



## Encouraging Words from the Teacher

Subhana Barzagli Roshi



### The liberating way of non-attachment

What is true non-attachment? There is so much confusion in the Buddhist tradition about non-attachment or detachment. Firstly we need to make a

distinction between healthy forms of attachment and unhealthy forms of attachment. Having a deep and lasting bond and attachment to ones children is natural and healthy. Having a feeling of being loved and protected is essential for a child's security to establish trust, build self-confidence, and have healthy psychological, emotional, social growth and development.

Unhealthy attachment is to crave, obsess and cling to possessions, material objects, intoxicants and experiences with a mistaken belief that these immaterial or transient things will bring happiness. Being overly attached to relationships that are toxic, neglectful and or hurtful creates suffering.

Non-attachment is not to be mistaken for a cool indifference, an 'avoidant attachment' style, (which is one of the insecure attachment patterns) where a person disconnects, is aloof and not emotionally

engaged with people or the world.

The Pali word for non-attachment is *Nekkhamma* which translates as renunciation, a freedom from lust, craving and desires. In Zen philosophy the Chinese term for non-attachment is 'wu nian', which literally means 'no thought'. Not a literal absence of thought but a state of being untroubled by ones thoughts. Hence non-attachment is the ability to observe, step back, detach, let go and witness mindfully ones thoughts. It is to sit in the empty spaciousness of the heart-mind and observe ones thoughts and opinions, ideas about self and other and hold them lightly. When mindfulness is present we don't get caught up in the useless repetitive chattering stream and one is not blown around by your story mind. Letting go into the moment and being with things as they are, is the spirit of non-attachment.

A compassionate awareness and presence that is engaged with the world, is in the world, but not of the world is true non-attachment. From this space there is freedom, the bird song calls out chirp, chirp, or caw, caw and goes right through, with nothing sticking to it, completely alive and free. Then every moment fills us up and each thing empties us out.

#### Reports

Winter Sesshin, Intensive  
Practice period, Samu at  
Annandale

Pages 2-4

#### Coming Events

Spring Sesshin

Page 5

#### News From the Board

Zazen continues at Annandale  
during Sesshin

Page 5

## Special Sangha Announcement

It is a great joy and privilege to offer Maggie Gluek Dharma Transmission.

Maggie has been an apprentice teacher in the Diamond Sangha and has been offering teachings under the umbrella of the SZC since her initial appointment in July 2003. We have been co-teaching a number of sesshin together over the years and it feels now right and in the Tao to offer Maggie Gluek transmission as a fully accomplished Zen teacher.

We have discussed plans for a transmission ceremony at the end of the Easter Sesshin next year, 2015 to be held at Kodoji on Saturday 11th April.

All Sangha members are welcome to join in the celebrations of this very special event, so stay tuned for further details of the ceremony of Transmission.

*Subhana Barzaghi*  
*Myo Un An Roshi*

## Reports

### Winter Sesshin, Kodoji



Our winter sesshin this year was a small and intimate affair, with everyone reporting that they were satisfied with the outcome. As there were only 10 participants, including the two teachers, it was decided to limit the sesshin to four days. Even though all applicants had wished to attend for the advertised seven days, it was estimated that the amount of work to be done by only 10 people would be too stressful. This turned out to be the case. In practice, while the four-day retreat was doable, everyone was tired at the end, given that most of us had three jobs. In addition to their allocated job(s) everyone participated in food preparation and cleaning up. Of the ten participants, three were rank beginners, so the four days suited them as an introduction to sesshin. Overall, everyone settled into the sitting practice very quickly, possibly because they were conscious of the fact that it was to be a short sesshin, and so wanted to make the most of it.

Our previous experience with the Sound of Silence retreats provided us with a good model for this sesshin. We ate at the table in the cottage, thereby doing without the need for servers at mealtimes. Similarly, the role of Jisha for dokusan was simplified by having each person ring the bell for them self once the dokusan line was opened. The role of Tanto was shared by Paul and

Allan when required. Janet was Jisha from Sunday and, as always, did a sterling job. I was particularly impressed with the behaviour of both Sarah Sherrington, as Jiki, and Michael Tierney as Ino, among other roles. They stepped into their leadership roles as though they had been doing them for years. It seems to me that, with such fine young members, the future of the SZC will be in good hands. Overall, everyone settled into the sitting practice very quickly, possibly because they were conscious of the fact that it was to be a short sesshin, and so wanted to make the most of it.

