



Encouraging Words

Subhana Bazarghi

Wu Wei - Equanimity

Wu Wei is a Chinese Taoist expression that means 'doing nothing' or non-doing. Equanimity has strong associations with the spirit of Wu Wei. Wu Wei - non-doing has easily been misunderstood and falsely interpreted as a passive acceptance of life or resignation or literally sitting on the cushion

and doing nothing. Wu Wei is an attitude and approach to meditation and life itself; it is finding stillness within movement. It is working with the natural order and flow of things as they are. Alan Watts calls Wu Wei 'a form of intelligence'. Non-doing is the opposite of the ego's efforts to control and manipulate things for the self. If our practice is in alignment with the spirit of Wu Wei, equanimity stabilises and we do non-doing yet nothing is left undone.

A Zen master was once asked, "What is the secret of your equanimity? He answered, "Complete unrestricted co-operation with the unavoidable".

Wu Wei is also likened to the Watercourse Way which describes the qualities of humility, flexibility, adaptability, persistence and equanimity. Water is described as giving life to all things and flowing down to the humblest levels, adapting itself to whatever shape it finds itself in and embodying patience and perseverance in its ability to cut through mountains, drop by drop. The true meaning of Wu Wei is not doing anything against the flow or not doing anything that does not have its roots in the Buddha Tao. Wu Wei is practicing and living in accordance with our essential nature, the eternal Tao. Our deepest essential nature is beyond words, names and descriptions. The eternal Tao - is the vast bright empty field of awareness. Equanimity is an expression of the awakened peaceful heart.

The Tao that can be spoken of is not the eternal Tao
 The name that can be named is not the eternal Name.
 Nameless the source of earth and sky,
 Names engender everything.
 Free from desire, the mystery reveals itself;
 Wanting this gives rise to that.
 Beyond named and nameless, reality still flows;
 Unfathomable the arch, the door, the gate.

Thirty spokes converge on one hub;
 The centre is empty, so the wheel can turn.
 A pot is made from clay;
 The centre is empty, so the vessel can be used.
 Windows and doors are cut for a house;
 The centre is empty, so there's room to live.
 The being of a thing makes it handy;
 Its nonbeing lets it function.

Reference: Robert Meikyo Rosenbaum,
 Walking the Way: 81 Zen encounters
 with the Tao Te Ching
 (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2013)

Upcoming Events

Buddha's Birthday and Baby Naming Ceremony

Annandale 23 April, 11am

This is a family-friendly event - we bathe and offer flowers to the Baby Buddha and welcome new babies to our sangha with stories, poems and songs, followed by a potluck lunch. Please bring food and flowers and plan to arrive by 10.45am. This year, the baby naming and welcome to sangha will be for Maggie Gluek and Tony Miller's grandchild, Matthew - Phoebe and Andrew's son. There may be other babies - please let us know.

Contact: Janet Selby: janetselby@bigpond.com

Winter Sesshin

Annandale & Online, 9 - 14 June

The winter sesshin will take place between Friday June 9 to Wednesday June 14 (including Queen's Birthday June 12).

This sesshin is led by Jane Andino, roshi and apprentice teacher Peter Bursky. 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.

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. The Annandale dojo is only open for Morning and Afternoon blocks.

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 (online) is mandatory unless there are exceptional reasons not to.

The schedule will include zazen, walking meditation, sutra recitation, dokusan and a teisho every day.

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.

Application forms will be available on the SZC website soon. If you have any queries, please email Pablo Scodellaro: pablo.scodello@gmail.com

Reports

Women's retreat

At our cosy azure Women's retreat we revelled in the peace and beauty of Kodoji. We did lots of bushcare, targeting moth vine and fleabane. Diana led yoga, we ate delicious food, we heard gang gang cockatoos, we shared love poems and chocolate, we felt gratitude for Gully and Brendon's recent rat proofing of the pantry, we had a moon-rise viewing across the paddock, we sat and we shared.

Why cosy? There were just four of us due to numerous complications for the majority. Gilly, Oivi, Diana and Julie, plus Tilly.

Why azure? Our retreat started with a loud thud. A startlingly blue azure kingfisher had flown at speed into the zendo window. The exquisite bird rested on the altar until we ended our retreat with a short burial ceremony by the creek. Azure kingfishers have their nests in small tunnels in riverbanks.



Diana, Gilly holding the Azure kingfisher, Julie and Oivi.



Azure kingfisher the care of Kwan Yin on the altar.



Moon viewing practice.



