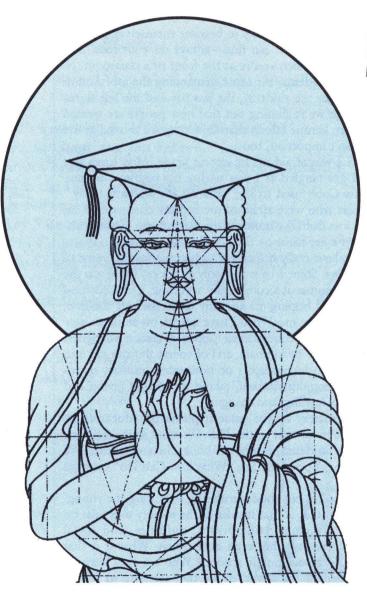


Back-to-School Issue!



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Transforming Education in the Public School • the Monastery the Family • the University the Reform School • the Garden

FROM THE EDITOR

Education is kind of like another word for being alive. I mean what isn't education? Education means transmission of the culture from one generation to the next. Education happens, whether we as a society pay for it or not with our taxes, whether we design it or not. The culture—some culture—gets passed on by people who have experience to those who don't. Kids on the street learn how to be drug dealers from their elders.

My father was a high-school teacher, and started an alternative school. My mother had a doctorate in education and worked as a school psychologist. I grew up believing in "education." I mostly respected and admired my teachers. I wanted to be a teacher when I grew up. And I am one, among other things. One of my sons is a teacher. Many of my friends are teachers. They are committed to education, to encouraging their students to become themselves. Being a teacher is about as difficult a job as you can find—always on your toes. You can't space out even for a moment when you're at the front of a classroom. In my experience, the younger the students, the more demanding the job. And in our backward society, the younger the students, the less pay and the less status for teaching them. Even though we're finding out that how people are treated at the age of two, say, has more karmic effects than how they are treated at the age of thirty. (Not that that isn't important, too.)

I had a couple of teachers I was afraid of. In second grade, Miss Jones got mad at me when my thread got tangled as I was sewing my pilgrim costume. Our third-grade teacher Miss Cobb used to say, "I'm on the warpath today." And I had a couple of teachers who were afraid of me and my classmates. Miss Grinspoon was one. She was lost from the moment she walked into the seventhgrade math classroom and wrote her name on the blackboard.

I've had some teachers who have really helped me to become myself. Some of them have been Buddhist teachers. Some I have met only in books. There was the photography teacher I had this summer at a community art center. The wilderness guide in Utah. My dental hygienist, helping me keep my teeth. And my children, no longer children, constantly teaching me. When I have taught, my students have also helped me find out who I am. For education to happen, it takes a willingness on the part of teacher and student to be intimate, and of course this can get into dangerous territory. But intimacy includes respect on both sides. Intimacy means letting down the barriers to becoming yourself, taking the risk of giving and receiving help, of not knowing, of learning and changing.

You can tell a lot about a society by the value it places on educating its young. We don't get good marks for that in the U.S. We need more teachers, and they need to be paid more. Students need better books, better facilities. We can work for changing these social priorites. See "What You Can Do" on page 42 for some suggestions.

Negligence is one of the mistakes our society makes in educating the young. Another problem, more complicated, is that insofar as the society *does* take on the task of education, there are many assumptions, rigidities, and social inequities that get passed along, sometimes even deliberately. What is it that young people are learning to do in our public schools? Who are they learning to be? Are they learning to be their full selves, or are they learning to fill the needs of corporations, who use some of them and discard the rest?

Education is a vast field. This issue of TW presents a number of Buddhist voices talking about this big landscape. \clubsuit —Susan Moon

Coming themes for *Turning Wheel*:

Winter, '98–'99: The Death Penalty, Deadline: October 15, '98. Spring, '99: Feminism & Buddhism, deadline: Jan. 11 '99. Summer,'99: Class, deadline: April 10, '99.



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—by Sasha Ryerson (age 10)

Letters

IN RESPONSE TO THE BOMBINGS

Here in the BPF office and out in the wider world we have been talking about the recent cycles of bombing and retaliation. These conversations are painful and at times confusing. We want to speak, to act, but are not sure what to do.

What is it to live in fear of bombing and violence? If one can find that fear inside oneself. there is the chance of all-sided compassion in response to terrible happenings: the bombing of U.S. embassies in Afghanistan and Sudan, our government's bitter reprisals for these acts, the IRA car bombing of downtown Omagh in Northern Ireland, the bombing that was a reprisal for reprisals in Capetown, South Africa. It seems so difficult for groups, peoples, nations to express their deep fears. Easier to unleash our anger and take life, easier to turn anger into a policy of violence. Under cover of righteousness, governments practice the same terrorism as their sworn enemies. Presidents and ministers decry the targeting of civilians and innocents, but who do we think dies beneath million-dollar Cruise missiles? When we hear one side claim the destruction of a nerve gas facility and the other side insist that this was an antibiotic factory, who are we to believe?

A half century of small and great lies—from Vietnam to Clinton—creates a shabby, threadbare fabric of moral authority. We don't condone the violence of militant factions, but we must take responsibility for the shameful actions of our own government. We can remind them that terrorism begets more terrorism.

Once again we have to reckon with the fact that our "enemies" are killing with arms we supplied to them. And the camps we attacked in the Afghan desert were built not so many years ago with funds from the CIA. Once upon a time Taliban rebels were formerly supported by the U.S. in their campaign against Soviet occupation. The fairy tale of power, politics, and arms trade just naturally becomes a spiraling nightmare of violence.

Let's remember several things. First, no matter what "side" we may be on, as long as we are silent, violence is being done in our name. Second, that in Buddhadharma and in the heart of all religions, there are no sides. There is just life. How can we live and act to protect life? I hope we can tell and show our leaders that we see violence leading only to more violence; that we are willing to sacrifice our own privilege and safety to end all terrorism. $\blacksquare \blacksquare$

LETTERS

[Please write to us. Letters are subject to editing.]

On Nelson Foster's Essay

In his article, Nelson Foster tries to understand how it is that our dharma ancestors apparently failed to live up to their vows to save all beings by becoming socially engaged. But more importantly I think, if we look around, we'll find that it is a failing on the part of most of our contemporaries as well.

The fact is that most Buddhists—today and in the West—are not engaged Buddhists. And if we look around, we will find that most practitioners of meditative traditions are not engaged socially. Unlike Nelson and others, many practitioners do not come into practice convinced of the importance and relevance of social engagement. And it seems that many, through practice, in fact become convinced, at least initially, of the opposite. To most of our contemporaries, liberation is the transformation of individuals, and social engagement is unnecessary, and has no intrinsic relationship at all to Buddhist practice and realization.

When I came to Buddhism, I believed that if people would only sit down and practice, they'd come to see that really there wasn't any problem in the first place. I believed that there could even be "Buddhist Nazis." It wasn't until I started college that my perspective changed.

My sociology professor was visiting from the Philippines. She taught us some of the Marxist critiques of capitalism. She showed us films documenting the suffering that consumerism has caused around the world. And she countered my conservative-like arguments.

Around the same time I saw the movie "Romero," [about the radical archbishop from El Salvador]. And I saw in Romero's transformation and awakening from the heady world of books to the world of social engagement the same sort of transformation that was occurring in me.

From that time on, I became committed to bridging the "gap" between personal and social liberation.

To me, that change was as much an awakening as any that has occurred through practice. It was a social awakening, an awakening to social suffering. And it required social change, social action.

This awakening was transmitted to me, not just from the West, but from the east and the south as well. The views may have been "Western," but they certainly weren't mine. I was much more at home with the views of the ancestors. If I had not been exposed to the teachings of social engagement—the problem of social suffering, its causes, the truth that change was possible, and an example of the way to that change—if I had not been exposed to those teachings at the right time, I would still be sitting on my seat with all our ancestors.

-Ray Shunpu Bonini, Chicago, IL

• Nelson Foster seems to miss the point. "Nowhere," he states, "do we find great Ch'an or Zen teachers of yesteryear admonishing their students to organize for the common good. It simply is not there in the teachings, as much as you and I might wish it were." And he goes on to speak of the discrepancy between Mahayana Buddhism's vision of saving the world and its apparently inept institutional role in effecting that vision.

But is there really a discrepancy? To a bodhisattva, after all, there *are* no others. Who, one might ask, could there be to "save" or not to save? For the great Ch'anists, or for the awakened of any age, the concept of "personal self-cultivation" is as ludicrous as a "world" to save...

Is this not the right view, from which all true action, all true activism, pours freely?

-J. Ginn, Appleton, Minnesota

Twentieth Anniversary

Your 20th Anniversary issue made me realize how deeply grateful I am for the BPF. In the past two years my professional career has been completely transformed, in no small part by the inspiration, insight and practical advice I have found in *Turning Wheel*.

As a practicing architect, I have struggled for years to find a way to bring my Buddhist practice into my work. I have long understood the vast environmental devastation the construction industry is responsible for, but could not find a way to make real changes within my practice. However, with support from my firm, and the insights I have gained from *Turning Wheel*, I started a small practice in sustainable design. I have recently completed one "green" office building, and a few other projects are in the works.

My work in the last few years has taken me beyond the traditional boundaries of architectural practice, and has fundamentally transformed my relationship with everyone I do business with. I have learned first-hand what I have read about repeatedly in the pages of *Turning Wheel:* it is impossible to practice engaged Buddhism effectively as long as we cling to dualistic thinking that divides the world into "us and them."

This is a particular problem in the environmental movement, where large companies are consistently vilified and treated as the "enemy" because of the environmental problems they create. This attitude is perpetuated in quite a myopic way by environmentalists who fail to see that their own lives are intertwined with these same companies, and therefore they are also to blame for the environmental problems we all face.

I have been successful in my design practice because I do not preach to clients, architects, engineers, contractors or manufacturers. Instead, I spend my time listening and asking, at every point in a project, why we can't do things in a more sustainable fashion. I have found that it is possible to achieve quite a lot by abandoning environmental perfectionism in favor of an attitude that views sustainability as an ongoing process that can be advanced with each building I work on.

Last year I founded the Wisconsin Green Building Alliance, an interdisciplinary, non-profit organization working to implement green building practices in Wisconsin. We use market-based incentives as a "carrot" to supplement the "stick" of environmental regulation. This organization has held many forums and conferences and has facilitated greater communication among local construction professionals, helping motivate them to work towards sustainability in a collaborative fashion.

-Matthew Tendler, Wauwatosa, Wisconsin

Corrections and Clarification:

The 20th Anniversary issue felt very good in terms of history, with one exception; I'm writing to correct that exception. During my service as editor, I did two good things: 1) getting Susan Moon to take over the job from me; and 2) getting Lawrence Watson to work with design and production.

Ms. Moon gets her say each issue, thank goodness, but Mr. Watson goes unnoticed. Building the *Turning Wheel* to its present form was a work that proceeded incrementally—Mr. Watson was there for each step.

In 1989, desktop publishing was THE NEW THING and the Web was yet unborn, if you can imagine. Larry worked as the Art Director for a national magazine dedicated to people putting themselves into funny postures and holding them, and I worked for a computer magazine, and both of us worked for BPF.

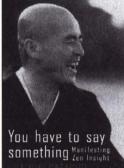
To get out an issue of what was then called simply the *Buddhist Peace Fellowship Newsletter*, we would "borrow" computers from our workplaces, string them together in my house or his house, or his office, with ungodly combinations of phone lines and other cables, and bash the thing out, page by painful page. It was slow, marriage-straining work: "Dear, I'm still working on the BPF...it will only be another couple of hours..." etc. Then, later, "Dear, I'm going to be staying the night here..."

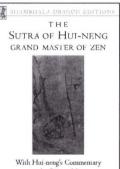
I never once saw Lawrence Watson lose his temper, though he certainly had ample cause to do so. The look of the magazine remains almost exactly as he designed it 10 years ago. Yes, 10 years! For half of the life of BPF, Lawrence Watson has quietly labored to make the words and ideas and pictures look good. Like all good designers, he's made himself invisible, in the service of the message. This seems to me to be a very real work. Hail to the invisible work; hail to Lawrence Watson.

-David Schneider, Marburg, Germany

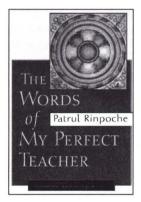
In an article about the Tibetan Refugee Children's Project in the Spring '98 issue of *TW*, it was erroneously reported that the Revolving Fund began in 1989. In fact, the Children's Project began in 1990, and the Revolving Fund in 1991. *TW* also neglected to mention in its Chronology that Dorothy Marschak founded the Buddhist Action Group on Central America, as a BPF project in 1985. We regret the errors. ◆

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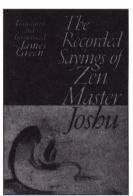
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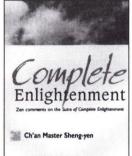
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READINGS

Maha Ghosananda Receives Peace Prize

On May 9, 1998, BPF International Advisory Board member Maha Ghosananda received the fifteenth Niwano Peace Prize. This prize, awarded by the Japanese Niwano foundation, honors individuals and organizations that have contributed significantly to interreligious cooperation, thereby furthering the cause of world peace.

Maha Ghosananda, Supreme Patriarch of Buddhism in Cambodia, lost his entire family during the Khmer Rouge holocaust. Sometimes called "the Ghandi of Cambodia," he has courageously dedicated himself to nonviolent action for peace. He has led Dhammayietra (literally, "pilgrimage of truth") peace walks in Cambodia since 1992. These non-partisan peace walks, by as many as 7,000 participants each year, demonstrate the possibilities of nonviolence as they travel across the scarred and violent landscape of Cambodia. In 1995 the Dhammayietra gathered more than 20,000 signatures calling for a worldwide ban on landmines. In 1996, the pilgrimage planted 2,000 trees along the walk route. Says Maha Ghosananda, "Our wisdom and our compassion must walk together. Having one without the other is like walking on one foot; you will fall. Balancing the two you will walk very well, step by step."

