



Encouraging Words

Jane Andino

The Practice of Peace

You are probably familiar with the quote: 'There is no way to peace; peace is the way.' I guess after seeing that on so many SZC T-shirts, I had assumed it was a Buddhist quote; but no. The author of that line is A.J. Muste, a Dutch-born U.S. clergyman of the 1920's who eventually became a Quaker, a pacifist and a social activist. Robert Aitken amplified the social activist side of this statement by paraphrasing it as 'There is no way to a just society; our just societies are the way.' In 'Envisioning the Future', he encouraged us to see that Right Action is part of the Eightfold Path that begins and ends with Right Meditation.

How can we cultivate the practice of peace? There have been many Buddhist leaders like Thich Nhat Hanh and Joanna Macy who are models for us. What I find in Buddhist practice is that it offers a way to not get stuck in one perspective, not get trapped in a frozen view of the world, and to find for ourselves that peace which is always there. It's a way out of the violent and acquisitive aspects of our society. We find that still point as described in the Verses of the Faith Mind (Hsin Hsin Ming, Sengtsan 3rd Patriarch):

To set up what you like against what you dislike is the disease of the mind. When the deep meaning of things is not understood, the mind's essential peace is disturbed to no avail. The Way is perfect like vast space where nothing is lacking and nothing is in excess.

'Peace is the way' means that we live each moment as much as we can in the vast and fathomless peace. It's a peace which gets stronger with meditation. It isn't safe, uneventful peace (buji peace) but one where, through patient dialogue and strategy, we work towards the common good. And if we momentarily fail, we make amends and find again that peace which is the Way. As the Hsin Hsin Ming said, setting up what you like against what you don't like is the cause of all the problems.

When we live in a social system that is weighted towards violence and acquisitiveness, then our meditation can help us realise that the world actually is a mutual, interdependent, co-operative single existence. You and the one you disagree with are the one existence, but at the same time you are uniquely you, they are uniquely them.

I turned to the writings of Claude Anshin Thomas to see his wise comments on how to deal with disagreements. Anshin Thomas enlisted when he was 17 to fight in the Vietnam War and after the war ended spent a lot of time trying to deal with the fallout from the war, dealing with anger, addiction and depression. He somehow found Buddhist practice and became a Zen monk. In his book 'Bringing Meditation to Life', he writes: 'Though my understanding of peace continues to grow and change, I do know that peace is not the absence of conflict; it's the absence of violence within conflict'. Anshin's point is that there will always be disagreements, but it's how we deal with it that matters. The practice of peace also doesn't mean that we are somehow untouched by emotions, or by the ups and downs of life. Anshin writes: 'In all our lives, there are moments of calm and moments of non-calm. If I am living in mindfulness, I can learn to live with my fear, my doubts, my insecurity, my confusion, my anger. My task is to dwell in these places like still water.

Fully embracing this now-moment, there is no way to peace. We have already arrived.

Upcoming events

Spring sesshin

Saturday 4 October - 11 October
with Gillian Coote, roshi and Will Moon

Spring comes with flowers, autumn with the moon,
summer with breeze, winter with snow.
When useless things don't stick in your mind,
That is your best season.

Wumen Hui-k'ai (d.1260)



At sesshin, we let go into vastness and silence and settle into our depths. Here we can be gentle with ourselves and embrace the present moment without thoughts of realisation, without ideas of goals. Here is radical simplicity, seeing what is, seeing when the flow of living is blocked - lovingly, intelligently, compassionately.

Transmission Ceremony for Will Moon

Saturday 11 October, 1 pm – 4 pm, 2025*

Last day of Spring Sesshin, arrive 12:30pm at Kodoji

You are warmly invited to the Transmission Ceremony for Will at Kodoji on Saturday 11 October from 1pm-4 pm. This will be the culmination of our 7-day Spring Sesshin and a very special occasion for our sangha. Aim to arrive at Kodoji by 12.30pm so you can settle after the drive; bring lunch to enjoy on the ferry. The ceremony will be followed by an afternoon tea celebration.