As the weather was mild, we had no need for a fire in the cottage stove, thereby reducing our consumption of wood. The days were full of sun, and we were able to have two medium length walks on the road. So not quite the winter sesshin that most of us had expected, based on past experience. It is to be noted that people should not be put off by the notion of a winter sesshin. Kodoji now has a heated dojo and cottage, when required, as well as some indoor sleeping space. Bear in mind that many people choose to sleep outside, either on the verandah or in tents. So do give consideration to participating in future years.

*Paul Maloney*

---

## Intensive Practice Period

At Guan Yin Zendo 23 May – 5 June with Allan Marett, Ashfield

A little while back, some keen Zen folk expressed an interest in getting together an intensive practice period similar to what takes place at the Palolo Zen centre in Hawaii once a year. Periods of retreat and intensive practice have been around since the Buddha's time and as lay practitioners, sesshin and similar periods of extended meditation are dear to those on the Buddha Way.

The coming together of the ideas and those involved in this intensive offered us a wonderful opportunity to take part in extended periods of Zen practice a lot of us find difficult to manifest without the support of the sangha.

The intensive took place at Allan Marrett's home in Ashfield with nine barbarians from the north and south all squashed into one of the rooms Allan had recently turned into a dojo, re-naming his home *Guan Yin Zendo*, after his cat.

The intensive began with an opening ceremony that heard encouraging words by Allan, assuring us that we would make up most of the next two weeks as we went along. As this was the first time a practice period had been organised by any of us, the form was put together not



without the help of some sesshin guidelines and improvised ritual.

We also took part in a small aspiration ceremony, writing down our wise efforts for the retreat and beyond on a piece of paper, storing them in a box on the altar. These were then burned up in a small fire ritual and shared by those who wished on the closing night.

We closed the ceremony and began the retreat by offering a bowl of tea and dedicating our practice to dear friend Gordon Waters, whose picture we had on the altar with us.

For two weeks, the schedule consisted of daily morning zazen and dokusan, Monday to Friday, and the addition of Tuesday and Thursday nights to the Weekly SZC schedule.

Saturdays saw a Diamond Sutra study group that yielded amazing insights and discussions from everyone present. The shared sitting seemed to cultivate intimate dialogues within the group, and the morning tea & coffee sessions after zazen were teishos in themselves.

By the end of the first week the intensive seemed to be working, most notably one morning after zazen, with the realisation we'd all been staring at the sun hitting the Buddha statue for way too long.

The form of the retreat worked wonderfully in enabling all who took part to integrate cushion practice with the daily coming and goings we all had to attend to after each morning sit, which were soon to be dropped away with evening zazen any ways.

Hopefully this form will develop and become an annual occurrence for the SZC sangha. The realisation that's its all right here was much clearer for us all who took part, and the intensive showed us that great practice can definitely be manifested everywhere.



*Peter Burskv,*

*Photos Lee Nutter*

---

## Samu at Annandale, June 15

On a dank Sunday morning on June 15, Sean, Glenys, Suneeta, Sarah S, Yvonne, Janet, the Cootes and Sally met for a short sit and then Tony showed part of a 1983 film that Gilly made of the THREE WEEK building project in Northern California in 1982, which Gilly and Tony and their son Gully took part in. This project was the building of the Ring of Bone Zendo which Nelson Foster now heads. The temple eyes were opened by Yamada Roshi after Robert Aitken's powerful dedication. Anne Aitken and Mrs. Yamada were also present. After this, and a warm cup of tea, great work was done around Annandale, cleaning windows, the shed, dealing with the creepers and the street gardens, sewing broken zafus, and labelling books and putting them in the library shelves -good fun all working together.