News from Chiapas

The Buddhist Peace Fellowship is a member of SIPAZ (International Service for Peace/Servicio Internacional para la Paz), a coalition committed to active nonviolence, international witness, and dialogue in Chiapas, Mexico.

Violent conflict began in Chiapas in 1994 when the primarily indigenous Zapatista Army of National Liberation (EZLN) seized control of towns and regions previously controlled by wealthy landowners supported by the Mexican government. Indigenous people in Chiapas seek regional autonomy so as to live self-sufficiently according to their own practices and customs.

Increasingly, events point to a reliance by the Mexican government on military violence to resolve the conflict. After the Acteal massacre in December, 1997, in which 45 indigenous people (mostly women and children) were killed by the Mexican military, government forces have attacked four more Zapatista autonomous counties in Chiapas. During the most recent assault, June 10, 1998, federal soldiers struck an indigenous community in the state of El Bosque—dropping bombs from helicopters onto homes, killing families, and arresting and torturing large groups of people.

The Mexican government's low-intensity warfare against indigenous people has displaced thousands from their homes. The government continues to undermine the work of both neutral international observers and human-rights workers who are providing humanitarian aid to refugees. As long as the attacks, arrests, killings, torturings, disappearances, harrassments and displacements continue, it is extremeley important that people outside of Chiapas take action to support the liberation of indigenous people in Mexico.

Please, urge Mexican president Zedillo to reduce the army presence in Chiapas and to respect the efforts of human-rights workers and international observers. Write to: Lic. Ernesto Zedillo Ponce de Leon, Presidente de la Republica, Palacio Nacional, 06067 Mexico, DF, Mexico. Fax: (int - 52)(5)271-1764. Email: webadmon@op.presidencia.gob.mx

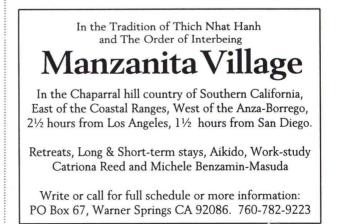
For updated information, please contact: SIPAZ, P.O. Box 2415, Santa Cruz, CA 95063 USA, tel/fax: (831)425-1257, E-mail: sipaz@igc.org. Web: www.nonviolence.org/sipaz/

Good News about Burma

On August 11, 1998, the U.S. company Atlantic Richfield (ARCO) announced that it would not renew its lease with Burma for offshore oil exploration. ARCO's withdrawal leaves only three major foreign oil and gas companies with substantial investments in Burma: UNO-CAL (California), Total (France), and Premier (UK).

Foreign oil companies have provided at least 65 percent of all foreign investment in Burma since 1988 and are therefore the main source of foreign revenue for the SLORC military regime. How much longer will Burma's military elite be able to sustain its stranglehold on Burma? As was the case in South Africa, direct consumer boycotts and institutional divestiture are effective pressures on oppressive regimes who will not listen to international outcry over human rights abuses. When will the remaining oil companies in Burma join other foreign corporations such as Texaco, Pepsi, Amoco, J. Crew, and many others who have withdrawn from Burma? Write them a letter and ask them yourself: Roger C. Beach, CEO, UNOCAL Corporate Headquarters, 2141 Rosecrans Ave, #4000, El Segundo, CA 90245, Tel: 310-726-7600 Fax: 310-726-7804. *

—Mark Kunkel



SHIGEO KIKUCHI

by Diane Patenaude Ames

It was 1915. The Japanese immigrant canefield workers in the remote town of Naalehu on the Big Island of Hawaii had no electricity, no running water, no flush toilets, no doctors, and certainly no day-care centers. The women, forced by poverty to work alongside the men in the tropical sun for 58 cents a day, had to take their babies to the fields and leave them under a tree. On Saturdays, or on weekday afternoons after the public school let out, there was no provision for the care and supervision of the many school-age children whose mothers were working—except, predictably, that provided by the Japanese-language school of the Naalehu Buddhist temple.

Of course, the school could operate only thanks to the selfless devotion of the local Shin Buddhist priest, Chikyoku Kikuchi, and his young wife, Shigeo Kikuchi. On the wretched salaries that the temple and Japaneselanguage school could afford to pay them, they lived pretty much as the cane cutters around them lived. Mrs. Kikuchi cooked and cleaned without running water. While her husband circuit-rode to 13 different work camps on horseback to conduct services, she had all the usual temple duties shouldered by *bomoris* (priests' wives), who functioned not only as assistant ministers but, in Shigeo Kikuchi's own words, as "social welfare workers, community workers." Mrs. Kikuchi did such things as helping illiterate laborers to write letters to their families in Japan, teaching girls to sew, and, sometimes, taking into her home children who lived too far from the public school. Above all, she taught Japaneselanguage school every weekday afternoon as well as every Saturday. This, besides teaching both children and illiterate adults to read the Japanese language, provided desperately needed after-school care long before the term was ever heard.

The Japanese-language schools of Hawaii were repeatedly attacked by white politicians as an un-American, un-Christian influence. Laws reminiscent of California's recent anti-bilingual education initiative were passed to restrict the operations of such schools. But somehow the Kikuchis and others like them managed to keep their local schools open-until Pearl Harbor. Then Rev. Kikuchi, like almost all of the Buddhist priests on the islands, was arrested and sent to a camp on the mainland, where he was held until 1945. Although Mrs. Kikuchi admitted that she contemplated suicide at this time, she managed to carry on, officiating at all the Shin Buddhist funerals in the area and reopening the local Buddhist Sunday school when the military authorities finally permitted it. And in 1946, a few months after her husband's release, she re-opened her temple's Japanese-language school. �



TURNING WHEEL O FALL 1998

LEARNING FROM RATTLESNAKES AND PROFESSORS

by Stephanie Kaza

"Stephanie, come over here right now." Davis's voice calls ugently. "A natural history event you have to see." I leave my studio, hurry to the kitchen. Davis is very still, pointing to something five feet away, just off the deck. "Rattlesnakes. Two of them." He has the snakecatching pole nearby, but these snakes are not interested in us. The male is jutting his head forward rhythmically over the female, each gesture engaging his whole body. The female is underneath, her head barely visible. Both snakes are coiled. We watch spellbound, adrenaline surging. They are so close! Whispering, passing the binocs back and forth, we are in their presence-their event is our event. The male humps the end of his body over the end of the female's body, vent to vent, holding her in place. We can't move; the animal teachers are here-be still!

My old professor Ken Norris would love this, I think. Mr. Naturalist, lover of snakes, lizards, dolphins, whales. He saw the natural world as the source of all great teaching, and he passed this on to his students. I was lucky enough to taste that transmission. And now the flavor is sharp in my mind, for just this week I found out he died, too weak to recover from heart surgery. The body goes, and what is left is the legacy in the mind. Once in an interview Ken was described as "a wily Zen master." A conservation visionary, he initiated a California state-wide reserve system for field research. Ardent advocate for marine mammals, his dolphin research and scientific activism were legendary. I knew him best through his magnetic teaching; everyone wanted to get into his field courses.

Animal teachers, human teachers—when learning happens in a powerful way, what is the transmission? Three elements stand out: wisdom, compassion, and the forms of practice. This combination is classic in Buddhist tradition; the student comes to learn and the teacher offers points of contact with the truth. Ken, like Buddhist teachers, offered a way of seeing into the nature of the world beyond the individual self. By looking for patterns and relationships from the perspective of the animal, Ken opened the door to many worlds. By sharing his deep concern for the rapid decline of whales and dolphins, he taught compassion through advocacy. By sticking to formal methods of field observation, he passed on practices that take the student directly to understanding.

A student comes to a teacher with great appetite, drawn by the power and clarity of the teacher's mind. If both are willing, they give themselves to each other for a period of time-a few years, or a lifetime. The student becomes attached, bound by the desire to learn, eager to reach some degree of the depth s/he sees manifest in the teacher. They wrestle, they laugh, they challenge each other; the teacher takes up the student's mind: the student takes up the teacher's mind. Transmission is happening all the time. As with pure osmosis, consciousness flows through the membranes of their minds. If the teacher is not clouded by ego or power needs, the student can gain the practice forms clearly and carry the insights beyond the teacher. Changed forever but now independent, the student goes forth, taking the mind of the teacher into new worlds.

A third snake arrives, sliding up from the creek. Now what is happening? The mating male rises up, leans forward, juts his head at the intruder. The message is clear; the newcomer darts away. More jerking, and the female slips out; the male follows her into the blackberry shade. We are electified, charged by their presence. Farther down the path, they coil together again. Five hours they stay that way, into the dark of the night. We dream of snakes, we coil like snakes; the snakes have changed us forever. Big Teaching—the gift is passed along, mind to mind. *****



Fundamentals of Tibetan Medicine October 24 9a.m. - 5 p.m.

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TIME INSIDE

by Diana Lion

Imagine sitting in a concrete basement classroom, fluorescent lights blinking erratically. Groups of men talk as they walk through our classroom, on their way back to their cells. Uniformed and armed guards stroll through once in a while. For prisoners in the "Alternatives to Violence Project" this is the most intimate sharing opportunity to which they have access during their time in San Quentin. Many in our twice-monthly support groups say that they live from AVP to AVP.

One evening an inmate told the AVP circle of having been collared by another prisoner—an act which could, and often does, lead to an escalation of violence, retaliation, stabbing, and extended time in the "hole" (solitary). Instead of rising to the threat he stepped back and paused. During that pause he realized he had choices, and he was able to transform that moment away from being a potentially fatal one. He walked away, spent some time alone, and later went to talk with the other man. He said that what he had practiced at AVP had made that shift possible.

The "Alternatives to Violence Project" is a spirituallybased training that was started in 1975 by a partnership between Quakers and prisoners in Green Haven Prison (New York). It focuses on empowering people to lead nonviolent lives through affirmation, respect for all, community-building, cooperation and trust (all compatible with my Buddhist values). It conducts community and prison workshops in 16 countries around the world. In our AVP group, most of the 18 people are prisoners in blue denim-shirts crisply creased, hair very short (now that new prison grooming rules have gone into effect). Six of us are "free people": participants and facilitators. We all sit in a circle. Some lean forward, straining to hear what one man is saying as he tells his story for the first time in his 23 years of incarceration. The weather is hot and sticky, the fan is old and noisy, and the man's voice is low, as he covers his face and cries into his hands. I feel a knot of pain in my belly, and want to reach across the room to him, but I am sitting on the far side of the circle. He is telling us that he killed a man who had tried to rape his daughter. He has never allowed her to know why he was convicted, because he wants to protect her from life's violence. He took a much heavier sentence just so she would not find out that truth. He looks across at me and says he told his story because I remind him of his daughter.

Our group is full of stories. A young man, barely a legal adult, comes into the group saying the world is divided into two camps: gangbangers and squares. His sweetness reminds me of my stepson, and I like him right away. I tell him I hope his world will get bigger, 'cause that's a piss-poor set of choices. He sits outside the circle most of the first day, but gradually joins in more until he is asking us all to sing—Beatles songs, Amazing Grace, Aretha, and more—and then we listen as he sings us two beautiful songs in Spanish. The next day he passes around a tiny photo of his chubbycheeked daughter, born when he was 14. He has decided that for a square I'm OK; and I hope he'll get a chance to raise his daughter.

So many of these "hardened criminals" were abused and/or neglected as kids. During one exercise where we imagine talking to our parents, people call out the messages they were told while growing up. Knowing theories about cycles of abuse being repeated and the effects of racism or poverty being internalized is very different from witnessing this raw pain. Men start to sound and look fuller to me—like plants that have been watered. One becomes a tall, thin prophet, moving his long fingers gracefully as he talks. His hands are birds, and later I see the magic they produce in the photos of his art. Another man, who dances his way through conversations with words and arms going a million miles an hour, gets slower. And I am able to start seeing him, too.

The AVP training lasted for three 12-hour days. We all laughed. Many of us cried (even the "real men"). We each took home a giant poster with our name at the top, filled with fellow participants' affirmations and messages in bold colors. Now whenever I need an image of a place where I feel truly accepted, I think of those guys in the circle in San Quentin. Bo Lozoff of the Prison Ashram Project says we are *all* doing time. The men inside teach me about doing the time, and not letting the time do us. As a Buddhist I feel grateful to be learning from them more about interconnectedness, patience, and impermanence.

The BPF Prison Project is now starting to take shape. We have been networking with other faith-based Prison projects, including volunteers from the San Francisco Zen Center, Bo Lozoff of the Prison Ashram Project, Fleet Maull of the Prison Dharma Network, Joan Halifax of the Zen Peacemaker Order, and Rev. Kobutsu Malone of the Engaged Zen Foundation, to see how we can learn from one another and pool knowledge. We are following leads for funding, and are excited about the possibilities. *****

People in the U.S. may contact AVP/USA at (713) 747-9999, or email them at avpusa@aol.com.

Diana Lion is a Vipassana practitioner who works with AVP and is coordinating the start-up of the BPF Prison Project.

Please note that the Prison Project is still in its formative stages of developing programs and funding sources. At this point we are unable to respond to the flood of requests for information and support as fast as we would like. We will respond as soon as we are able. Your donation would help to get us going!

Nourishing Freedom

Five Ways to Provide an Engaged Buddhist Education for Your Children

by Mushim Ikeda-Nash

1. Celebrate Buddha's birthday today.

We can communicate to our child, even before birth, and certainly every day thereafter: "You are the buddha. Happy birthday, baby Buddha!" An engaged Buddhist education, as I define it, begins with transmitting to our baby that all beings have buddha nature. When our children understand this, they feel bathed in love and trust, just as in some traditions a figure of the baby Buddha is bathed in warm sweet tea each year.

I recently attended instruction in Zen meditation given by Layla Smith, at a North American Buddhist women's conference. Layla, who is a mom and a Zen priest, showed us some stable sitting postures. "Now, sit like a baby," she said, smiling. "Sit like a baby in Buddha's lap."

2. Teach children how to take refuge.

My son Joshua's original home was my body. At nine, he still likes to hug me and pat my tummy. "I came from there," he says. "I was little, like a fish. I liked it in there." Although Josh, Chris, and I have lived in a onebedroom apartment for seven years, whenever we talk about moving to a larger place Josh says, "I don't want to leave this house. It's my childhood home. I'm used to the way it smells. I love everything about it."