Please RSVP Sue Bidwell by
September 30.
suebazbi@bigpond.net.au

***Note:** You will be notified if
flooding prevents us from accessing
Kodoji, when the ceremony will be
relocated to our Annandale Zendo.

Report

Kodoji Samu

20-21 September at Kodoji

Samu over the spring equinox weekend was a delight. Eighteen of our Sangha turned up and Lily, Leah, Will, Anna and Greg, James, Kathy and Kym, Sue, Jill B, Kelly and Diana, Kerry and Brendon, Mike and Jason, Jill S and her Robert all pitched in to mow the grass, cut back the wattle saplings, tighten the doors, frighten the rodents, marvel at the new tanks, clean and tidy beautiful Kodoji; it's all set for spring sesshin.

As per normal we ate delicious meals, laughed at corny jokes and spent great time together.

Oh yes, I almost forgot - we dug out the dunny pit, James did the spade work!

The weather was wonderful and Saturday night was the best star gazing opportunity for a long time and we did that standing around a fantastic bon fire.

Brendon



Fantastic bonfire at Gorricks Run samu weekend.



Developments on the property: new tank stand, and new tank behind the cottage.

Memorial Ceremony

Sunday 9 November, Annandale

On this occasion every year we commemorate those who have died—family, friends, sangha members, beloved beings generally, ancestors, victims of war. Where does it end?

We'll start at 10am with a period of zazen, then have a short sutra service, followed by ample time for sharing, an opportunity to celebrate particular individuals. All manner of offerings—words, music, photos-- are welcome.

We'll also share food, with a potluck lunch (hopefully outdoors) after we finish in the dojo. If you plan to stay on, please bring a plate.

Any queries to Maggie Gluek: magpiewarble@yahoo.com

Kodoji Open Weekend

15-16 November, Kodoji

Imagine soaking up the magic of Kodoji, taking time out to sit, doze, create, contemplate while enjoying the company of your besties and fellow Zennies! On the weekend of 15-16 November, we are doing just that! Bring food to share and eat together and then spend the rest of the day doing your own thing or join any of the activities on offer. Friends and family are welcome and encouraged to attend. Arrive when it suits, but we aim to leave together after Sunday lunch. Activities which you can choose to join include:

- zazen, led by Peter Bursky
- tea ceremony
- Japanese cooking lesson

More details to come. Please RSVP to Sean at lettersforsean@yahoo.co.jp by 7 November.

Rohatsu sesshin,

Wednesday 3 – Monday 8 December, Annandale

This sesshin is led by Maggie Gluek and held at the Annandale zendo.

Rohatsu celebrates the Buddha's awakening. This moment outside of time is traditionally commemorated in time on December 8. At sesshin we commit ourselves in turn to the Buddha's timeless path of practice and realisation.

Our five-day non-residential sesshin will be held at Sydney Zen Centre, 251 Young Street, Annandale, beginning Wednesday evening 3 December and running through lunchtime on Monday December 8.

Participants can choose to attend full-time or in specific blocks (early morning, morning, afternoon, evening) on specific days. This flexible structure is designed to accommodate the demands of peoples' busy lives, particularly at this time of year.

The schedule includes zazen, walking meditation, sutra recitation, dokusan and teisho.

All participants are asked to attend Wednesday evening for the opening of sesshin, unless there are exceptional reasons not to.

Supper will be provided Thursday-Sunday evenings, and breakfast on Thursday-Monday mornings.



Meditation Under Tree by Maya Gur

News from the Board

AGM

Please write Sunday 19th October in your diary so you can come along to the AGM at the zendo. This is a wonderful opportunity to hear how the Centre has been going over the last year and make a contribution to directing what we do in the year to come. Arrive at 10am for the meeting at 10.30am. We need as many people as possible to come to Annandale to make up the numbers for a quorum. If you can't make it please fill out a proxy form so someone else can vote for you. There will be a pot luck lunch afterwards, so please bring a plate of yummy food. Everyone is welcome!

