



## Encouraging Words

Will Moon

### Oceans of Compassion

Recently I've been interested in reading more on the history of our practice and its early development. A gift from Gilly last year at the transmission ceremony was the Flower Ornament Scripture, or the *Avatamsaka Sutra*. The translation of the sutra into Chinese commenced in the second century of the common era. Heinrich Dumoulin in his study of the history of Zen described the *Avatamsaka* as one of the foundational documents in the development of Zen, or Chan.<sup>1</sup> It is a massive body of work and so it is usually just a case of picking it up and opening pages at random and soaking up the wisdom contained within. In the section of the book called the 'Entry into the Realm of Reality', the Buddha speaks a series of verses to Sudhana. One of the verses seemed particularly pertinent at this time. It reads as follows –

Measureless is my ocean of compassion for the world;  
 Herein the buddhas of all time are born,  
 Hereby the pains of the world are soothed –  
 Realise this wisdom, O Sudhana, steadfast one.<sup>2</sup>

At the time of writing this, it felt like watching from the sidelines with bewilderment as the world seems to be plunging further into chaos. Each night on the news are the images of buildings collapsing in clouds of dust and vehicles exploding as the missiles rain down on Iran and surrounding countries. A kind of madness drives the world into darkness. The powers of greed, hatred and ignorance on full display. And then there is this beautiful verse from the Buddha.

Sitting with this verse in zazen is particularly powerful. Sitting and reciting this, 'Measureless is my ocean of compassion for the world'. It is very related to metta practice. The practice where we develop loving kindness for ourselves and then broadening this practice to include loving kindness for those close to us including friends and family. We then further expand the practice to people we don't know, people we may have had ill feelings towards, people we find difficult, and eventually to all beings.

When we really feel love and compassion for the world, when we practice these words, summoning our compassion for the world, for all beings, for all suffering, unconditional, we unconsciously begin to release the fear and tightening around our own heart. We release from our preoccupations and daily concerns, again unconsciously. We become that ocean of compassion. We may need to summon that ocean of compassion for ourselves to begin with, perhaps starting with a small stream, before we can broaden it to encompass more of the world. When we truly experience

unconditional love and compassion, we realise that this is the measureless dharma that excludes nothing.

The verse then says, 'Herein the buddhas of all time are born'. Indeed, all buddhas of all time are born into each moment. When our compassion extends to encompass the world and our preoccupations have dropped away, we realise Dogen's words, 'The entire world of the ten directions is nothing but the true human body<sup>3</sup>.'

Following this, the verse says, 'Hereby the pains of the world are soothed.' When our own pain is soothed, the world's pain is soothed. When we have peace in our heart, we carry that into each moment, and we bring peace to whatever we touch. And that peace radiates out endlessly. At this time of chaos, the world needs Bodhisattvas with a peaceful heart, and an ocean of compassion. How fortunate we are to walk the Buddha's way, the way of love, peace and compassion.

May your ocean of compassion wash over the ills of the world.

1. Dumoulin Heinrich 2005. Zen Buddhism a History. Volume 1: India and China. World Wisdom. p 46.
2. Cleary, T. 1993. The Flower Ornament Scripture: A translation of the Avatamsaka Sutra. Shambala Publications Inc. Boston MA. p.1289.
3. Tanahashi, K. 1985. Moon in a Dewdrop: writings of Zen Master Dogen. North Point Press. Berkeley California. p91.

## Upcoming events

### Annandale samu

Sunday 31 May

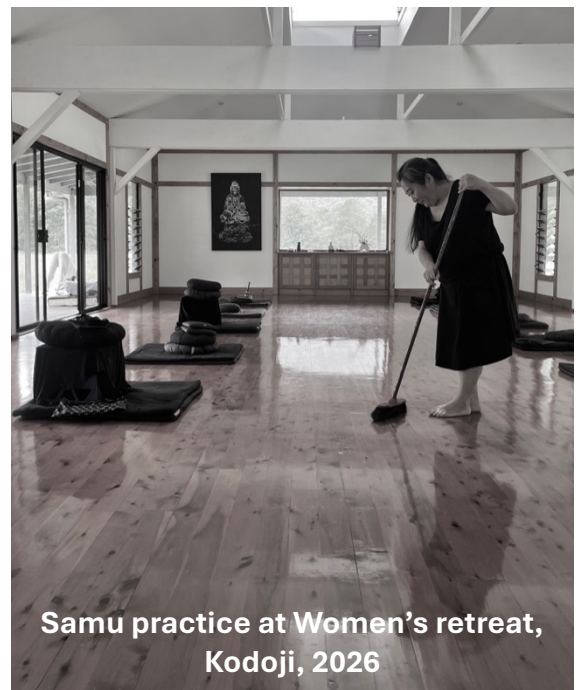
On the 31<sup>st</sup> May we get together to tidy up our Annandale Dojo.