We establish safe, loving homes for our children, places where they can take refuge from stress and overstimulation. As our children grow, they naturally spend more and more time away from us, developing new skills and testing what they've learned so far. But what happens when they are away from home and "lose it" fall apart emotionally? As a mother, I try to give my son and other children a way to go for refuge, a way to touch home base in any situation.

The Buddha himself left his "palace" and wife and son to find a new home for himself under the bodhi tree. The home he found was his body, his breath, and his buddha nature. It was very portable. We can remind our kids, also, from the time they are a few years old, to center their energy in their bodies, to learn awareness of breath, and to visualize the baby buddha inside themselves, always sitting happily and peacefully, bathed in lovingkindness.

Some years ago I went to pick up Josh from his kindergarten class. A teacher told me that he was in the auditorium, "getting counseling from the principal." Apparently he had been playing with his two best friends, and they had decided to exclude him. "It's two against one," one of his buddies said. Josh was so hurt and angry that he lost control and bit his friend's hand, drawing blood.

The instant I saw my five-year-old, standing next to his friend and the school principal, I felt shocked by how absent he looked, how unlike his normal self. He was pale, trembling, his entire body rigid, and his gaze distant. I brought him home and made him sit in a warm bath to bring him back into his body. Then I told him that the Buddha had given us a special way to heal ourselves when we feel wounded, or have hurt others. Would he like to try it? Josh said yes, so we offered incense at our home altar and he sat in my lap. Then we recited the Metta (lovingkindness) Sutra together, offering wishes for our own happiness and well-being, then wishes for all the people we loved and liked, then for all the people we

Joshua was indignant. "How could I accept Grandpa's death if I didn't see his body? That's just insane."

did not like, then for all beings. We put his friend's name into the sutra, and prayed, "May [my friend] be happy and well. May he be free from suffering."

By the end of the recitation, Josh had relaxed, and looked more like himself. He went to his room and played quietly the rest of the day. Two years later, when I again picked him up at school after an especially chaotic day, I asked him how his day had gone.

"Not good," he said. "I got a bad headache. At recess I sat under a tree and meditated."

"Did it help?" I asked, amazed.

"Yes," he said.

3. Teach your child the art of questioning, and be open in giving answers.

A typical second-grade math problem at my son's alternative public school is: "How do you measure a puddle? Write and draw your answer." Children are encouraged to collaborate with one another and to seek multiple ways of finding the "right" answer to a given problem.

Probably the most powerful "Buddhist" tool I feel I can offer children is identical to what is called "critical thinking" in modern education. The ability to formulate questions that can penetrate or open up new areas of thought and being, and the courage to do so—what greater gift can we give, since surely we do not have all

the answers? I believe in spending lots of time talking with kids, asking them questions, joking around, and encouraging them to ask me questions I can't answer, then strategizing ways we might be able to find an answer. As far as I am concerned, no question is taboo, and I never withhold information, although occasionally I will say to my son, "This has to do with adult sort of material. However, if you like I will explain it to you as fully as I can. Would you like to hear the answer?" Sometimes he says yes, sometimes no. In this way we have discussed subjects such as how people can get AIDS, why children are starving in North Korea, and why his birth father does not live with us.

Free and open access to information and the ability to choose what he is ready to learn have given Joshua dignity and inner strength. He and I recently talked again about how, after my father unexpectedly died in the night, I had to decide whether Josh deserved the choice to look at Grandpa's body, not yet embalmed and "fixed up" by the funeral home.

"Some adults thought I shouldn't have given you the choice," I said.

Joshua was indignant. "They're totally wrong," he said. "If you *hadn't* given me the choice, I would have torn up the house. How could I accept Grandpa's death if I didn't see his body? That's just insane. Anyway, other people don't know what's best for you, me, and Dad. Only we can decide, because we know our own situation."

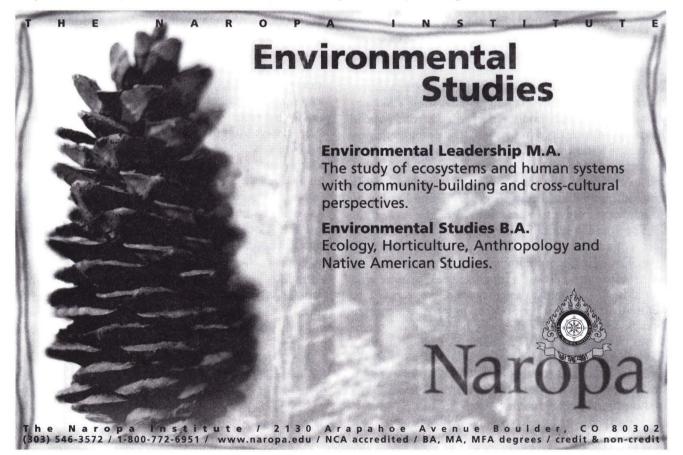
4. Be an activist for universal education.

When Josh was finishing preschool, several parents said to me, "He's so bright, you should try to find a private school for him. The public schools in Oakland are no good." One mother said, "You might consider a Catholic school. I know you're Buddhist, but all religions are the same because they all say love one another." Although these people were well-intentioned, and had good points to make, Chris and I wanted Josh to attend a public school where racial, cultural, and socioeconomic diversity would be ensured. I wanted to be an educational advocate for all the children.

If we regard all children as potential buddhas, I don't think we can say that some children deserve a better education than others. Robert Thurman, arguing for "universal, total, unlimited education of all individuals" in his essay "Nagarjuna's Guidelines" says:

"...the educational system of a society is not there to 'service' the society, to produce its drone-'professionals,' its workers, its servants. The educational system is the individual's doorway to liberation, to enlightenment. It is therefore the brain of the body politic. Society has no other purpose than to foster it. It is society's door of liberation." (*Engaged Buddhist Reader*, p. 79, Parallax Press.)

Although admittedly a very American, broad, and democratic take on education, Thurman's comments have for years inspired me. I decided to become an



activist parent in support of public education, and I keep finding new ways to express my commitment: participating as a facilitator in anti-racism work in the school, volunteering to help with literacy, and lobbying the school district when severe problems remain unaddressed because of bureaucratic red tape. A proactive attitude can lead to surprising results.

Last spring I had taken myself out for a lunch special

"Please write down an educational policy for the new mayor's office and send it to me," Jerry Brown said in parting.

at a Chinese restaurant in my neighborhood when Oakland mayoral candidate Jerry Brown walked past my table. Emboldened by the fact that he has practiced Zen meditation, I leaped up and shook his hand vigorously, then ran home and found his campaign website, "Oaklanders First." I e-mailed him: "Jerry: If you are elected mayor, what can you do about our public schools? They're falling apart!" About five minutes later the phone rang, and a strange voice boomed, "Hello!"

"Who's calling?" I asked suspiciously.

"Jerry Brown!" the voice said. "I'm quick, aren't I?" I told the ex-governor of California all about my son's school: the moldy, tattered rugs, vandalized bathrooms, dedicated teachers, lack of supplies, and nearly barren playground. He listened carefully and at the end of our conversation repeated back to me the points I had made. He assured me that I was not alone: whether the neighborhood was rich or poor, he said, all Oakland residents had the same two complaints: crime, and the alarming condition of the public school system.

"Please write down an educational policy for the new mayor's office and send it to me," Jerry Brown said in parting. A few months later, Brown was elected as mayor in a landslide vote; a newspaper article said he was possibly the first politician to get elected by listening carefully and fully to people instead of talking at them.

Although it may be provocative, I want to argue that a Buddhist education should be a public education or, as Thurman says, the door of liberation for all: "By giving others the gift of education, they gain freedom, self-reliance, understanding, choice, all that is still summed up in the word 'enlightenment." Can we work toward providing this?

5. Practice "letting go."

Practicing nonattachment doesn't mean not loving our children. But if we cling to them and they cling to us, eventually we'll both be limited, distorted by our love.

I've heard some parents express fear of the "outside world" as being full of contamination. They feel threatened by pop culture, and see their children as pure beings who must be sheltered as long as possible from television, video games, the Internet, and fast foods. A Buddhist education, instilling in my son the ability to fearlessly ask questions, telling him he has the right to seek answers, and showing him how to go for refuge, provides what I feel my child basically needs to deal with the "outside world." When I trust that Joshua's "inside world"—his sense of self, and his trust in innate goodness—is healthy and intact, I trust him. When I trust him fully, I take joy in his growing up and I can let him go. And that's *my* Buddhist education. *****

Mushim Ikeda-Nash is a poet and Zen practitioner who lives with her husband and son in Oakland, California. This article takes the place of her regular Family Practice Column, which will reappear in the next Turning Wheel.

Children,

I'm not asking you to write about pain. Just describe an object you love. Mine is a green bicycle. On windy days when I can see clear down to the bay crossing at University, I feel I'm sailing—that's the street where some time ago, a friend of mine looked into people and saw their souls like cats in bags all trying to get out.

And when our speaker comes with her talking ape, don't inquire about the past. It's hard enough for a gorilla to remember her name. You mustn't dwell on what she doesn't understand. Tomorrow you can ask in private.

Anyway now choose a word for vocabulary. Why I don't know but I thought of hanker. I trust you'll use a dictionary to spell your word.

Oh children, it's happening all over, the new rose and green folders, the color of hummingbirds, and the chairs bright yellow with shellac. I need to take a moment to catch my breath. Read a book, any book, and then write down something in your journal. I know at first nothing will come but in the end you can put it back and hear the blood running in your ears. Look at the clock. Only a few minutes have passed. We have a whole year ahead of us. Class, we must help each other.

—The Teacher

The Teacher has been teaching in Oakland, California for more than 30 years.

Junior High School Counselors: A REPORT FROM THE FRONT LINES

Jan Sells and Barbara Sandidge both work as counselors in public junior high schools—Jan at Martin Luther King, Jr. Middle School in Berkeley, California, and Barbara at Carter Middle School in Oakland, California. Barbara is a long-time Buddhist practitioner at the Berkeley Zen Center, and Jan grew up in a Theosophist family, studied Buddhism, and is a member of the Buddhist Peace Fellowship. In the following conversation with Susan Moon, editor of Turning Wheel, they speak about the challenges they face working in urban school systems where the resources fall far short of the needs, and where many students come from homes decimated by poverty, violence, and substance abuse. They speak, too, about how their spiritual practice has helped them in their work.

Susan Moon: How did you get into school counseling?

Jan Sells: I had been a teacher for about 20 years in all different settings. Then I decided to get my MFCC

(Marriage, Family,

and Child Coun-

seling) license, as

well as a California

school counseling

credential. While I

internship at a community coun-

seling service, one

of my supervisors

got a call from a

teacher at King

saying they des-

doing

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Middle



Jan Sells

perately needed counselors. Since I had so much experience working in schools, I was happy to volunteer there. That was 13 years ago. To support myself I got a 40 percent teaching job there as a French teacher, and the next semester I also taught ESL. I continued counseling as a volunteer, and after the third year, they started funding me. It was 40 percent the first year, then 60 percent, and for the past seven years, it's been 80 percent, so I haven't taught at all. After I got my license I was able to get interns, and that really increased the services we could offer. Then I started a volunteer program for licensed therapists in Berkeley. I essentially created my own program.

Once I was only doing counseling, I was able to really expand my work. I started a community-service program and a conflict-resolution program, training kids as mediators. I also trained a lot of adults to be mediators, including a lot of Buddhists who came as a result of a BPF conference I attended. All in all, I feel very fortunate.

But it's very heart-rending work, because I do a lot of crisis intervention. Every year I see kids who are suicidal, kids who are abused. A lot of kids' parents are crack addicts, and the kids are in foster homes or living with grandparents who have a really hard time keeping track of them. The kids are angry and rebellious. It's taken me a long time to develop clear boundaries so I don't take problems home with me.

Susan Moon: Barbara, what is your job like?

Barbara Sandidge: My training is also as a counselor/therapist. Mostly I have worked as a therapist.

When I came to California I wasn't making enough money to live on, so I started substitute teaching in the Oakland school system, to supplement my income. And I blew out pretty quickly. The children were very violent. It was so violent that I was afraid of my own



Barbara Sandidge

violent tendencies. I was afraid of hitting somebody's child and cutting myself off from being able to work in that way, so I just kind of backed out. This was about 15 years ago. About five years later I started subbing again, for the income, and I just made the best of it, because I had my back to the wall.

Susan: What age level were you working with?

Barbara: Mostly junior high schools. I worked in one rough situation where there was a big fight and I was in the center of it, and in fact I was battered. But when the smoke cleared, I was the only one left standing. I ended up working at that school for two more years after that, and it gave me a certain reputation among the children.

Susan: What do you actually do in your job?

Barbara: Among other things, I schedule the kids' classes. We had no secretary until the middle of April, so I scheduled classes for the whole school-about 440 kids. I also notify families when their children are in danger of failing, and I meet with the children in danger of failing. I count their credits for graduation, determine who's in danger of not passing. I recommend children to alternative schools. And I do a lot of discipline.

Susan: Tell us about that.

Barbara: I take a lot of the ambiguity out of things, because the students' thinking is cloudy when it comes to school. I get very concrete: what's appropriate, what's inappropriate, what we're doing there, what we're not doing there. I also recruit volunteers for the school, because our adult-to-child ratio is very poor, and the bet-

ter the ratio, the more leverage we have on the kids' behavior. This year I also did two lunch-time supervisions every day, so I was out on the yard with them.

Susan: Do you think the kids are afraid of you because you're the disciplinarian?

Barbara: I can rattle their little socks if I need to. These are not small children.

Some of these kids are bigger than I am, but they often act very inappropriately toward adults and try to physically intimidate people. They have a little game they play, trying to undermine the entire momentum of classroom procedure. If you let that happen, they'll run with it.

Susan: What are the hardest parts of your jobs?

