is the “difficult” part of Zen: one actually has to do it, there are no short-cuts.

Fortunately, in the beginning a person does not have to believe everything they have read in this booklet in order to put it into practice in the sort of open-minded and energetic way which is required: all that is necessary is the willingness to give it a really good try and see what happens. The Buddha Himself told His followers not to believe what He said simply because He said it, nor because it was found in ancient Scriptures, nor because it made sense, nor for a host of other reasons; He told them to put it into practice and see what happens: to see if, in the course of time, it leads to that which is beneficial, true, and liberating and away from that which is harmful, false, and productive of sorrow. Even the few guidelines found in the previous pages are enough to get a really good start in practicing Zen, the religious training of everyday life, should someone choose to make use of them.



If you wish to do this, here is a brief outline of how to go about it. First, find one or two suitable times a day and set them aside for seated meditation; in those times do what it says in the “Rules for Meditation” chapter. Start with a few minutes each time and gradually, comfortably, work up to doing from 30 to 45 minutes twice a day, no more. Second, during the rest of the day, put into practice the mindfulness training described in the “Every-Minute Meditation” chapter. Third, each time an ethical decision has to be made, try acting the way a Buddha would, by following, to the best of your understanding, the Precepts outlined in the “Kyojukaiimon” chapter. It may help to remind yourself from time to time that every action has natural and inevitable ethical consequences, as discussed in the sections on karma on pages 3, 9, 26, 27–28, and 30–31. When you get greedy for wisdom and “spiritual experiences”, remember what the “Shushogi” says: true wisdom is to be found in charity, tenderness, benevolence, and sympathy: try putting them into practice when you see an opportunity to do so. When you find yourself clutching at things, longing for what you don’t have, grieving for what you’ve lost, angry at others, or trying to force the world to be the way you want it to be, try considering more deeply the implications of *anicca*, *anatta*, and the Four Noble Truths discussed on pages 2–7 and 8–9. Finally, when it seems just too hard to keep going, have another look at the “Verses of Uplift” and the chapter on having “Perfect Faith” in That which is greater than all of us. And, if you’d like some advice or come to the point where you see that more detailed instructions would be useful, that is what we are here for.

\* \* \*

## MONASTERIES AND PRIORIES OF THE OBC

### USA

#### **Shasta Abbey**

Rev. Master Eko Little, Abbot  
3724 Summit Drive  
Mt. Shasta, CA 96067-9102  
Ph: (530) 926-4208 [Fax: -0428]

#### **Berkeley Buddhist Priory**

Rev. Kinrei Bassis  
1358 Marin Avenue  
Albany, CA 94706  
Ph: (510) 528-1876 [Fax: -2139]

#### **Eugene Buddhist Priory**

Rev. Oswin Hollenbeck  
85415 Teague Loop  
Eugene, OR 97405-9536  
Ph: (541) 344-7377

#### **North Cascades Buddhist Priory**

Rev. Koshin Schomberg  
P.O. Box 650  
McKenna, WA 98558-0650  
Ph: (360) 458-5075

#### **Portland Buddhist Priory**

Rev. Meiko Jones  
3642 SE Milwaukie Avenue  
Portland, OR 97202  
Ph: (503) 238-1123

#### **Pine Mountain Buddhist Temple**

Rev. Jisho Perry & Rev. Phoebe  
van Woerden, Co-Priors  
941 Lockwood Valley Road  
Maricopa, CA 93252  
Cell Phone: (805) 905-3550

### UK

#### **Throssel Hole Buddhist Abbey**

Rev. Master Daishin Morgan, Abbot  
Carrshield, HEXHAM  
Northumberland NE47 8AL UK  
Ph: +44 (0)1434 345 204 (Fax:-  
216)

#### **Reading Buddhist Priory**

Rev. Olwen Crookall-Greening  
176 Cressingham Road  
READING RG2 7LW UK  
Ph/Fax: +44 (0)118 986 0750

#### **Telford Buddhist Priory**

Old Meadows, 49 The Rock  
Ketley, TELFORD TF3 5BH UK  
Ph/Fax: +44 (0)1952 615 574

#### **Portobello Buddhist Priory**

Rev. Lewyn Blake  
27 Brighton Place, Portobello  
Edinburgh EH15 1LL Scotland  
Ph: +44 (0)131 669 9622

### CANADA

#### **Lions Gate Buddhist Priory**

Rev. Koten Benson  
2069 E. 49th Avenue  
Vancouver, BC V5P 1T6  
Ph: (604)327-7742

#### **Edmonton Buddhist Priory**

Rev. Dominic Lloyd  
11635 77th Avenue  
Edmonton, Alberta T6G 0M4  
Ph: (780) 436-2623

[www.obcon.org](http://www.obcon.org)