



ENCOURAGING WORDS

Maggie

What is not a mistake?

A dear dharma friend recently imparted some sage advice. *Don't try so hard*, she said. *Effortless effort is the Way*. Indeed.

I was reminded of a passage in Suzuki Roshi's Zen Mind, Beginner's Mind: *When we reflect on what we are doing in our everyday life, we are always ashamed of ourselves. One of my students wrote to me saying, "You sent me a calendar and I am trying to follow the good mottoes which appear on each page. But the year has hardly begun and already I have failed!" Dogen-zenji said 'Shoshaku jushaku.'* 'Shaku' generally means 'mistake' or 'wrong.' *Shoshaku jushaku means 'to succeed wrong with wrong' or one continuous mistake. According to Dogen, one continuous mistake can also be Zen. A Zen master's life could be so many years of shoshaku jushaku. This means so many years of one single-minded effort.*

I don't know about "always ashamed of ourselves" but in trying to be a good Zen student, in making the utmost effort to do it *right*, it's possible to flounder in the perception of failure and the dreadful feeling of shame. A far cry from "forgetting the self." In discriminating "I should have done or should be this, that or the other," one is often simply imposing

limited assumptions about right and wrong, and about personal identity. As the Hsin Hsin Ming reminds us, *To set up what you like against what you dislike is the disease of the mind. And If you wish to see the truth, then hold no opinions for or against anything.* Who is trying hard? Who's to say what is mistaken? For that matter, from the perspective of one undivided mind, what is not a mistake? Whose life is *not* so many years of *shoshaku jushaku*, so many years of one single-minded effort?

Trying is a mistake, not trying is a mistake, trying to write encouraging words is a mistake. *Not yet enough!* our old teachers insisted. And *The purpose of Zen is the perfection of character.* In the delusion of separateness and isolation lies the world of suffering and flaws. You and I will err again and again. And will practice to redeem what harm we may have caused, doing our best, acting in faith, not knowing. So it goes. But all the while our essential nature is flawless. *Each particle of matter, each moment, is no other than the Tathagatha's inexpressible radiance* sings Torei Zenji. Waking up to the cold, quietly breathing, sneezing, regretting something said yesterday, seeing trees catch the light.

Mistake upon mistake.



Upcoming Events

Winter sesshin 10-15 June, 2022



Dear meditators, Winter is approaching. Days are getting shorter and colder. The idea of warming ourselves next to a good fire is enticing.

Charlotte Joko Beck writes in *Everyday Zen* (1997), p33-34: “the main purpose of doing sesshin is this burning out of thoughts by the fire of attention, so that our lives can be dispassionate and fundamentally unaffected by outward circumstances. [...] when the fire really burns, there’s nothing it can’t consume. When the fire gets hot enough, there is no self, because now the fire is consuming everything; there is no separation between self and other.”

Let us warm ourselves by the fire of attention during winter sesshin.

This sesshin is led by apprentice teachers Jane Andino and Peter Bursky, with Paul Maloney, roshi assisting. It will be held concurrently **at the zendo and online via Zoom**. As lay practitioners, we will have the opportunity to explore the connection of our zazen to our work, our home life, our place in the wider world, and our response in compassionate action.

The schedule will include zazen, walking meditation, sutra recitation, dokusan and a teisho every evening. Please set up a quiet place in your home, so you can sit comfortably and without distraction.

This sesshin will also celebrate Jane Andino’s path to becoming a roshi. A Transmission ceremony conducted by her teacher, Paul Maloney, and a celebration with the sangha will be held on the last day of sesshin.

Winter sesshin begins on Friday evening and closes at midday on Wednesday. There are four blocks of zazen per day: Early morning, Late morning, Afternoon and Evening.

Participants can sign up for any blocks, but are urged to take advantage of the long weekend and sign up for the full Saturday, Sunday and Monday sittings.

Attending the opening of sesshin on the Friday evening is mandatory unless there are exceptional reasons not to.

Attending sesshin near to your home, or online in your home, is a wonderful opportunity to integrate your zazen and work/home practice: we find how to be unbusy in all our activities.