Jan: The hardest thing for me is having to report child abuse. Every year there are more cases, and I don't know if that's because kids are just trusting the counseling process more. It's very hard, because the kids, even though they might be afraid of the person who's abusing them-and it's usually a parent-don't want to snitch on them or get them in trouble. The kids carry so much violence and rage within them because they're the victims of abuse. They act out all over the place, but they still really want to protect that person. So it puts us in a difficult position. It's also really hard to see kids being victimized. Usually, it's not intentional; the parents are doing the best they can. But I find it very painful to learn about what happens to kids. I get really attached to some of the kids, and I stay connected with them after they leave school.

For example, there's a girl I just talked to this morning on the phone. She had a really traumatic childhood. She got pregnant when she was 13 and dropped out of school. She actually wanted to get pregnant, because she wanted somebody to love. She wasn't getting a lot of love. Now she's living with her boyfriend. He's really been responsible; he's really been there for her. He's an illegal immigrant, but he's working at two different minimum-wage jobs to support her and the baby, and they're getting so much hassle from all these government agencies, instead of getting support and help for what they *are* doing, which is raising this baby. She's left

The hardest thing for me is having to report child abuse. Every year there are more cases.

totally on her own. If I didn't spend time with her she wouldn't have anybody. And I could multiply that 10 times and still feel like I'm not doing enough.

Barbara: I think the hardest thing for me is seeing children lose the opportunity to come to school and not being able to intervene in some way. They tell me that at Oakland Tech the drop-out rate is 78 percent of the black students.

Susan: What can you do to minimize the damage?

Barbara: You have to talk to kids a lot. People think that children can be raised by television and computers,

but those things aren't interactive. Life is organic and very interactive, and children need a lot of rapport with organic beings. If you interact with them they sit around after school until four and five o'clock, just to connect in some way. They need a lot of time like that.

I'm with children 85-95 percent of the time. I like little kids. I like to see

that spark in them. When I first came to the school, I noticed that nobody ever looked at you. I'd say, "Look at me when I talk to you! Then you can see that I'm sincere about what I need you to do." To get them to trust me enough to look at me, to establish that kind of rapport with them—I can do that until I die!

Susan: Do you get to know particular kids?

Barbara: At the graduation exercises, I had to call their names to come get their promotional certificates. I knew almost every child in that class—544 kids. The ones I did not know were the most well-behaved. I knew every single rascal in that whole class by name.

Susan: What's the most satisfying part of your job?

Jan: It's really satisfying how many kids come and ask for counseling. If I go to a classroom to get a student, very often other students ask if they can have a counselor. We have lots of requests. We had 150 kids at any given time last year seeing a counselor, and half of those were self-referred. Also, I do at least one conflict reso-

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lution a day, and that's very satisfying. In a lot of conflicts, it's just a matter of getting kids to understand each other. They have to be willing to do it, to solve the problem, so in a way it's a set-up for success, because they come in agreeing. In general, conflict resolution is the most satisfying thing I do. I've trained a lot of people to do it and I'm trying to get more teachers to do it. Most teachers don't really have time, but if they do have time they also need the skill.

Susan: What about the violence you're facing all the time in school ? How do you deal with it?

Barbara: Both my tolerance for violence and my dislike

You don't get strong from not doing difficult things. I can help them understand that they don't have to suffer just because life happens to be hard.

of it have grown through the years, and I feel much more capable of not being explosive in that environment. I can survive there because of the training I've had in my Buddhist practice. I didn't feel composed enough, 10 years ago, certainly not 20 years ago, to work in that kind of environment. I would not have been able to contain it, and it would have made me explosive.

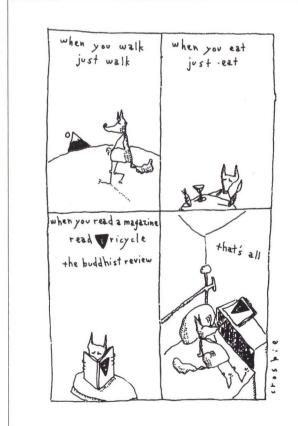
Susan: How does your Buddhist practice help you?

Barbara: I think school is a good place for teaching children to focus. Children don't like to focus. They will contrive to be scattered and to scatter. I often discipline children in the presence of their parents. They're daydreaming and I say, "Where are you? Come back." And I tell them to look at us when we talk to them, and they will see how we are as adults and how we look at each other. I try to weave them into the fabric of living beings and culture.

Susan: Do you sometimes have to stop and take a deep breath so you don't get swept away by it all?

Barbara: I'm generally one of the last to get upset. And when I get upset it can even do the situation some good. "Oh, my god! Sandidge is upset!" So, you know, upset is okay. But it's good to get back to meditation in the evening and just be able to be quiet.

There are so many interventions. Some are good, and some you miss the mark a little bit, and they're haunting. I make hundreds of interventions on student conduct in the course of a normal day, many of them nonverbal: a look, a stop, a touch, a shake, a hand on the shoulder, hand on the head, a scold. Sometimes you



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get it right, sometimes you miss, sometimes you might be a little tilted, but you always keep it going. That's the job. You just have to trust yourself. If something shakes your confidence, it'll knock you off balance for a minute, but you just have to get back on the horse, because there's just too much riding to do.

Jan: I can really relate to what Barbara is saying, because I think the whole idea of being present, and helping kids to stay present, is a big part of my job. I sometimes talk to kids about karma, too. I'll say, "Well, I don't know about you, but I believe in karma, and that means what goes around comes around." That's an expression they can relate to. Also, I've done meditation with kids. I don't call it meditation. I call it relaxation exercises. I try to help kids do breathing as a way of having better impulse control, just taking breaths and trying to stay centered. You know, I don't really agree with the way school is for a middle-school kid. I think they'd be much better off being on farms and in the woods and doing creative activities. They'd still have to learn to read and write and follow through with plans they make, but a lot of school is just not meaningful to them. And their hormones are raging and their energy is wild and there are just too many things going on in their lives.

Recently, a boy came in and said, "The weirdest thing happened last night. I didn't think it would ever happen. But I proved to myself that I'm stronger than my dad. He was starting to beat up my mom, just like usual, but this time I got on top of him and I pulled him off her, and my sister called 911, and then he started going after my sister, and then he got a gun and he held it up to all of us, and he said, 'Okay, which one of you wants to die first?' But my sister snuck out and he started running down the stairs chasing her, and just then the police came."

Susan: Whoa!

Jan: And meanwhile, the math teacher is coming to me and saying, "This boy is so smart, but he's just not doing work at all." So I'm not gonna tell the teacher what happened, but I'll say, "He's going through so much right now—you can't imagine. Could you just give him a little break?"

Susan: It's good that the teacher comes to you.

Jan: Yes, I feel lucky that the whole school has bought into the idea of counseling. Teachers come to me and discuss problems they're having. The best teachers ask me to do conflict resolutions between themselves and the kids, and it really helps. A lot of times it's the first time a kid understands that the teacher cares about him.

Susan: When you see the amount of suffering there is, when you're doing these child abuse reports, or seeing kids falling through the cracks, does your practice help you deal with that?

Jan: Yes, it does help. I feel weird saying it, but sometimes

it feels like there's not a lot we can do to help the kids. I mean, if they're homeless, for example, there's not a lot we can do short of adopting them. So it might be a rationalization, but there's a part of me that says, "Well, we all have our own paths, and this is this person's path for some reason. And they have to learn from this." I used to argue with my grandmother—she was not only a Theosophist,

There are so many interventions. Some are good, and some you miss the mark a little bit, and they're haunting.

but also a teacher. I'd ask her, "What if it's somebody's karma to drown and then they get saved?" And she'd say, "Well, then it was their karma to get saved." So I feel like my intervention is part of their karma, but the ways in which I can't intercede are also part of their karma. I've had hard things happen in my life, too, which have strengthened me and made me who I am, and hopefully they'll learn from what they're going through, and those lessons will strengthen them. But maybe that's a rationalization for my own inability to do more.

Susan: It doesn't sound like that, because you're trying to do the best you can anyway. It would be different if you were trying to find an excuse for not doing something.

Jan: Yes. It's part of my path to intervene and try to help. When you're raised as a Theosophist, you say this chant that goes, "Children of light, as you go forth into the world, seek to render gentle service to all that live." And you sing it. My sister and I used to sing it before we went to sleep every night. I always thought that what I was supposed to do was render gentle service to all that lived. I can't always do that, but at least I've created work that makes me feel good about trying to fulfill that.

Barbara: Those are beautiful points. There's a difference between suffering and hurting, you know. You can have an injury and it can hurt, but you don't have to suffer. It just depends on how you're attached to what is happening, whether it's suffering or it just happens to be hurting. I think that life lived strenuously is good, and a life that is not strenuous doesn't make for strength. You don't get strong from not doing difficult things. I'm not trying to make life hard for people, but I can help them understand that they don't have to suffer just because life happens to be hard. I think that's where the desire to save all sentient beings comes in. What are you saving them from? Thinking about suffering in a certain way.

Susan: Thank you both so much. *

In the fall of 1998, Jan Sells, MEd, MA, MFCC, will be teaching a course at U.C. Berkeley Extension in "Effective Interventions with Adolescents in Crisis."

DHARMA TRANSMISSION IN THE WEST

by Lewis Richmond

Lewis Richmond, an ordained disciple of Shunryu Suzuki-roshi, was for many years the resident teacher at Green Gulch Zen Temple in California. He is currently the owner of a software company, and leads a meditation group in Mill Valley, California, as well as workshops on Spiritual Practice in the Workplace. Mr. Richmond completed all the preparatory steps for the Soto Zen dharma transmission ceremony, but before the ceremony's completion he decided to retire from his role as a Buddhist teacher. Shortly afterward, he left Green Gulch to pursue a career as a writer, musician, and businessman. His book Work As a Spiritual Practice will be published by Broadway Books in February 1999, and his album of solo piano compositions Lake of No Shore will be released in March 1999 by Artifex Records.

In this essay I will examine three different styles or understandings of dharma transmission: the "mind-tomind" transmission of classical Ch'an, the "professional" transmission of priesthood, and "seniority" transmission that recognizes longevity of training. All three styles are being used in Western dharma centers, in ways that are not mutually exclusive. What method of dharma transmission—one or more of these three, or some new method— is most useful, effective, and appropriate for the emerging tradition of Western dharma?

The term "dharma transmission" itself is a technical term in Zen or Ch'an, but Vajrayana and Vipassana also include some form of recognition and authorization of teachers. Zen was the first of these traditions to be introduced into the West, so Zen books and literature dominated the convert Buddhist scene well into the '60s and '70s. Consequently, the attitudes of many present-day dharma students about such topics as enlightenment and transmission are still influenced by the Zen understanding of these matters.

With the publication of Zen At War, by Brian Victoria, in 1997, a new chapter has opened in the saga of Buddhism in the West. Because Mr. Victoria has unearthed numerous published writings by Zen authorities such as Dr. D.T. Suzuki, in which "enlightenment" is described in terms that include the ability to kill human beings without hesitation or remorse, the explanations of Dr. Suzuki and other prominent Zen figures of this century regarding "enlightenment" and "transmission" must be re-appraised.

All the more reason, then, for us as Western Buddhists to look not only to other cultures and countries for our understanding of the issues of spiritual attainment, credentials, and succession, but also to ourselves. In this sense, our discussion of transmission must draw on a multitude of sources, schools, and interpretations, including our own experience and needs.

In Ch'an or Zen the spirit of transmission is summarized in the following famous verse:

A special transmission outside the scriptures, No dependence on words and letters, Pointing directly to the mind of man, Seeing into one's nature and attaining Buddhahood.

Tradition ascribes this verse to Bodhidharma, the legendary founder of Zen, but modern authorities (including my teacher, Suzuki-roshi) place it a few generations later, when the emerging Ch'an school was in competition with established sects for recognition by the emperor and other secular authorities. Each line of the verse represented a challenge to established Buddhism, especially the first: "A special transmission outside the scriptures."

All Chinese Buddhist sects at that time based their teaching on scriptures, which were understood to have come from the mouth of the Buddha. Each sect emphasized one primary text. The T'ien T'ai school drew its authority from the Lotus Sutra, the Hua Yen school from the Avatamsaka Sutra, and so on. In fact, modern scholars have determined that such scriptures as the Lotus Sutra were composed centuries after the Buddha's death by anonymous author-monks. In ancient China, when questions did arise about the late appearance of these works, it was explained that the Buddha preached them to gods or dragons, who stored them for later dissemination. No one questioned scripture. For anyone to come forward and proclaim that there was an alternate line of authority back to the Buddha was provocative, to say the least.

What was the purpose of such a claim? The Ch'an school seems to have arisen outside the established monasteries among groups of monks who emphasized meditation and who wanted to get back to what they believed was the original practice of the Buddha. This was not really new. Through the centuries in India, even before Buddhism came to China, various groups of meditation adepts gathered around particular teachers, sometimes operating independently from the established monastic communities. They may indeed have created a body of knowledge and lore separate from the collected sermons attributed to Buddha. The Ch'an school needed to explain and justify this fact to a religious orthodoxy of centuries' standing.

Mind-to-mind transmission refers to the wordless accord of teacher with student, usually following many years of one-on-one spiritual training. Meditation and other inner spiritual skills are an art. They cannot really be learned from books, and their mastery cannot be objectively measured as easily as knowledge of scripture. Inevitably there comes a time when the mentor announces, "You know what I know. You don't need me. You can go on." After years of close contact, it is a dramatic and important moment. But from another point of view, it is just another milestone among many—something like a twenty-fifth wedding anniversary. Other people can celebrate the anniversary, they can have a big party, but only the married couple knows the enormity of its meaning, of all that went into it. Outwardly, it's just a date. You can write it in blood on silk and sign it with an antique jade seal, but that's still all it is. Just a date. You don't need to have a party.

This type of transmission is by nature secret, just as the intimacy of marriage is secret. This secrecy has its problematic side, however, because its authenticity can't be objectively measured from outside. It's either for real or it isn't, and only the principals know for sure. The mentor really has mastery, she or he really has imparted

it to the pupil, the pupil really does have it—or not. By its very nature, the whole business is susceptible to corruption—or at least compromised standards. No wonder the Buddhist establishment went for scripture. Scriptural knowledge is easier to verify.