Azure kingfisher.

Tony Coote memorial samu, Kodoji



Samu group photo.



Jane in the kitchen.



Lisa, Erin, Scott and Ben pitching in.



Subhana, Kerry and Aeven behind the masks, finishing the pantry.



Sue, Mari, Subhana staining the deck.

What a wonderful weekend we had at Kodoji, celebrating the Memorial Samu for Tony Coote. So many Sangha members came along and we finished off lots of jobs that have needed attention for some time.

So Ben, Scott, Eran, Lisa, Jane, Jason, Brendon, Peter, Jill S, Robert, Sue, Aeven, Lola, Julie, Mari, Jill B, Kathy, Kym, Kerry, Subhana and Tiffany - so what's that - 21 Bodhisattvas with paint brushes, mowers, wiper-snippers, hammers and saws all attending to our wonderful Kodoji. We even have brand new batteries.

The photographs tell the story best.

Thanks to everyone who came, for the fantastic meals at lunchtime and in the evening, for the gentle rain that shrouded the valley in mist, for the birds that wake so early, for the laughter and chatter around the dinner-time table and for the care of our sangha community.

News from the Board

April Full Moon Precept Ceremony

Once every two months we have a chance to explore one of the ten precepts. It's a wonderful opportunity to learn more about the ethics of our practice and how it applies to daily life. Make sure you come along to the dojo to share your thoughts and challenges with other students of the Way. szc.org.au/classes/full-moon-ceremony/

Tony Coote's memorial samu

The planned ceremony to celebrate Tony's life and contribution to the sangha and particularly Kodoji had to be postponed because Gilly wasn't well. But the samu went ahead in his honour, with many people attending and many wonderful tasks being done. As Brendon said in the morning tea sharing - Tony taught me that maintenance is the first rule of living ecologically. Deep bow of gratitude to Tony and everyone who continues to maintain our bush zendo.

Kodoji

The pantry in the cottage has been lined with gyprock by Tony and Gilly's son, Gully and Brendon, making it rat-proof. And at the samu, the pantry was sanded back and painted making it feel fresh and new. At the recent women's retreat the lights stopped working. Brendon organised a solar expert to test the batteries who advised they all had to be replaced. The new batteries were purchased and taken to Gorricks for the samu. Many thanks to Gully and Brendon.



Brendon and Peter installing the new batteries.

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.

Mondays

Annandale - Subhana

Tuesdays online

Mini morning meditation

6.55–7.00am Join/welcome

7.00–7.25am Meditation

7.25–7.30am Great Vows

Wednesdays

Annandale - Gillian Coote

Thursdays online

With Jane Andino or Peter Bursky

7.00–8.00pm Meditation/walking

8.00–8.30pm Discussion/Great Vows

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 Gillian by appointment

The Blue Mountains Zen Group

We meet via Zoom on Sunday afternoons.

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

Email Jane janeandino@yahoo.com.au for more details.



Tilly enjoying the creek at Women's retreat.



Bush care with Julie, Mari and Jill at Tony's memorial samu.



Members of the Board

Kerry Stewart (Chairperson) stewartkerry4@gmail.com, Zoe Thurner (secretary), Joe Gaebel (treasurer), William Verity, John McLean, Helen Sanderson, Julie Robinson.

Newsletter Editor: Janet Selby janetselby@bigpond.com

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

April 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2	3 ZAZEN Annandale <i>FMC</i> <i>Not Lying</i> 7-9pm Subhana	4 Board Meeting 6:30pm	5 ZAZEN Annandale <i>FMC</i> <i>Not Lying</i> 7-9pm Gilly	6 ZAZEN Zoom <i>FMC</i> <i>Not Lying</i> 7-9pm Jane	7 Autumn Sesshin	8 Autumn Sesshin
9 Autumn Sesshin	10 Autumn Sesshin	11 Autumn Sesshin	12 ZAZEN Annandale 7-9pm Gilly Autumn Sesshin	13 ZAZEN Zoom 7-8:30pm Jane Autumn Sesshin	14 Autumn Sesshin	15
16	17 ZAZEN Annandale 7-9pm Subhana	18	19 ZAZEN Annandale 7-9pm Gilly	20 ZAZEN Zoom 7-8:30pm Peter	21	22
23 Buddha's Birthday Gilly	24 ZAZEN Annandale 7-9pm Peter	25	26 ZAZEN Annandale 7-9pm Gilly	27 ZAZEN Zoom 7-8:30pm Peter	28	29
30						

May 2023

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