Bank matters

We have opened an account at Bank Australia, which is more ethical. We have set up PayID with this account to make it easier for people to pay membership, sesshin, orientations and facility fees. This also makes our account much safer from scammers, rather than having our BSB and account details in public view. Now all you have to do is use our email info@szc.org.au to make the transfer of funds via Pay ID.

Safe keeping

We have retrieved the beautiful and ancient paper deeds for our Gorricks Run property from the safety deposit box at the Commonwealth Bank, as all proof of ownership is now in digital form. The Board has decided to frame them and put them on the wall at Kodoji as an interesting historical document.

Kodoji

We have made a few upgrades at our bush retreat to replace deteriorating items and to make it easier to set up. New tanks have been installed by our neighbour Simon and Solar electric lights have been installed in the toilets and shower block. Please remember to turn the lights off overnight so we don't lose power from our precious batteries. The Board is looking at some other items which will be upgraded over the next year or so.



The old tank stand was replaced



Maintenance of the toilet doors.

Regular Notices

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 or Will Moon

Thursdays online

With Jane Andino or Peter Bursky,

7.00–8.00pm Meditation/walking,

8.00–8.30pm Discussion/Great Vows



Blue Mountains Zen group, living it up in Lawson.

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 usually meet on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of the month, 3-5 pm.

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

Dharma Café.

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

Wahroonga Friends, Upper North Shore

The Meeting House is located at 59 Boundary Road Wahroonga

Inquiries to Maggie: 0413 018 100, magpiwarble@yahoo.com

Online opportunities

If you can't come to the zendo because you live too far away, or you have work or family commitments, or you are restricted in your ability to travel, we have a solution for you.

Meditation is available online via Zoom every Tuesday morning (6.55am – 7.30am) and Thursday evening (6.50pm – 8.30pm) led by two of our teachers - Jane Andino and Peter Bursky. And you can even become an online SZC member for a very special price! Go to the website for more details: <https://szc.org.au/classes/online-meditation/>



Members of the Board

Kerry Stewart (Chairperson) stewartkerry4@gmail.com, Zoe Thurner (secretary), Joe Gaebel (treasurer), William Verity, Sean Loughman, Julie Robinson.

Newsletter Editor: Janet Selby janetselby@bigpond.com

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

October 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 ZAZEN Annandale 7-9pm Gilly	2 ZAZEN Zoom 7-8:30pm Peter	3	4 Spring Sesshin Starts
5 Spring sesshin	6 Spring sesshin	7 Spring sesshin	8 Spring sesshin	9 Spring sesshin	10 Spring sesshin	11 Spring sesshin Transmission Ceremony 1-4pm Kodoji
12	13 ZAZEN FMC Annandale 7-9pm Subhana	14	15 ZAZEN FMC Annandale 7-9pm Will	16 ZAZEN FMC Zoom 7-8:30pm Peter	17	18
19 AGM 10:30 - 2pm Annandale	20 ZAZEN Annandale 7-9pm Maggie	21	22 ZAZEN Annandale 7-9pm Gilly	23 ZAZEN Zoom 7-8:30pm Jane	24	25
26	27 ZAZEN Annandale 7-9pm Subhana	28	29 ZAZEN Annandale 7-9pm Will	30 ZAZEN Zoom 7-8:30pm Peter	31	



November 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2	3 Dharma Cafe Annandale 7-9pm Subhana	4	5 Dharma Cafe Annandale 7-9pm Gilly	6 Dharma Cafe Zoom 7-8:30pm Jane	7	8
9 Memorial Ceremony Annadale 10am	10 ZAZEN Annandale 7-9pm Subhana	11	12 ZAZEN Annandale Will	13 ZAZEN Zoom 7-8:30pm Peter	14	15 Kodoji Open weekend
16 Kodoji Open weekend	17 ZAZEN Annandale 7-9pm Subhana	18	19 ZAZEN Annandale 7-9pm Gilly	20 ZAZEN Zoom 7-8:30pm Jane	21	22
23	24 ZAZEN Annandale 7-9pm Subhana	25	26 ZAZEN Annandale 7-9pm Will	27 ZAZEN Zoom 7-8:30pm Peter	28	29
30						