Ch'an's claim that its lineage

stretched back to the Buddha cannot be substantiated by historical record. Scholars now know that Ch'an's lineage list, which starts with the Buddha and continues through Nagarjuna to Bodhidharma, has little historical validity. Many of the Indian names linked in the Ch'an lineage chart lived centuries apart and could not possibly have been contemporaries. Ch'an monks apparently penciled in the big names of Indian Buddhism-Nagarjuna, Vasubandhu-and filled in the gaps with other names. Of course, scripture records that the Buddha himself refused to name a successor. To get around this, Ch'an cited a story in which the Buddha gave a "sermon" by simply holding up a flower, and Mahakashyapa smiled. Ch'an called this the first transmission "outside the scriptures." Which is more likely to be true: that the Buddha did not appoint a successor, as almost all scripture says; or that he really did, in secret, and only the Ch'an lineage knew about it?

Actually, we shouldn't be so hard on Ch'an. The Buddha may not have appointed an official successor, but of course there were successors of some kind. The elder monks took over after he died, and the mantle continued to be passed on, generation after generation. In that sense, Ch'an's claim of a lineage back to the Buddha is true in spite of itself. We can attribute their lineage chart to political pressures and a certain loss of

My primary credential as a Buddhist practitioner and teacher ought to be who I am as a person, not a certificate or even the opinion of my teachers.

nerve. They could have just stayed with the real story— "Yes, this is a special transmission outside the scriptures. We can't prove it, but we're trying to live it." But that wouldn't have played as well politically. Suzuki-roshi attributed Ch'an's approach to some zealous descendants of the Sixth Patriarch anxious for imperial favor.

So there it was, a new rebellious school of Buddhism full of tremendous spiritual vigor. Spiritual acknowledgment could be spontaneous and informal in those days, and, due to the forthright style of the early Zen figures, it was often public. Many of the "enlightenment" stories so familiar to American Zen students happened in public, as did the dharma dialogues of teacher and student. Not much need for rituals and secrets back then. The trust level in those communities was clearly quite high.

But inevitably, once the initial fervor waned, Ch'an itself became an orthodoxy. By the tenth or eleventh century there were thousands of Ch'an abbots, not all of whom were saints. Rank became an issue. Corruption set in. Transmission certificates were bought and sold. The certificates themselves became

more elaborate, more secret, more coveted. What originally was the most precious of gifts—spiritual awakening under the guidance of a respected mentor—turned little by little into that bane of true spirituality, a possession. When Dogen, the founder of the Japanese Soto sect, visited China in the twelfth century,

monks he met there treated their transmission papers like holy relics. When Dogen was shown one for the first time, by a librarian monk, the monk made it clear to Dogen that he was being favored with a rare privilege by being allowed to see the scroll at all.

As a dissatisfied Tendai monk on pilgrimage from Japan, Dogen was overwhelmed by this written proof of a "special transmission outside the scriptures." Clearly the news of Ch'an's special dispensation from the Buddha had not reached Dogen's Japan, and the carefully drawn lineage charts showing the fifty generations from Buddha to his time made a tremendous impression on him. Authentic transmission was a topic that Dogen stressed over and over again in his writings. He was also not above scathing criticism of Ch'an monks in China whom he saw abusing what he felt was the true meaning of the transmission.

Over the centuries, the original spirit of mind-tomind transmission has been hard to sustain. In the present-day Soto school, both in Japan and in the U.S., the dharma transmission ceremony is often more like an initiation into a profession or guild. The ceremony itself is sometimes conducted by a priest with no long connection or intimate relationship with the recipient. In Japan, the recipient is typically a priest in his early twenties, whose transmission ceremony is one milestone in a professional training that will culminate in his taking charge of his own temple. In the West, the recipient is usually someone of much greater seniority. This is "professional" transmission, related to priesthood and sectarian forms.

This is not to belittle the ceremony on its own terms. The disciple is enjoined to sit in the circle with the 90 or so descendants from Buddha and copy each name, with brush and ink, onto a silk scroll, and letter in his or her own name to close the circle. Experientially, the ceremony is quite palpable and powerful, and it can include the quality of "mind-to-mind" transmission too, especially where the recipient is a senior student, and where teacher and student have had a long relationship.

To complete the picture, I should add that Soto has several ranks beyond this first dharma transmission. Some of the higher ranks seem to confer the kind of spiritual acknowledgment that Western students imagine a Buddhist master ought to have. I don't know of a Westerner who has been granted any of the higher ranks, although there may be some. But even if no one

has, it may only indicate that Japanese Soto does not yet accept Westerners as a full part of their priest system, or that Western teachers in the Soto tradition have not pressed for such inclusion.

The Rinzai Zen tradition seems to distinguish more clearly between one's advancement as a priest and

the recognition of one's inner spiritual attainments. For the latter, they use the term *Inka*, which means "seal of approval." Inka is not necessarily tied to priesthood in Rinzai, and this is an important divergence from the Soto tradition. In that regard, Rinzai seems to have stayed a bit closer to the spirit of classical Zen, which swept aside all such distinctions as priest and layman as irrelevant to "seeing into one's nature."

Dogen, on the other hand, scorned those who believed with the Vimalakirti sutra that laymen and monk are equal. In his essay "Thirty-Seven Limbs of Enlightenment" he called those who believed in such an equality "piss-sucking dogs." Some translators say "filth-eating animals"—a matter for scholarly dispute. Actually, the Vimalakirti sutra goes a bit farther, and asserts that laypeople like Vimalakirti are in some ways superior to monks. Dogen did not believe that the Vimalakirti Sutra was authentic. He would certainly not have been pleased to observe the role of contemporary Zen monks in the West, since most of them live and work much like laypeople. Besides, it appears that dharma centers who have retained the Asian forms of monk or priest are in a distinct minority anyway. We see accomplished Buddhist teachers who have never gone through a "priest" ordination, or received a "professional" priestly transmission, teaching effectively in

much the same manner as those who have. If Buddhist priests are to marry and have families and support themselves in a variety of ways, what extra benefit, other than honoring tradition, does their priestliness provide? And if Buddhist teachers whose tradition does not include priesthood can convey the dharma as effectively without priest ordination, then what is their deficit? These are important questions that ought to be widely discussed and pondered.

As to spiritual attainment, even the most accomplished of contemporary teachers are not of the stature of the Buddhist patriarchs of old, and inflating the attainments of Western teachers beyond their due does a disservice to them and to their students. At the same time, there is a whole generation of American practitioners who have 15, 20 or more years of solid meditation and teaching experience under their belts— more even than many Asian teachers. There needs to be a fair and factual acknowledgment of this. Many centers, particularly in the Vipassana tradition, do acknowledge senior practitioners for their completion of some inten-

It is the students who make the teacher, and a student should watch a teacher closely, for many years if necessary, before agreeing to follow him or her. sive, years-long curriculum, in what I would call "seniority" transmission. Of course, the three styles of transmission I have described are not mutually exclusive. But the question remains: what forms and understanding of transmission work best in the Western dharma context? Perhaps the Vipassana tradi-

tion, which teaches meditation not as a special transmission outside scripture, but as a discipline within it, could be instructive. Vipassana lacks the preoccupation with hierarchy and lineage that characterizes Vajrayana and Zen. Pomp and ceremony, brocade robes and peaked hats, secret documents and mystical symbols, do not appear to be necessary for Vipassana to provide a method of acknowledgment which neither inflates nor detracts.

When it came time for my own Soto Zen transmission ceremony, I found that I could not in good conscience complete it. I had many reasons, not all of which are relevant here, but one of them was the conviction that my primary credential as a Buddhist practitioner and teacher ought to be who I was as a person, not a certificate or even the opinion of my teachers. The Dalai Lama has told Western dharma teachers that ultimately it is the students who make the teacher, and that a student should watch a teacher closely, for many years if necessary, before agreeing to follow him or her. I like that "free market" approach. We might call it transmission by observation. It is also consistent with a modern democratic spirit, and encourages students not to make assumptions, but rely on their own good judgment.

I also like the spirit of the famous Ch'an master Joshu, who, embarking on a pilgrimage at the age of 60, said, "If I meet a three-year-old child who knows more than I, I will be a student. If I meet a hundredyear-old man who knows less, I will be a teacher." In this transactional model of teacher and student, whoever has something to teach, teaches. Whoever has something to learn, learns. Credentials are relevant only to the extent that they help the process.

In the manner of other professional disciplines, such as acupuncture, psychotherapy, university doctorates and seminary degrees, I wonder if acknowledgment of Western Buddhist teachers might be granted not by one individual in secret, but by a group of elders and peers in public. I would ideally like to see such a group be of mixed lineage too, so that representatives of Zen, Vajrayana, and Vipassana could collaborate in acknowledging the worth and experience of teachers in each of those traditions. Not only would this provide a breadth and variety of views, but it would hasten the dissolution of sectarian boundaries and the formation of a culturally grounded Western Dharma.

Some would argue that the traditional method of one-on-one transmission is necessary to preserve the quality of teachers and the teaching. There is some merit to this view, but given the numbing frequency with which Western Dharma centers have erupted into scandal around issues of teacher behavior, it is difficult to make a convincing argument for sticking just to the traditional way. Reviewing the history of these scandals one by one, one might even be tempted to conclude that the more exalted the credentials, the more outrageous the behavior. There were periods in ancient China where temple abbots were elected rather than anointed, and the historical record indicates that some of these abbots made fine spiritual leaders indeed. When we reflect that the Buddha's own spiritual community, as described in scripture, was radically egalitarian (at least within each gender; we know that nuns were subservient to monks in nearly all respects), we should wonder how much of what we assume to be ineradicably Buddhist about dharma transmission is simply an expression of Sino-Japanese culture, with its emphasis on hierarchy and ritual in all facets of society.

The monastic community of the Fifth Patriarch of Ch'an was outraged when they heard that the old master had anointed an illiterate layman and kitchen worker (Hui Neng, who became the sixth patriarch) as his successor. Instead of choosing from among monks of 30 and 40 years standing, who had been doing years of hard meditation, who knew the whole scripture backwards and forwards, the Old Teacher picked a no-account rice pounder who wasn't even a monk! (At least, that is how Hui Neng is traditionally described. His later sermons reflect the style of an educated person.)

Some monks wanted to kill Hui Neng, so the legend goes. They'd played by the rules, followed the forms, had the certificates, the rank, the position. Their place in Buddhist society was earned. So who was this upstart with his ragged long hair and greasy, blistered hands?

I think he was the spiritual ancestor of all Dharma students. He's somebody we'd all better watch out for, because chances are she's already on her way to your place. In fact, he may already be there.

The drama of Ch'an in China is archetypal. It may not be literally or historically true, but it is archetypically true. It is always happening.

The transmission ceremony was originally the outward confirmation of an inward truth, an ineffable and intimately personal event. Though the outward confirmation had specific form, it was the inward truth that counted most. Conversely, the outward ceremony has only as much worth as the inward event. If the teacher or the disciple are less than scrupulous, it does not matter how awe-inspiring are the bells, the robes, the scepter, the silk. Conversely, if the teacher and disciple are genuine, and their accord is genuine, no ceremony is needed, no announcement need ever be made. I think it is fair to say that the Buddha himself was not primarily interested in rituals, but rather in truth. How can we best express that truth in a modern Western context?

Wherever groups of people get together to search for the truth, Mara licks his lips, Manjusri sharpens his sword, Samantabhadra scrubs down the elephant, Avalokitesvara tries on costumes. It didn't just happen in China then. It's also happening in America and Europe and all over the world right now. How will we respond? *



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ENGAGED PEDAGOGY

It is rare that anyone talks

about teachers in university

settings as healers. And it is

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one suggest that teachers have

any responsibility to be self-

actualized individuals.

by bell hooks

In his work Thich Nhat Hanh always speaks of the teacher as a healer. Like [Brazilian writer Paolo] Friere, his approach to knowledge called on students to be active participants, to link awareness with practice. Whereas Friere was primarily concerned with the mind, Thich Nhat Hanh offered a way of thinking about pedagogy which emphasized wholeness, a union of mind, body, and spirit. His focus on a holistic approach to learning and spiritual practice enabled me to overcome years of socialization that had taught me to believe a classroom was diminished if students and professors regarded one another as "whole" human beings, striving not just for knowledge in books, but knowledge about how to live in the world.

During my twenty years of teaching, I have witnessed

a grave sense of dis-ease among professors (irrespective of their politics) when students want us to see them as whole human beings with complex lives and experiences rather than simply as seekers after compartmentalized bits of knowledge. When I was an undergraduate, Women's Studies was just finding a place in the academy. Those classrooms were the one space where teachers were willing to acknowledge a connection between ideas learned in university settings

and those learned in life practices. And, despite those times when students abused that freedom in the classroom by only wanting to dwell on personal experience, feminist classrooms were, on the whole, one location where I witnessed professors striving to create participatory spaces for the sharing of knowledge. Nowadays, most women's studies professors are not as committed to exploring new pedagogical strategies. Despite this shift, many students still seek to enter feminist classrooms because they continue to believe that there, more than in any other place in the academy, they will have an opportunity to experience education as the practice of freedom.

Progressive, holistic education, "engaged pedagogy" is more demanding than conventional critical or feminist pedagogy for, unlike these two teaching practices, it emphasizes well-being. That means that teachers must be actively committed to a process of self-actualization that promotes their own well-being if they are to teach in a manner that empowers students. Thich Nhat Hanh emphasized that "the practice of a healer, therapist, teacher or any helping professional should be directed toward his or herself first, because if the helper is unhappy, he or she cannot help many people." In the United States it is rare that anyone talks about teachers in university settings as healers. And it is even more rare to hear anyone suggest that teachers have any responsibility to be self-actualized individuals.

Learning about the work of intellectuals and academics primarily from nineteenth-century fiction and nonfiction during my pre-college years, I was certain that the task for those of us who chose this vocation was to be holistically questing for self-actualization. It was the actual experience of college that disrupted this image. It was there that I was made to feel as though I was terribly naive about "the profession." I learned that far from being self-actualized, the University was seen more as a haven for those who were smart in book knowledge but who might be otherwise unfit for social interaction.