Cost

Full Time: SZC Member \$150 Non-Member \$220

Part time: SZC Member \$10 Non-Member \$15 per block

Enquiries and bookings, Pablo Scodellaro: pablo.scodello@gmail.com

Transmission Ceremony for Jane Andino

Sydney Zen Centre invites you to
Jane Andino’s Transmission Ceremony and Celebration

Wednesday 15 June, 2 pm

Last day Winter Sesshin, arrive 1:30pm
Upstairs Hall, Annandale Community Centre
79 Johnston Street, Annandale

RSVP Kerry stewartkerry4@gmail.com by Friday 3 June



Reports

Autumn ‘Magical Synchronicity’ sesshin 2022

Crossing the river comes up in a number of spiritual traditions as a metaphor for a transformation. But in our sangha we have to cross a literal river, the Macdonald, to reach our bush zendo. Three days before autumn sesshin, we discovered that the river was uncrossable after the months of rain. This meant we had to find a new venue, and quick. We knew where not to look since this situation has arisen before with La Nina. We eventually found that Karuna Sanctuary at Katoomba, was willing and able to accommodate us at short notice, and within our budget if it was a six-day sesshin. Everybody who had registered was dead keen to sit sesshin. The most extraordinary team effort brought it together.

Karuna sits on a side ridge just off the Great Western Highway and the complex of buildings are surrounded by bush. The dojo is a magnificent space built in mud brick, the dining room /kitchen is a spacious straw bale building. Many of the zennies had their own room in the sleeper carriages of yesteryear. As though this complex was a train platform, a station sign announced “Karuna”!



By pulling this sesshin together everyone demonstrated the paramita of virya, energy or zeal. We had musical offerings from Aladdin of Melbourne. I taught yoga. We went on walks around the many tracks on the property, recited “Peacemaker Vows” at a Peace stupa. Subhana and Maggie gave some great teisho, Aladdin also.

Because of the way it came together, and because of the quality that then arose, Subhana decided to dub this the “Magical Synchronicity sesshin”. I think it demonstrated the power of sangha because of the way that we all met the challenge. Was it Buddha who said that sangha is the greatest of the three treasures? I also think that the form of sesshin, far from being a rigid set of rules, was proven to be like the reinforcing mesh in a concrete pour - allowing all kinds of shapes to hold strong. Our gratitude manifested too in a cleaning blitz which was greatly appreciated by Nara, the manager/owner of Karuna. If the need arises again, we’ll be back.

Diana Levy

Left: Aladdin cleaning the windows.



News from the Board

Transmission ceremony - 2pm Wednesday 15 June Jane Andino's transmission ceremony is open to the whole sangha but numbers are limited so you need to book in. It will be held on the last day of Winter sesshin 15th June - please arrive at 1.30pm as the ceremony begins at 2pm.

The venue is: Upper Hall, Annandale Community Centre, 79 Johnston Street, Annandale.

RSVP Kerry stewartkerry4@gmail.com by Friday 3rd June.

Samu Annandale - 9.30am Sunday 26 June

Please bring your energy and a shared lunch to Annandale for a work day with dharma friends. Samu is an ancient way of giving something valuable back to the sangha through the generosity of your labour. Enjoy the joy of pruning, building maintenance, cleaning and mending at our city zendo.

Contact Brendon if you plan to come: stewarts34@bigpond.com

Welcome back to the zendo! Please come along to experience sitting and chanting together once again at Annandale. All the teachers are offering dokusan in the hojo on Monday and Wednesday evenings. Check on the website for the latest schedule: szc.org.au

Zendo requirement - June These are the Board's requirements for coming to the zendo: Fully vaccinated, book in with info@szc.org.au, and wearing of a mask for chanting and during dokusan in the hojo.

Saving Lives

The Defibrillator is upstairs in the zendo library and is ready to be taken to Kodoji during sesshins.

Residents We say farewell to Paul from upstairs at our Annandale house, but are pleased to still sit with him on Zoom and in the dojo.