We will paint the outside bathroom door and window sill, cleaned gutters, trimmed the hedge, weeded the garden, dusted the dojo window sills and vacuumed everything, tidied up the sutra books, cleaned the kitchen, wash windows and enjoy each other's company – sangha relationships!

### Buddha's Birthday and Baby Naming Ceremony

Sunday 12 April, 11am - 12 noon, then lunch

This is a family-friendly event when the birth of Siddhartha Gautama is celebrated in Zen sanghas around the world. After Gillian Coote roshi's introductory words, and while chanting the Enmei Jikku Kannon Gyo, one by one children and adults approach our statue of the baby Buddha, pouring water over him and offering him a flower, then songs and stories, perhaps sharing what the birth of this baby means to us. Please arrive by 10.45 am with flowers and food to share for our potluck lunch which we'll enjoy in the garden, weather permitting, from noon. Do let us know if you are coming, and whether you would like your child or baby named and/or welcomed to our sangha Contact Shauna Murray: [shauna.murray@uts.edu.au](mailto:shauna.murray@uts.edu.au)



Samu practice at Women's retreat, Kodoji, 2026

## Reports

### Women's Treat 2026

If a women's weekend retreat didn't answer a need, they wouldn't have been held since 1991.



neighbours on the east side....splashed in the creek... When the humidity and heat abated, Lisa got us all to walk lines through the long grass in the paddock and perhaps cross paths. In the simplicity of that activity we could interpret it in our own way. She also had kites for us, but the wind did not cooperate! Many thanks to Jill S. for organising us in absentia.

*Diana Levy*

## News from the Board

### KODOJI

Brendon has been arranging tradies (past member Nick, and neighbour Simon) to do crucial maintenance jobs, that our members can't do, like painting the high parts of the dojo (clerestory) and cottage, fixing guttering, adding first flush and overflow pipes to the tanks. So, when you visit our bush temple, please look up and marvel in the fresh new look! Thank you Brendon for keeping the building in such a good condition.

### BANK AUSTRALIA

Please be aware that all your regular and one-off payments need to use our Bank Australia BSB and Account number, not the CommBank account. So, if you pay your membership or facility fee as a recurring transfer, please update your records. If you don't know the Bank Australia account details, you can email Kerry: [stewartkerry4@gmail.com](mailto:stewartkerry4@gmail.com)

### DONATION

The lawyers who have finalised our dear Dharma sister, Sarah Walls' estate, have contacted the Board saying that she has donated more money into our account – just over \$5,700. Deep bow of gratitude.

*Splashed in the creek...at Women's Treat 2026.*



## Regular Notices

Please see the regular SZC email reminders for Zoom links, or email [info@szc.org.au](mailto: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

### 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](mailto:janeandino@yahoo.com.au) for more details.

### Wahroonga Friends, Upper North Shore

Saturday mornings, from 9:30am to 11:30am.

**The Meeting House:** 59 Boundary Road Wahroonga

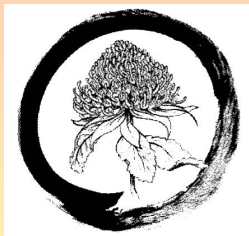
**Inquiries to Maggie:** 0413 018 100, [magpiwarble@yahoo.com](mailto:magpiwarble@yahoo.com)

## 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](mailto:stewartkerry4@gmail.com); Zoe Thurner (secretary); Scott Nelson (treasurer); Joe Gaebel; Sean Loughman, William Verity.

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SZC: [info@szc.com.au](mailto:info@szc.com.au), [www.szc.org.au](http://www.szc.org.au)

## April 2026

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

## May 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3 Womens' Retreat	4 Dharma Cafe Annandale 7-9pm Subhana	5	6 Dharma Cafe Annandale 7-9pm Will	7 Dharma Cafe Zoom 7-8:30pm Jane	8	9
10 Zazenkai Peter	11 ZAZEN Annandale 7-9pm Subhana	12	13 ZAZEN Annandale 7-9pm Gilly	14 ZAZEN Zoom 7-8:30pm Peter	15	16
17 Zazenkai Janet with clay	18 ZAZEN Annandale 7-9pm Subhana	19	20 ZAZEN Annandale 7-9pm Will	21 ZAZEN Zoom 7-8:30pm Jane	22	23
24 Samu at Kodoji	25 ZAZEN Annandale 7-9pm Subhana	26 Orientation	27 ZAZEN Annandale 7-9pm Giilly	28 ZAZEN Zoom 7-8:30pm Peter	29	30
31 Annandale samu						