Luckily, during my undergraduate years I began to make a distinction between the practice of being an intellectual/teacher and one's role as a member of the academic profession.

It was difficult to maintain fidelity to the idea of the intellectual as someone who sought to be whole—wellgrounded in a context were there was little emphasis on spiritual well-being, on care of the soul. Indeed, the objectification of the teacher within bourgeois educational structures seemed

to denigrate notions of wholeness and uphold the idea of a mind/body split, one that promotes and supports compartmentalization.

This support reinforces the dualistic separation of public and private, encouraging teachers and students to see no connection between life practices, habits of being, and the roles of professors. The idea of the intellectual questing for a union of mind, body, and spirit had been replaced with notions that being smart meant that one was inherently emotionally unstable and that the best in oneself emerged in one's academic work. This meant that whether academics were drug addicts, alcoholics, batterers, or sexual abusers, the only important aspect of our identity was whether or not our minds functioned, whether we were able to do our jobs in the classroom. The self was presumably emptied out the moment the threshold was crossed, leaving in place only an objective mind-free of experiences and biases. There was fear that the conditions of that self would interfere with the teaching process. Part of the luxury and privilege of the role of teacher/professor today is the absence of any requirement that we be self-actualized. Not surprisingly, professors who are not concerned with inner well-being are the most threatened by the demand on the part of students for liberatory education, for pedagogical processes that will aid them in their own struggle for self-actualization.

Certainly it was naive for me to imagine during high school that I would find spiritual and intellectual guidance in university settings from writers, thinkers, scholars. To have found this would have been to stumble across a rare treasure. I learned, along with other students, to consider myself fortunate if I found an interesting professor who talked in a compelling way. Most of my professors were not the slightest bit interested in enlightenment. More than anything they seemed enthralled by the exercise of power and authority within their mini-kingdom, the classroom.

This is not to say that there were not compelling, benevolent dictators, but it is true to my memory that it was rare—absolutely, astonishingly rare—to encounter professors who were deeply committed to progressive pedagogical practices. I was dismayed by this; most of my professors were not individuals whose teaching styles I wanted to emulate. My commitment to learning kept Whether academics were

My commitment to learning kept me attending classes. Yet, even so, because I did not conform—would not be an unquestioning, passive student—some professors treated me with contempt. I was slowly becoming estranged from education. Finding Friere in the midst of that estrangement was crucial to my survival as a student. His work offered both a way for me to understand the

limitations of the type of education I was receiving and to discover alternative strategies for learning and teaching. It was particularly disappointing to encounter white male professors who claimed to follow Friere's model even as their pedagogical practices were mired in structures of domination, mirroring the styles of conservative professors even as they approached subjects from a more progressive standpoint....

While I wanted teaching to be my career, I believed that personal success was intimately linked with selfactualization. My passion for this quest led me to interrogate constantly the mind/body split that was so often taken to be a given. Most professors were often deeply antagonistic toward, even scornful of, any approach to learning emerging from a philosophical standpoint emphasizing the union of mind, body, and spirit, rather than the separation of these elements. Like many of the students I now teach, I was often told by powerful academics that I was misguided to seek such a perspective in the academy. Throughout my student years I felt deep inner anguish. Memory of that pain returns as I listen to students express the concern that they will not succeed in academic professions if they want to be well, if they eschew dysfunctional behavior or participation in coercive hierarchies. These students are often fearful, as I was, that there are no spaces in the academy where the will to be self-actualized can be affirmed.

This fear is present because many professors have intensely hostile responses to the vision of liberatory education that connects the will to know with the will to become. Within professorial circles, individuals often complain bitterly that students want classes to be "encounter groups." While it is utterly unreasonable for students to expect classrooms to be therapy sessions, it is appropriate for them to hope that the knowledge received in these settings will enrich and enhance them....They rightfully expect that my colleagues and I will not offer them information without addressing the connection between what they are learning and their overall life experiences....

Any classroom that employs a holistic model of learning will also be a place where teachers grow, and are empowered by the process. That empowerment cannot happen if we refuse to be vulnerable while

> encouraging students to take risks. Professors who expect students to share confessional narratives but who are themselves unwilling to share are exercising power in a manner that could be coercive. In my classrooms, I do not expect students to take any risks that I would not take, to share in any way that I would not share. When professors bring narratives of their experiences into classroom discussions it eliminates the possibility

that we can function as all-knowing, silent interrogators. It is often productive if professors take the first risk, linking conventional narratives to academic discussions so as to show how experience can illuminate and enhance our understanding of academic material. But most professors must practice being vulnerable in the classroom, being wholly present in mind, body, and spirit.

Progressive professors working to transform the curriculum so that it does not reflect biases or reinforce systems of domination are most often the individuals willing to take the risks that engaged pedagogy requires and to make their teaching practices a site of resistance....Professors who embrace the challenge of selfactualization will be better able to create pedagogical practices that engage students, providing them with ways of knowing that enhance their capacity to live fully and deeply.

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drug addicts, alcoholics, batterers, or sexual abusers, the only important aspect of our identity was whether we were able to do our jobs in the classroom.

THE JOY OF DIVERSITY

by Rita Archibald and Rosa Zubizarreta

Rita and Rosa are both in the collective that is organizing "Healing Racism in Our Sanghas," a community learning event to be held in Berkeley on November 7, 1998. (See ad on page 8.) As part of their ongoing work, they bring the following dialogue about diversity to the readers of TW.

Rita: When we think of education, we usually think of the lessons we were taught in school: the things our teachers said, the books we read. We forget that we also learn a great deal from silence, from the things that are left unsaid.

I have learned to treasure silence, to sink into the space it opens for me. But there are two different forms of silence: one that is ripe with emptiness, the other cluttered with assumptions that are so familiar we don't even see them.

What is missing for me in the silence I experience in the Buddhist communities where I practice—are the voices that are not heard, the issues that are not addressed, the people who are not recognized, the different values, cultures, and ways of seeing that are ignored. This silence perpetuates the unspoken assumption that the voices being heard are the only ones worth listening to, that the concerns and issues being raised are the only ones of any real importance.

Rosa: So we are talking about a silence that perpetuates ignorance, that keeps us from being able to recognize and let go of our conditioning.

Rita: Yes. At retreats, people sit and sit, and even though my practice is insight meditation, there are huge areas of life we are not developing great insight about. In a way, it makes me distrust the process of meditation itself, if one can do all that work of sitting, and still not gain much insight about one's social conditioning.

Rosa: What this brings up for me is how deeply our background, our past experience, shapes our perceptions in the present, in ways we don't even realize. And that may be why sitting is not enough, why the Buddha did not only teach sitting. That is where deep listening comes in, as a neccesary complement to our sitting. When we listen to people who have had a different experience than we have had, we overcome our ignorance.

Rita: What is emphasized in the Buddhist centers where I practice is a lot of intellectual discourse—say, on the origins of Pali terms. Sometimes teachers offer us vignettes from their own personal experience to illustrate some aspect of their practice. But so often we don't know anything about the person sitting next to us in the hall, what experiences they have that we might learn from.

Rosa: While the experiences the teachers share may be very valuable on many levels, they are still conditioned by their own life experiences, as hard as it might be for people to acknowledge that.

Rita: My experience is that when I go to a retreat, I enjoy it while I'm there. I enjoy the talks, I enjoy the sitting. I experience so much, and I don't have the sense that I am missing anything; yet when I walk out, I know something is missing. Even though the retreat experience seems seamless, when I walk out, when I come home, it doesn't speak to my neighborhood where I live, in the very heart of San Francisco.

Rosa: What's missing is what you said earlier: the opportunity to confront our assumptions about each other, to reduce our ignorance by getting to know each other better, to practice ways of being that will help us get along in a world of differences.

From my perspective as a light-skinned Latina woman, I am very sensitive to how much hidden diversity is always present, and how important it is to create the opportunity to acknowledge and explore that diversity. I see our difficulties around race as conditioned by a pervasive, underlying "culture of conformity," where all of us are "closeting" some of our identities, where often there is so little space for any of us to "come out."

Rita: Last year, I went to a panel for psychotherapists on how we can bring our spirituality into our work situations. Ram Dass, who was supposed to present, could not be there due to his illness. So instead, they had other, less experienced speakers on the stage. I felt this great sense of frustration: "why can't we just *talk* to one another??" I mean, there were all these wonderful people there, and it seemed such an opportunity to learn from one another. Finally, enough of us made that suggestion to the organizers that they ended up planning a time over lunch for people who wanted to share ideas with one another. Almost everyone signed up for it. It was so rich that a number of the people continue to meet on a regular basis.

At this event, it was so obvious that people had a spiritual practice, that they were trying to integrate that spiritual practice in their own lives, and the opportunity to connect with one another allowed us to create sangha at a deeper level. When we don't have that opportunity to get to know one another more, to delve into unexplored areas of connection, we are robbing ourselves of the fullness of sangha.

Rosa: Unexplored areas of connection, and of difference...the paradox being that the more we can share our differences, the more connected we feel, because we feel a greater sense of wholeness.

Rita: And so we have the experience of breaking through the duality of connection and difference, and experiencing non-self.

Rosa: In this regard, I was very inspired by the work of Sensei Egyoku from Los Angeles Zen Center, and the presentation she gave at the last Sakyadhita conference in Claremont, California, on using the "council" process as a Dharma practice.

Rita: I'm a member of the Multicultural Sangha, where I often have the opportunity to reflect and hear others reflect on a dharma talk that we have all attended—and to see how differently we each experience the same talk. While I can sense that something is missing in the dharma talk, I can't quite "get it" in the same way as some of the people of color in the group; I don't have the same painful feelings come up. My perceptions are different, because of the personal experiences I have had or not had as a white person.

Rosa: That pain is part of the reason I was a solitary practitioner for so long! It was hard to feel at home in many of the Western Buddhist sanghas I encountered.

Rita: And that makes me sad. I know that's true for too many people. It's true for me to a certain extent, and I also know that Buddhism is my home, my path. I want it to be what I know it can be—home for many more people. It shouldn't have to be so hard....

Rosa: Maybe if teachers have not personally experienced a certain kind of suffering, they can't help us in applying Buddhism to alleviate that suffering. A Buddhist teacher is not like a Western doctor, where a specialist has "expert" training, and can therefore "cure" a patient regardless of whether the doctor has ever had a similar ailment or not. I see the Buddha much more as a "wounded healer," speaking from the ground of experience. That may be why I have always felt so inspired by teachers like the Dalai Lama and Thich Nhat Hanh. Since they have touched the depths of suffering in their own lives, they can speak deeply to my own pain....

So if a teacher has not experienced the suffering of racism, and is not open to listening and learning about the depth of pain involved, that can seriously limit their helpfulness to me. Of course, there may still be ways I can learn from them. Yet when the culture of the sangha and the way the teachings are presented perpetuate patterns of ignorance, Western Buddhist communities often become a *greater* source of suffering for people of color instead of a means of alleviating suffering.

Not only is it painful to experience white people's ignorance, but then we are told that we should just go "sit with our pain"—in other words, that you don't need to learn anything about our suffering because you are already enlightened! Give me a break! That's where people of color often head for the hills; we already have more pain than you might imagine, and we are sitting with it on a daily basis.

Rita: It's hard to understand why we resist looking at this area. The topic of diversity is raised so often, it's hard to ignore it; yet it is still such a problem when we attempt to discuss it in our Buddhist communities.

Rosa: It does seem paradoxical, that Buddhist communities would be so resistant to the process of questioning our assumptions about racial issues, when the whole epistemology of questioning is so central to Buddhism. And yet, the process is awkward, and painful, and even terrifying at times. Many "privileged white people" I know experience a great deal of pain in their own lives, despite their privilege: the pain of alienation, separation, illness, etc. They, too, want their sangha to be a place of refuge from suffering.

There is a difference, however, between the pain of cleaning a wound and the pain of allowing it to fester. I would suggest that enlightenment lies on the other side of the painful difficulties we all face by engaging in the "diversity dialogue." To whatever extent we are privileged—and most of us are privileged in one way or another—we need to face the death of our "false pride" so that we can explore the truth of our circumstances and learn the extent of our ignorance.

Rita: And wake up to our larger connection. One way to transcend duality is to fully explore it. When people are really talking about their lives, that sense of connection becomes very powerful. For example, at Spirit Rock, during the sweat lodges, when people pour out their suffering to each other, I experience such an opening of my "small self" to the larger whole: we are all different, we are all the same—each person expressing a part of my self, my larger self that includes the world.

Rosa: And there is such joy in that! The joy of feeling more connected, of overcoming the pain of separation. We all sense, on one level or another, the need for our species to learn, experientially and deeply, the truth of our interbeing. To fulfill this need, we need to re-examine the pattern of our interactions with each other. Wherever we are—in our sanghas, communities, schools, organizations—we can choose to create forms of collective experience that allow us to listen deeply and to learn from one other. And when we do so, when we honor and explore the diversity that is always present, we are creating the conditions where more people with different life experiences will feel welcome, and where all of us can learn to be at home with all beings. *****

Rita Archibald has had a variety of practices for 20 years, and currently practices with the Multicultural Sangha and the Vipassana community at Spirit Rock, in Woodacre, California. She works as an RN in psychiatry. Rosa Zubizarreta co-founded the Mindfulness, Diversity, and Social Change Sangha in Oakland, California, which practices in the tradition of Thich Nhat Hanh. She works in education as a writer and translator.

EDUCATING THE HEART

by Cassandra Sagan Bell

In my work as freelance Poet-in-Residence I have only one actual goal—whether I'm working with innercity youth, suburban third-graders, new immigrant students, or weapons violators—and that is to encourage my students to explore the infinite geography of their own hearts. If there's a tree, climb it. If there's a river, swim in it. Within your heart lies the source of poetry and the key to language acquisition. Within lies moral integrity and happiness. There is no work that needs to be done on this planet that does not begin here.

My primary teaching metaphor is "jumping over the fence." I explain that poetry comes from our imaginations, and our imaginations are infinite, bigger than the universe. We can imagine real things—a pillow, or a peanut butter sandwich with a bite missing; and we can imagine things that don't actually exist—flowers pulling up their roots and walking away, all the hungry children in the world eating a nourishing breakfast at the local playground.