## Spring Sesshin

September 19-26

Kodoji

Gillian Coote

Sesshin invites us to leave the tumbling, noisy, incessant world behind. At Kodoji, watches are removed, there's no mobile reception or chit-chat and, in this beautiful wilderness valley, we are offered the precious opportunity to wake up moment by moment - to come home to the lyrebird's song, the starry heavens, the vastness of this universe and our own true nature, radically shifting the way we live our everyday lives.

Application Forms are on the website and the coordinator is Jill Steverson

[jillsteverson@gmail.com](mailto:jillsteverson@gmail.com) who can answer all enquiries.

## A Book Review

by Subhana Barzaghi

### *Dongshan's Five Ranks - Keys to Enlightenment* By Ross Bolleter

Ross Bolleter is a Zen teacher in the Diamond Sangha, who teaches in Perth, W.A. and has just published a remarkable book, which has been ten years in its thorough gestation. 'The Five Ranks' is a core text in the Zen tradition, it is a suite of dialectical works which consist of a pair of five esoteric verses that are summations of the Chan teachings of awakening compiled by Dongshan, a Zen master of old China. Dongshan approaches enlightenment from five different angles, using paradox, poetry and metaphors, laying out a multi-faceted path, by which we might discover that mysterious unnameable truth of our being. Ross Bolleter offers new translations and augments a fine commentary of the Five Ranks with liberal doses of humour, storytelling and a down to earth exploration, bringing this esteemed classic to life. This book is a must read for any serious student of Zen, available through Wisdom Publications, Boston.

## News From the Board

### **Zazen on Monday and Wednesday Evenings during Sesshin**

In future, there will be zazen at Annandale on the Mondays and Wednesdays during Autumn and Winter and Spring sesshin. Given our numbers and the existence of a full set of ritual instruments at both Annandale and Kodoji, it is no longer necessary to continue our former practice of not sitting on these evenings.

The Board would really like sangha members to offer their thoughts, by way of the yahoo group or through emails to me and/or other board members as to how we might continue to plan for changes and opportunities. It is an open invitation to offer big picture and small detail ideas from which our sangha can continue to be so wonderful. Brendon. Brendon's email is [stewarts34@bigpond.com](mailto:stewarts34@bigpond.com)

So, let us truly think about this and share our ideas!

Jason Koh, our hard working honorary Treasurer, wishes to remind all members that they need to send him a membership renewal form (the only way he can keep track of things) and to pay your annual fee in whatever way you usually do, as SZC needs money to keep everything running.

Thank you to Glenys for the new cups she has donated. We continue to enjoy her flower arrangements.

Heaters are again in the dojo, and Janet has donated her Auntie Doris's extension cord to help warm the whole room.

The monthly Women's Group have sent \$435 in the past 6 months and \$806 in the past financial year to *The Asylum Seekers Centre* in Newtown.

# Notice Board

## Dokusan

### MONDAYS:

Subhana August 4, Sept 1, 22, 29  
 Allan Marett August 18, 25, Sept 15

### WEDNESDAYS:

Gillian Coote August 6, 20, 27 Sept 2, 27

## Dharma Café

August 11 + 13 Time to ask Questions 7-9pm

## Full Moon Ceremony

September 8 + 10 Not Misusing Sex 7-9pm

## Zazenkai

August 17, Gilly talk, dokusan 8.30-12pm  
 September 14 Paul Maloney, talk, dokusan  
 (this is one week earlier than usual due to sesshin)

## Board Meetings

Second Tuesday of each month  
 August 12 + September 9 6pm sit for 6.30

## Women's Group

August 8 Maggie's  
 September 13 (Saturday) Diana's

## Early Morning Zazen

**Ashfield.** SZC members living in or close to the inner west who are interested in early-morning zazen and dokusan are invited to join a small group that sits regularly on Tuesday and Friday mornings from 6-7.30am in Ashfield. Contact either Allan Marett [allan.marett@gmail.com](mailto:allan.marett@gmail.com) 04097127767 or Kim Bagot [kimballb7@gmail.com](mailto:kimballb7@gmail.com) 0402321277.

# Regular Notices

### Gift recipient status for SZC Building Fund

The Australian Tax Office has confirmed that we are a DGR, or Deductible Gift Recipient for a fund (the Sydney Zen Centre Building Fund). This restores the status of gifts to the building fund as tax deductible for the donor. If you would like to make a donation to the building fund, simply flag it as such and we will issue a receipt against which you can claim a tax deduction from your income.

