




# Encouraging Words

## Jane Andino

## Yantou's Shout

You may have come across Yantou in the koan collections as the student of Deshan and the good dharma brother of Hsueh-feng. Yantou lived in 9th century China at a time of great upheaval.

Yantou was attacked and murdered by bandits as he sat in zazen in his monastery. As he was stabbed, Yantou let out a great shout which was said to have reverberated for miles around. In 13th century Japan, Hakuin Zenji was greatly troubled by this story. How could a revered Zen master show such emotion at his death? Wouldn't it be better to die in silence, with acceptance? One evening, the sound of the chirring of crickets put all Hakuin's doubts to rest.

In 21st century Australia, what can these stories mean for us? We too live in a world undergoing great upheaval. We also seem to live in a world now where everybody has an opinion, a very loud one. At all the many levels of government and society, there seems to be a prevalence of various hostile groups shouting at each other with vitriol, the very antithesis of Yantou's great shout. How do we refrain from joining in the shouting or getting caught up in the turmoil? or on the other hand, acting as if we are deaf and are only the innocent bystander?

Yantou's shout cuts through this or that, right or wrong. It points us to action that is wholehearted and open to this moment now, responding to this moment as is needed. When we hear Yantou's shout, it says to us 'Wake up! Stop wandering in your head! Here it is!', and our response is to truly live each moment directly, making alive the way of compassion. This is embodying the Buddha Way, making the teachings our own life, making each step along the Path a step of love.

On a practical note, I was reading about Robert Aitken Roshi's 'one-breath zazen' in his The Practice of Perfection. Just a breath before you pick up the phone, a breath after you put it down. Just a breath before you turn on the news, a breath after you see the spring blossoms which bloom for all to enjoy regardless of which 'side' you are on.

We can take to heart Yantou's words to Hsueh-feng: '*If you want to propagate the Great Teaching, it must flow point by point from within your own breast to cover heaven and earth. Only then will it be the action of someone with spiritual power.'*

# Reports

## Bushwalking Retreat with Will

23-30 August

The bushwalking retreat held at Kodoji over the weekend starting Friday the 28th and finishing on Sunday the 30th of August was a wonderful gathering of Sangha members enjoying this unique way of practice. The schedule involved zazen on the Friday evening from 7.00 until 9.00pm.

Saturday commenced with a wake-up bell at 6am. This was followed by zazen from 6.30 to 7.30am. We then had a shared breakfast, made lunches and prepared for the walk. A few people arrived on Saturday morning. The walk commenced at about 9.30am with 10 people taking part in the walk, and 3 people enjoying the peace and serenity of Kodoji.

Saturday's walk took us up the main creek for a few hundred metres before we turned up a smaller creek to the north and began a slow climb up the side of the ridge. We initially walked through the moist forest of the deep gully before entering the drier forest on the steep west facing sandstone ridge. Reached the top we enjoyed a rest overlooking Kodoji from the cliffs that tower above the valley. We then skirted along the top of the cliff line before going northeast into the back country.



We enjoyed lunch on a flat open rock platform and not long after enjoyed views from another platform looking north to the distant Mount Yengo.

During our walk we maintained silence and practiced mindfulness of our walking. At our rest stops we enjoyed chatting and sharing each other's company.

On Saturday evening we enjoyed lively conversation around the meal table with everyone sharing something for supper. From 7.30pm until 9.00pm we did zazen, and dokusan was offered to those interested.

The next morning we followed the same wake up, sitting and breakfast routine before we started the walk. This time eleven of us participated in the walk. We climbed the ridge behind Kodoji and then wandered through the back country following the sandstone rock shelves before arriving at the Heart Break Hill yarning circle and hut in time for lunch. We then wandered down the Womera Trail for about a kilometre, were welcomed by a goanna, before leaving the trail to visit a rock shelter with art. We then returned to Kodoji for the final pack up and departure.

We were grateful for John Curry who kept an eye on the walkers from the back of the line to ensure we all stayed together, and for being a second person with the navigation skills in case something happened to the leader. Gassho.



# News from the Board

## AGM

Please write Sunday 18th 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. Also, we need you to sign up for jobs like being a Mind Moon Circle editor and being a coordinator for sesshin. 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 potluck lunch afterwards, so please bring a plate of yummy food. Everyone is welcome!