I tell my students that even though there is no limit to our imaginations, most people get stuck inside a tight little fence, the fence of routine thinking. We think the same old thoughts, use the same words over and over, repeat what we heard on TV or in a movie or song, write the same sentences that have been written many times before.

The good news is, it's an imaginary fence, and you can jump over it! Thoreau called it "extra-vagance" encouraging writing that "wander[s] far...beyond the narrow limits of...daily experience." When we write poetry we jump over the fence, discovering new realms and new words. Every time we imagine something new, the universe gets a little bigger. There's a moment of inspiration, an "Aha!" as the universe expands. As one fourth grader wrote, "You can feel a little pop of imagination coming for a poem."

Day after day, year after year, class after class, I'm amazed that my students open their hearts and write truth. The children, most of whom have watched several hours of television a day since they were preverbal, are willing to take the leap within and discover something surprising about themselves. No TV characters or cartoon images are allowed here; that's someone else's idea, strictly "inside the fence." I tell them to close their eyes and write whatever they see. It is amazing what we can see when we slow down, breathe, and close our eyes.

John was one of those bright and angry third-grade boys who only wrote gory, gross, brutal poems. Worms, mortal wounds, gruesome crashes. It was our ninth session and we were taking an imaginary journey down to the bottom of our hearts and describing what we saw. Before John could pick up his pencil, I squatted down next to him, and whispered, "You know how everything you write is bloody and disgusting and violent?"

He nodded, smiling in agreement.

"Well, what would you call it when someone always thinks the same thoughts and writes the same things, using the same words over and over again?"

His face fell in horror. "That's the fence!" he gasped.

"Yeah, even if your fence is made out of really cool stealth bombers, it's still a fence. Just this once, try jumping over the fence and see what else you can find."

Originally his poem was called "A Journey to a Stone Cold Heart," but he scribbled out "Stone Cold" before he turned it in.

A JOURNEY TO A HEART

My journey to my heart was surprising. Instead of seeing peace and love I saw war everywhere. This heart of mine was pleading for help.

I planted a rose in the middle of the battlefield. Everybody was still for a moment. Then came closer and hugged politely. In a moment everybody left in peace.

My heart gave me a magic gold ring for whenever I'm in a jam.

Then we departed sadly.

Something inside him softened and opened. Over the next two years in which I knew him, he wrote consistently thoughtful, melancholy poetry. He hugged me often. And I never heard him try to get a laugh out of his classmates by calling out gross jokes again.

Poetry allows young children to express the complex intelligence inherent in all beings. Of this phenomenon I've sometimes said, "It's like your dog is talking to you." April, a second-grader wrote:

WILD THINGS LIVE INSIDE OF ME

Inside of me cats of the wild rule. They look like cats with smoke running behind them. They sound like horses running with the wind making me be wild whatever I do. They live in my heart and tear bad feelings out of me.

It makes my temper go up when they tear my kindness away.

Entering what I call "the heart of language" helps new immigrant students find their own authentic voice in English. Alla, from Kirghizstan, has lived in Washington state for a year and a half. She wrote the following poem in a Limited English Proficiency class. She was able to express, in the last stanza of her poem, the great mystery of language itself:

My heart is not an animal My heart is not a bird My heart is not an insect I'm sorry that I wrote this poem My heart is nothing of these words.

Educating the heart takes on whole new dimensions when working with juvenile offenders. Chris had been passed from foster home to foster home. He was barely able to spell, often leaning over to ask how to write simple words like "then" or "before," and he had been told repeatedly that he was stupid. At the end of one of our sessions he handed me this poem:

DARK WITHOUT A FACE

I was born dark without a face I was born dark without a place No spirit or man has felt like I have No woman or god has bled like I have I slept upon a bed of nails with little bits of noise dazzling my head I had demons in my veins drawing my blood drawing from me my peace refilling me with disease But how can this be? I had dreams I held so dear I had days I imagined that would be like heaven and hell would leave me Then I could touch the stars then stick my face in the sun without rays then jump off the moon then fall through the clouds, and hit the earth without a cut or a bruise But how could this be this dream, it wasn't what I pictured it to be It's just what I began with— Dark without a face, dark with no place

Chris dreamed of becoming a writer, but was convinced that he didn't have what it takes. During the course of our workshop, his confidence swelled. He would linger after class—in the meeting room at Juvenile Hall!—and talk about writing, asking me insightful questions about my own process and experience. He said he was willing to do *anything* to be a writer, even quit smoking pot and stay in school.

But most of the gang members and violent offenders I work with don't come to class with dreams of poetry dancing in their heads. They start out stubborn, resistant, verbally abusive, and use their writing time to glorify violence and catalogue as many obscene words as possible.

That's why I'm always amazed when, over the weeks, a subtle shift begins to occur. This spring I spent 12 Friday mornings at the Clark County School Re-entry Program with a group of teenagers who have been expelled from public schools for weapons violations. There were a dozen students, two classroom teachers, a county deputy, a social worker, and I in a square, white room with windows that didn't open. On the fifth Friday, a tall, handsome boy who was a selfproclaimed leader began to express in writing his deepest feelings and fears, then read triumphantly to the group. It was contagious. The masks began to unpeel, and pretty soon everyone was writing their hearts out.

LOST

In my heart all I see is a black void. In my heart I don't know how to feel anymore. In my heart the direction is lost. In my heart the trust is gone. In my heart I just don't care anymore. In my heart I wish I could learn to love. In my heart. —Ion

Why do these troubled youths open up with me? I think it helps that I share my own process, make myself vulnerable. Often, I notice their attitude begins to shift the first time I sing one of my own songs in class, as I did that particular Friday morning.

I listen to whatever they have to say without backing away, even when they are purposefully trying to offend me. I understand that their ugly words rise from buried pain, and I try to be present with them, to witness their suffering. I may not be free of internal negative judgment regarding certain content, but I invariably find something I can honestly praise.

Kids need us to really listen to them, and empowering praise is a crucial element. In the face of warm fuzzy self-esteem programs that put generic *Wow!* or *Terrific!* stickers on everything a child produces, to truly praise becomes a creative act.

If I read Jon's poem "Lost" and say "That's an excellent poem," he probably won't believe me. He'll think I'm just blabbing, that I would say the same thing to anyone. Or he might stop reaching out and exploring in his writing, become stranded in his own indifference. Having already achieved "excellence," he might crank out poem after poem about apathy, repeating the same phrases.

What I want to do is praise something very specific, so that my feedback is useful to Jon. I might begin by telling him that his poem makes me feel sad. That might surprise him. He might think of it as angry or dispassionate. I might praise the risk he took to expose himself so honestly. I will definitely point out that to me his poem is about hope. Even though it is a melancholy poem, his wish for learning how to love is a hinge upon which the entire poem opens, and through which love enters. His poem becomes the act itself, the granting of his wish.

Many of the kids write about their hearts being empty, hollow, void, containing nothing. I point out that this is not inherently bad. Emptiness is spacious. Emptiness is possibility. Emptiness isn't all cluttered up. Once I had a young girl who took the imaginary journey to the bottom of her heart and found that someone had left piles of junk and garbage all over the place. She spent the entire poem cleaning up the mess.

I tell them that I believe in their innate creative intelligence. When they're angry, sad, overwhelmed, lonely, or confused, they can write and it can help them get in touch with their feelings, might even reveal a path of transformation, might even *be* the path.

A lot of their poems are extremely painful. Suffering is the first noble truth. To accept this truth, to write about what is real inside of you, the difficult as well as the beautiful, is the first step toward freedom from suffering. There is nothing shameful or wrong with suffering; it is a basic part of the human condition, despite the illusion



perpetuated by the media that we're supposed to be perfectly happy every moment. When you deny your pain, you deny your beauty and your strength as well. Intuitively, children understand that writing about even the most agonizing truth can be an act of hope.

DARKNESS IS WHERE I LIVE

Darkness is where I live, I can't see what is crowding me. I hear things close to me and I swing 'cause I'm scared, but nothing's there. That is why I'm scared. People reach out to help, "Grab my hand," I hear, but I can't find it in the dark. It's like I'm alone in a crowded room. I'm crowded with emptiness and I'm crowded with darkness. "All I want is one candle, that's all," I can hear myself. Even if someone can get me that candle, I have no matches, and I can't even see, not even the light in myself, because I am afraid to look. And I am afraid to show my light because if this darkness faded then people would see me. All I hear is the candle hit the ground, dropped on purposewhy even take the chance to light it? People might see me. -James

A moment of healing comes when we realize that the heartbreak we feel is not only our own personal grief, loss, and despair, but it is *the broken heart of the whole world*. The suffering of every abandoned child, every mother who has lost a baby, every lover who has been forsaken, every lonely youth, every captive who has yearned for freedom, every father who has watched his child starve, all of these are right there inside of our own heart. To deny this gaping wound only creates more suffering. It is our task to enter the broken-hearted world with kindness, and through our acceptance of life-as-it-really-is, we and others are healed. We must move forward into our lives with our open, broken hearts. *****

Cassandra Sagan Bell is a poet-teacher and songwriter who lives in Vancouver, Washington, and practices vipassana.

TEACHING MEDITATION TO YOUNG PEOPLE

by Norman Fischer

Norman Fischer is a poet, a credentialed high school teacher, and a Zen priest, and currently serves as co-Abbot of San Francisco Zen Center. He and his wife Kathie, the parents of two grown sons, live in Muir Beach, California. The following article is an edited excerpt from Norman's forthcoming book, tentatively titled Taking Our Places: Mentoring Young People Coming of Age, to be published by Broadway Books in 2000. We are grateful to author and publisher for permission to print this piece.

I have taught meditation to young people as a high school classroom teacher, as a poet in the schools, in childcare centers, and at retreats for youngsters at Green Gulch Farm and San Francisco Zen Center, and these are some of the practices I have found helpful.

I. Meditation for preschoolers and elementary school children—

Since small children are not naturally interested in sitting still, I use alternative forms of meditation for them. The one that works best, that the children consistently respond to positively, is the bell meditation. This is a good one because it trains the children to really be quiet and listen; also I do it in the form of a kind of mysterious game, which kids like a lot.

First of all you have to get hold of a meditation bell with a very good sound, a sound that is pleasing and clear, that will cut through other ambient sounds, and will last a long time, with good reverberations. It need not be enormously loud or large. Bells like these are available through meditation supply catalogs, and are worth the trouble to find; they can be useful tools for any meditation practice. The practice for youngsters goes like this: you explain to the children that you are going to strike the bell and you want them to listen very carefully to the sound. You want them to find the moment when the sound of the bell dissolves into silence, the moment when the slow dwindling of the sound turns into non-sound. This, of course, is not an easy thing to do; it requires that you listen very carefully, without thinking about anything else. If you think about something else you might miss it. After explaining this, you ask the children to sit down and be still while the bell sounds. And you explain to them that as soon as the sound is completely gone, just in that moment, they are to stand up. Remember-you tell them-it's no good to stand up too soon. The first person who stands up is not the winner. You don't stand up until *all* the sound is *completely* gone. All right then: ready... set.... Then you strike the bell very carefully and dramatically and watch what happens. Usually you can strike the bell five or six times before the children get tired of it. You can, after you are finished, talk to them about how we all need a rest sometimes, how we all need to be with ourselves and feel our quiet feelings, and that the sound of the bell can help us to find this kind of quiet for a few moments.

Another meditation technique I've used successfully with young children is a kind of meditation on posture.

As soon as the sound is completely gone, just in that moment, they are to stand up. Remember—you tell them—it's no good to stand up too soon.

First, in a standing posture, find your breath in your belly, in and out. Then lift your arm up in the air very slowly and carefully, and stretch it up as far as it will go, a little bit more with each exhalation. Now with your arm up in the air pay close attention to your breathing, and see how raising your arm up has changed your breathing. Then—still paying close attention—put the arm down. It's more fun if you vary the postures: first the arm, then lying down on the floor on the back and lifting a leg, then lying on the stomach and lifting the head up. With youngsters a little bit goes a long way. Just a few moments of such exercises can be very restful for everyone and can completely change the atmosphere in a play group or elementary school classroom.

II. Meditation in middle or high school classrooms-

Working with middle school and high school students is tricky. Adolescents have, on the whole, a greater ability to concentrate than elementary school or preschool children, but this varies quite a bit from group to group and individual to individual, so you never quite know what to expect. There is also the overriding issue of attitude. Attitude is what it is all about with young people, and there is often not much control over it. Students who are capable of concentrating may or may not do so, depending on what kind of mood they're in. The main thing is *your* attitude: that you yourself are confident in what you are presenting, that you are clear that meditation is relaxing and useful and possible, and that you yourself want to do it for yourself (which is to say, you are not offering them meditation because *you* know it is good for *them*). The language of stress is very useful here: adolescents feel stress, perhaps especially so. To present meditation as a way of coping with stress will make sense to most students.

In a classroom situation, you have a captive audience. Not everyone present wants to be present in the room, let alone as present as you can get with meditation. And you have a limited amount of time. So it is important not to expect too much. Here are some of the things I have done; they have all worked fairly well.

A few moments of meditation-

This can be effective in the middle of classroom chaos, exactly when you think it'll never work. In my classroom I always paid close attention to the atmosphere in the room: how much talking is there, how much foot- and chair-scraping, coughing, moving around? If the distraction level rises too much, everyone starts to feel jagged, and this is when I'd say, "All right, let's stop everything. Put your hands on the desk, sit up

straight and just breathe. I need a two-minute break. It's getting too nervous and noisy in here." There would be some groans, but in a moment or two, everyone would be doing it and feeling the better for it. I'd stand in front of the classroom and breathe myself, but also

watch the students. If someone wasn't doing the practice or was disturbing someone else I'd be right there, calling out his or her name and saying something like, "It's all right to be quiet, you don't need to be uncomfortable with it, it's OK to relax and take a break," and in that way situating my comment from inside the student rather than from outside, policing him or her.