### Books for sale

*The Roaring Stream. A New Zen Reader*, ed. Nelson Foster and Jack Shoemaker is on sale at Annandale, along with Robert Aitken's books: *Taking the Path of Zen*, *Mind of Clover*, *The Dragon that Never Sleeps*, *Encouraging Words*, *The Morning Star*, *Vegetable Roots Discourse*, *Zen Master Raven* and *The Gateless Barrier*, plus new titles.

### Use of Kodoji

Kodoji is available for use by members of the SZC and guests (if accompanied by a member). It can also be hired by other groups if approved by the Board. Fees are \$15 per night for members and \$25 for non-members. There is a \$100 booking fee for non-member groups. Booking of Kodoji is essential

and it is also essential to receive instructions about use of the facility before going there. Please note that the local Fire Brigade has advised restrictions during Summer.

Try giving the family a wonderful weekend, or yourself a few days of private retreat. Enquiries to Brendan Stewart, phone 9879 7290, email [stewarts34@bigpond.com](mailto:stewarts34@bigpond.com)

### Blue Mountains Zen

The Blue Mountains Zen Group meets on the second and fourth Sunday of each month, from 3-5 p.m., at Paul Maloney's home, 19 Russell Road, Leura. Phone 4784 2136. The meeting is occasionally held at another venue, so it is best to check some days before.

### Canberra Zen Group

Meets on Wednesday evenings.  
 Please contact Gary for more details: 0429 635 412  
 email [gcaitcheon@gmail.com](mailto:gcaitcheon@gmail.com)

### Wollongong Sitting Group

Meets on Tuesday evenings, fortnightly from Feb 4.  
 Please contact Pip Atkins for more details: 0414 496 414 or email [pip.atkins@gmail.com](mailto:pip.atkins@gmail.com)

# Contact Information

Brendon Stewart (chair) [stewarts34@bigpond.com](mailto:stewarts34@bigpond.com), Sue Bidwell (secretary) [sue.bidwell17@gmail.com](mailto:sue.bidwell17@gmail.com), Ameli Tanchitsa (assistant secretary) [Ameli.tanchitsa@gmail.com](mailto:Ameli.tanchitsa@gmail.com), Jason Koh (Treasurer) [zazender@fastmail.fm](mailto:zazender@fastmail.fm), Michael Tierney (publications) [michaeltierney1@rocketmail.com](mailto:michaeltierney1@rocketmail.com), Glenys Jackson, Larry Agriesti, Helen Sanderson. Newsletter Editor: Janet Selby [janetselby@bigpond.com](mailto:janetselby@bigpond.com)

Sydney Zen Centre, 251 Young Street Annandale NSW 2038 (02) 9660 2993

## SZC Calendar June-July 2014

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
August 3	4 Zazen 7-9	5	6 Zazen 7-9	7	8 Women's Group Maggie's	9
10	11 Dharma Café 7-9pm	12 Board Meeting 6pm	13 Dharma Café 7-9pm	14	15	16
17 Zazenkai 8.30-12pm Gilly talk and dokusan	18 Zazen 7-9	19	20 Zazen 7-9	21	22	23
24	25 Zazen 7-9	26	27 Zazen 7-9	28	29	30 Samu at Gorricks
31 Samu at Gorricks	Sept 1 Zazen 7-9	2	3 Zazen 7-9	4	5	6
7	8 Full Moon Ceremony Not Misusing Sex	9 Board Meeting 6pm	10 Full Moon Ceremony Not Misusing Sex	11 Introduction to Zen I	12	13 Women's Group Diana's
14 Zazenkai 8.30-12 Paul talk and dokusan	15 Zazen 7-9	16	17 Zazen 7-9	18 Introduction to Zen II	19 Spring Sesshin 	20
21	22 Zazen 7-9	23	24 Zazen 7-9	25 Introduction to Zen III	26 Sesshin ends 	27
28	29 Zazen 7-9	30	October 1 Zazen 7-9	2	3	4