## KODOJI

The upgrading of our solar power to Kodoji is almost finished. When everything is installed and connected, it will have increased our input and storage by an enormous amount which will see us well into the future. We also have changed the light globes, which use less energy, and are replacing the old and tired gas fridges with efficient new solar powered ones. And down the track we will replace the wood chip heater, in the shower block, to a gas on demand system.

## ANNANDALE

The outside wall of the building has been waterproofed, so we don't have mould inside the dojo. And the laundry's rotten window has been replaced and the door fixed. Thanks to Gully our landlord for organising everything.

## CONSTITUTION

Our Constitution has been reviewed by the Board and a couple of minor changes may be made. They will go to a lawyer first to be assessed, then to the sangha for final approval.



Drawing by Janet Selby, 2015

# 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

## 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

Saturday mornings, from 9:30am to 11:30am.
**The Meeting House**: 59 Boundary Road Wahroonga
**Inquiries to Maggie:** 0413 018 100, magpiewarble@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

William Verity (Chairperson) jwgverity@gmail.com, Zoe Thurner (secretary), Scott Nelson (treasurer); Joe Gaebel, Helen Redmond, Ameli Tanchitsa, Kellie Tanaka.
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# October 2026

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | 1<br>ZAZEN<br>Zoom<br>7-8:30pm<br>Jane | 2 | 3<br>Spring sesshin |
| 4<br>Spring sesshin | 5<br>Spring sesshin | 6<br>Spring sesshin | 7<br>Spring sesshin | 8<br>Spring sesshin<br>ZAZEN<br>Zoom<br>7-8:30pm<br>Peter | 9<br>Spring sesshin | 10<br>Spring sesshin |
| 11 | 12<br>ZAZEN<br>Annandale<br>7-9pm<br>Subhana | 13 | 14<br>ZAZEN<br>Annandale<br>7-9pm<br>Will | 15<br>ZAZEN<br>Zoom<br>7-8:30pm<br>Jane | 16 | 17 |
| 18 | 19<br>ZAZEN<br>Annandale<br>7-9pm<br>Peter | 20<br>Orientation1 | 21<br>ZAZEN<br>Annandale<br>7-9pm<br>Gilly | 22<br>ZAZEN<br>Zoom<br>7-8:30pm<br>Peter | 23 | 24 |
| 25 | 26<br>Dharma Cafe<br>Annandale<br>7-9pm<br>Subhana | 27 | 28<br>Dharma Cafe<br>Annandale<br>7-9pm<br>Will | 29<br>ZAZEN<br>Zoom<br>7-8:30pm<br>Jane | 30 | 31 |

# November 2026

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2<br>ZAZEN<br>Annandale<br>7-9pm<br>Peter | 3 | 4<br>ZAZEN<br>Annandale<br>7-9pm<br>Gilly | 5<br>ZAZEN<br>Zoom<br>7-8:30pm<br>Peter | 6 | 7 |
| 8 | 9<br>ZAZEN<br>Annandale<br>7-9pm<br>Subhana | 10 | 11<br>ZAZEN<br>Annandale<br>7-9pm<br>Will | 12<br>ZAZEN<br>Zoom<br>7-8:30pm<br>Jane | 13 | 14 |
| 15<br>Memorial Ceremony<br>Maggie | 16<br>ZAZEN<br>Annandale<br>7-9pm<br>Subhana | 17 | 18<br>ZAZEN<br>Annandale<br>7-9pm<br>Gilly | 19<br>ZAZEN<br>Zoom<br>7-8:30pm<br>Peter | 20 | 21 |
| 22 | 23<br>Full Moon Ceremony<br>Not giving or taking drugs<br><br>Annandale<br>7-9pm<br>Subhana | 24 | 25<br>Full Moon Ceremony<br>Not giving or taking drugs<br><br>Annandale<br>7-9pm<br>Will | 26<br>ZAZEN<br>Zoom<br>7-8:30pm<br>Jane | 27 | 28 |
| 29 | 30<br>ZAZEN<br>Annandale<br>7-9pm | | | | | |