Room for rent If you know anyone who is a practicing Buddhist and would like to live at the zendo, please contact Brendon: stewarts34@bigpond.com

Regular Notices

Return to Annandale Zendo / Continuation of on-line meditation

Please see the regular SZC email reminders for Zoom links, or email info@szc.org.au for details.

Please go to the website for the latest information about the schedule: szc.org.au/classes/zazen

Mondays

Annandale - Subhana and other teachers on alternate weeks

Zoom - Senior students

Tuesdays

Mini morning meditation

6.55–7.00am Join/welcome

7.00–7.25am Meditation

7.25–7.30am Great Vows

Wednesdays

Annandale - Gillian and Will Moon on alternate weeks

Thursdays online

7.00–8:00pm Meditation/walking

8.00–8.30pm Discussion/Great Vows

The Blue Mountains Zen Group

We will be meeting via Zoom on Sunday afternoons.

All are welcome to join us for zazen with either a talk or Dharma Café.

Please email Jane at janeandino@yahoo.com.au

for more details.

Dokusan for members

Annandale - Dokusan is offered to members by our teachers on some Mondays and every Wednesday

Phone - Dokusan is offered by Subhana on Thursdays and Gilly by appointment.



Members of the Board

Kerry Stewart (Chairperson) stewartkerry4@gmail.com, Stephen Crump (secretary), Jason Koh (treasurer), Helen Sanderson, Zoe Thurner, Julie Robinson, Pablo Scodellaro, Joe Gaebel.

Newsletter Editor: Janet Selby janetselby@bigpond.com

SZC: info@szc.com.au, www.szc.org.au

June 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 ZAZEN Annandale 7-9pm Gilly	2 ZAZEN Zoom 7-8:30pm Peter	3	4
5	6 ZAZEN Annandale 7-9pm Subhana Zoom 7-8.30pm senior students	7 Orientation	8 ZAZEN Annandale 7-9pm Will	9 ZAZEN Zoom 7-8:30pm Jane	10 Winter sesshin	11 Winter sesshin
12 Winter sesshin	13 Winter sesshin	14 Winter sesshin	15 ZAZEN Annandale 7-9pm Gilly Winter sesshin Jane's Transmission Ceremony 2pm	16 ZAZEN Zoom 7-8:30pm Peter	17	18
19	20 ZAZEN Full Moon Ceremony Annandale 7-9pm <i>Not Indulging in Anger</i> Annandale Maggie Zoom 7-8.30pm Subhana	21 Board Meeting 6:30pm	22 ZAZEN Full Moon Ceremony Annandale 7-9pm <i>Not Indulging in Anger</i> Gilly	23 ZAZEN Full Moon Ceremony Zoom 7-8.30pm <i>Not Indulging in Anger</i> Jane	24	25
26 Annandale Samu	27 ZAZEN Annandale 7-9pm Subhana Zoom 7-8.30pm senior students	28	29 ZAZEN Annandale 7-9pm Will	30 ZAZEN Zoom 7-8:30pm Peter		

July 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3	4 ZAZEN Annandale 7-9pm Jane Zoom 7-8.30pm Subhana	5 Orientation	6 ZAZEN Annandale 7-9pm Gilly	7 ZAZEN Zoom 7-8.30pm Jane	8	9
10	11 ZAZEN Dharma Cafe Annandale 7-9pm Maggie Zoom 7-8.30pm senior students	12 Board meeting 6:30pm	13 ZAZEN Dharma Cafe Annandale 7-9pm Will	14 ZAZEN Dharma Cafe Zoom 7-8:30pm Peter	15	16
17 Zazenkai Gilly	18 ZAZEN Annandale 7-9pm Subhana Zoom 7-8.30pm senior students	19	20 ZAZEN Annandale 7-9pm Gilly	21 ZAZEN Zoom 7-8.30pm Jane	22	23
24	25 ZAZEN Annandale 7-9pm Subhana Zoom 7-8.30pm senior students	26	27 ZAZEN Annandale 7-9pm Will	28 ZAZEN Zoom 7-8:30pm Peter	29	30
31						