A moment of meditation is also helpful before answering a question or doing a thoughtful task, especially writing. In a classroom you are dealing with a very artificial situation in which a large number of young people who are by nature jumpy and enthusiastic are being asked to sit quietly, pay attention, and carry out tasks they did not choose and may not understand or desire. Young people are very focused on autonomy, and because of this it is fairly normal for there to be an immediate negative reaction to almost any assignment, even if it is something they actually like. Asking students to take a moment out and focus the mind before beginning a task gives them a few moments to relieve themselves of these negative feelings. Young people especially need to check in with themselves from time to time, to freely think their own thoughts without being directed by someone else. If some students react to this focusing moment with boredom I gently point out that they are now being offered free time to be with their own minds. There is no such thing as "it's boring"; there is only "I'm boring."

Stress reduction meditation

In fact it is very stressful to be a young person; it has always been this way and it may very well be worse now than ever. One of the salient facts about being a teenager is that one is quite preoccupied, often unconsciously, with the future. Young people are now more aware of all sorts of difficulties ahead, and are less likely than young people were in previous generations to look forward to a bright and secure future. In addition, young people are subject to all the same life pressures as adults. They also have their beepers and appointment books, their deadlines and romantic entanglements. They have, in addition, enormous peer pressure, which is daunting, and a constant sense of being off balance because they are never sure of exactly who they are and how they are supposed to be.

I have found then that high school students are very receptive to the idea of meditation as stress reduction. I would tell them: First sit up straight and put your hands

One of the salient facts about being a teenager is that one is quite preoccupied, often unconsciously, with the future. on the desk and your feet flat on the floor. Close your eyes. Begin to breathe calmly into the belly, just your ordinary breath. Now follow each breath in and out, paying attention to the belly as it gently rises and falls. After a while, begin to direct the breath to parts of the

body. To the head, shoulders, neck, chest, legs, hands, feet. (And I would talk them through this as we meditated: guided meditation like this is very helpful to keep the meditators focused.) As you exhale into the various body parts, feel a quiet sigh, almost but not quite audible, and with that sigh release all stress and tension in that body part. Most of our mental and emotional stress lodges in the body, and releasing it in the body can release it in the mind as well. If you experience thoughts or emotions associated with a particular body part, just allow yourself to be aware of those thoughts or emotions, but don't dwell there; just go on to the next body part.

Most of the time students enjoy this stress reduction meditation, and come out of it refreshed and relaxed. You can then make the point that a close awareness of stress can reduce it. We may feel like we need to add something to reduce stress, like alcohol or music or something else, but most of the time these things only cover the stress, allowing it to increase while we are temporarily tranquilizing ourselves.

Listening to sound

This technique works very nicely because it is so immediate and surprising. Students go through the school day with a tremendous amount of ambient sound that is quite distracting; mostly they don't notice it. When you draw their attention to it, and they actually begin to *listen* to the sound of the wheezy heater in the room, the clomping steps of students rushing along the hallways, horns and engines of the traffic outside, it is fairly astonishing. You ask the students to harmonize (this is a good word) the sounds they hear with the breathing in their bellies, so that breathing and sound are one seamless awareness. Ask them to notice the feeling of "I like" or "I don't like" the sound, and to let go of that as much as they can and just let the sound be as it is, without liking it or not liking it. Notice how liking it or not liking it (especially not liking it) are not as peaceful as just listening and breathing. Can this experience be applied to other situations in your day or in your life?

Investigating the self

I usually begin this meditation with a short discussion centered around the question "what is the self?" or "who am I really?" a subject of interest to young peo-

ple. Students suggest many things here: I am my body, my thoughts, my feelings; I am my friends, my likes and dislikes, my perceptions, my dreams, my past, my future.

Is there a self beyond all of these aspects or parts? The meditation practice is a way to investigate what the self might be right now. What actually does arise in our experience as *me*? It's as if *me* is a process going on all

the time, day in and day out, but we are not paying any attention to it so we don't have a very good sense of who me actually is! So let's take a look. Begin as usual with good posture (hands on desk, feet flat on floor), closing the eyes and establishing awareness of the breath in the belly. Once awareness of breathing is established, then we turn to me, to thoughts, sensations, and feelings that arise. It is important, on the one hand, not to be sleepy or spacey, and, on the other hand, not to look too hard. You need to look out of the corner of your eye: keep your focus on the breath, but be alert to what arises; just let what wants to come come, but don't pursue it. Watch the flow of thoughts and emotions as they arise and pass away. If you like some and dislike others, note that but try to let go and just remain present. Practice this way until the bell rings. Usually this practice can go on for ten to twenty minutes, though twenty is a long time. When it is over, students can write in their notebooks for five or six minutes (not trying to reproduce or record what they've experienced, but write what they feel or want to say right now, spontaneously), or they can talk with a partner or partners about their impressions. Point out to them that unlike most school or other tasks, there is no standard here and no desired result.

I do walking meditation most of the time I walk, which makes all the transition times during the day (walking from or to the car, walking to the bathroom, walking to the copy machine) opportunities for a little peaceful awareness.

Walking meditation

This is an important form of meditation for a number of reasons. First, when you are doing more than one sitting period, it's good to insert walking meditation between sitting periods. Second, it's good for people who have a hard time sitting still (or for people who are in difficult emotional states). Third, it's an easy meditation to do on a short break or in a public place where sitting meditation might seem odd. And finally, it's a very pleasant and easy way to meditate.

Here's a simple way to do it: stand with aware upright posture, not stiff but straight. Clasp the hands in front of you or behind you. Lower the eyes so that you're looking ahead and a little downward, aware only of what's just in front of you; do not look from side to side. Begin to walk with normal steps, but a little more slowly than usual. Gently notice your breathing in your belly. Notice also (after you have established the breathing awareness) the feeling of your foot touching the

> ground: let it touch gently and carefully and with appreciation, as though the ground were a friend of yours coming up kindly to meet your foot. Begin to coordinate your steps with your breathing: inbreath—one step, two steps; outbreath—one step, two steps (or however many steps you take). Just keep walking that way, paying attention to your breath and your steps, seeing what's in front of

you but not getting involved much with it.

The practice can also be done individually any time. If you walk a bit faster, a bit closer to an ordinary pace, you can do walking meditation anywhere anytime. In fact, I do it most of the time I walk, which makes all the transition times during the day (walking from or to the car, walking to the bathroom, walking to the copy machine) opportunities for a little peaceful awareness. It was one of the things that I did always when I taught school.

I would say that through meditation practice we learn to have a calmness and balance in our life that enables us to be honest with our emotions and needs, but not to be limited and trapped by them. It allows us to act out of our deepest, most empowered, and accurate selves. Meditation is nothing more or less than the activity of a mind and heart that is capable of wisdom and compassion, that can see self-interest and the limitations of self-interest and go beyond it. \clubsuit

BEGINNER'S MIND, BOOT CAMP MIND

by David Chura

It is the last place I would have expected to find myself. Yet, each morning I stand at the head of a classroom as a group of teenage male cadets march into my room. The tattoo of highly polished black boots marking time takes the place of a school bell. After a word of encouragement from the cadet leader to do their best, which is acknowledged with a shouted "Yes, Sir," they fall out around the large table that is our work space. My students greet me with a crisp, "Good Morning, Sir." It is another school day at the Youth Corps, a recently established boot camp for youthful offenders between the ages of 16 and 23 at the Westchester County Jail in Valhalla, New York. It is another school day, and once again I ask myself, "What am I doing here?"

After all, I still have the folder, almost 30 years later, that documents my own personal protest to the Vietnam war. There is my awkwardly worded application for conscientious objector status and the character references I gathered from high school teachers and old family friends attesting to the sincerity of my feelings "against all war

and violence." And, more recently, there is my Buddhist practice and its respect for "All living beings...small or great, visible or invisible, near or far, born or to be born" (Metta Sutta). My morning perch upon my meditation cushion calls all that I do, and think, into question, knowing, as the Dhammapada says, "We are what

we think ... With our thoughts we make the world."

That's why I initially said, "No, thanks" when asked to teach in the proposed boot camp. I was already teaching in the county jail school program, and that was disheartening enough. There I worked with adolescents who had finally succumbed to one of the "risks"—crime and its consequences—that educators worry about. It was a world where young men shuffled around all day in purposely ill-fitting "browns" and slippers (mockingly called "county Nikes" by the inmates), where a toothbrush could be sharpened to a knife, where mattresses routinely were set on fire or toilets stopped up to overflowing to break up the monotony of 12-hour lockups, where books couldn't leave the classroom because of their weapon potential, and where a piece of butterscotch candy was contraband.

Still, at the urging of my principal at the jail I reluctantly visited the boot camp program on which the county would model its own program. There I received the first of what would be many surprises. The director of this boot camp, a former colonel in the armed services, in full camouflage, spoke passionately about the need to love and accept and care for his young charges with a warmth and intensity I rarely saw in some of my co-teachers. I decided to give it a try.

Yet, I can't escape the fact that this is a military-type program I'm involved in. Heads are shaved. Khaki uniforms are pressed daily by the cadets' own hands. Each young man sports a gold chevron on his lapels indicating the rank he has earned: cadet, cadet first class, senior cadet. And line order, that outward sign of success or failure, rules their lives. Where you stand in that line decides when you eat, speak, shower, use the bathroom.

It is all here, all the things my friends and I did a different kind of marching against in the 1960s. Militarism in all its international, national, and local guises, competition, regimentation, all the things that caused us to shout in one way or another "Hell, No!" in voices as loud and articulate as these cadets' "Yes, Sir."

Some people might say that my ethical vision has become as blurry as my middle-aged sight. Yet these 15 young men, mostly African American and Latino with a

They stand at attention as though "attention must be paid."... They finally understand that their bodies are not weapons they must keep cocked for a fight. few Caucasians, all veterans of the criminal justice system, all volunteers in the Youth Corps, are not being trained for combat. No. Quite the opposite. They have seen enough of that, of fighting and death in their neighborhoods, their schools, their living rooms at home. Many of my students' arms and necks bear the fleshy, lumpy

tattoos of knife wounds unattended to but healed. No, they are not being trained for combat. Instead, they are being trained to protect lives—their own, their families', their friends'—against the senseless violence so devastating to their generation. In all aspects of the program—school, individual and group counseling, job preparation, physical training—techniques of conflict resolution, anger and stress management, and communication are taught and practiced, drilled the way their marching is drilled.

In many correctional facilities the strident drillsergeant model (what criminal justice professionals call "high impact" and what I call "scream in your face") is more common. This approach aims to tear down the individual personality in the service of the greater society, to promote unthinking allegiance to authority. However, the Youth Corps cadet is encouraged to question authority in a positive way, and taught how to do that in a way that gets results, at least results a little more positive than he is used to: being slammed to the sidewalk or arrested for "resisting arrest." And he is helped to discover, and then value above all else, his personal strengths and talents. Initially this discovery process can be as difficult as the most challenging math problem. For example, when I ask the cadets to make a list of their strengths and weaknesses, most of them easily come up with a list of their "bad" points that's as long as their rap sheet, whereas the "good" list is sadly short, and what positives they do have are often suggested by me. After all, these young men are more accustomed to hearing what is "wrong" with them than what is "right." They have run the gauntlet all their lives, often starting with physical and verbal abuse by parents and relatives, the dismissive (at best) attitude of school systems, the condemnation of the judicial system. In the county jail, for example, I've heard these incarcerated young men referred to as "human garbage" by the very people responsible for "reforming" them. However, once the cadet begins that arduous and sometimes scary process of discovery, he is encouraged to continue it not only while he is still in the Youth Corps but also upon his release, where he will have the ongoing support of his mentor (a volunteer from his community), probation officer, employment counselor, and his fellow graduates. He is urged to explore ways to use those unique talents for the good of his family, his friends, and his community.

And as I watch the cadets parade in perfect synchronized step, with head, shoulders, and arms aligned ("Watch those wobbling heads," the correctional officer turned cadet leader shouts), I can look beyond the mere *form* of all this marching and saluting and boot polishing. I have gradually realized that for most of these young men this is the first time that their minds and bodies are in harmony. There is none of the slouched posturing—arms defensively folded in front of their chests, rage-filled eyes glaring out—seen on music videos, magazines, and CD covers, reflective of the gangsta rap and thug culture they posed behind on the streets, a pose I still see daily among their peers in the less protected parts of the jail. Instead, they stand at attention as though "attention must be paid." When

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they move, they move with a new-found grace and dignity. It is as though they finally understand that their bodies are not weapons they must keep cocked for a fight. These cadets are beginning to live comfortably in their bodies. They are discovering little by little that their bodies are worth nourishing, exercising, resting, cleaning, respecting, protecting. And throughout my day, they remind me—with the resounding clatter of their boots (poor cousin, perhaps, to Thich Nhat Hanh's bell of mindfulness but a bell nevertheless) and their ramrod stance of attention—to come back to *my* body, right now in this present moment, to feel my step, my breath, to know that I am standing on this earth with them.

Obviously, young men should not have to go to prison to learn these things. All children should receive love and respect, learn structure and discipline from their families, their neighborhoods, their communities. We should invest in those things that strengthen the basic training of family and community life instead of building more prisons. But until that happens, I want to feel like a "new boot" myself each morning, both on my zafu and in my classroom. I want to stand at attention, to pay attention to myself, to this corps of courageous young men, and to this world we share, filled with contradictions. *****

David Chura lives in Connecticut. A writer and Vipassana student, he has worked as a counselor and teacher with "at risk" adolescents for the past 25 years.



HIDDEN BUDDHA

by Patrick McMahon

The school bell rings and the kids stream in from the playground, sweaty, noisy, wiggly. I stand at the door watching them jostle for their places. Looking down the double row of faces—skins brown and black and pink, eyes blue and hazel and chocolate, hair flaxen and kinky, boys and girls, mad, sad, and glad—I have a vision of 32 Buddhas looking back at me. —Personal Journal, May, 1994

It's been four years since I took leave of my 32 thirdgrade Buddhas, but their faces are as clear as if just last week they were fidgeting before me. The telescope of memory brings them into sharp focus, along with a clarity I seemed then to have had about my vocation: first of all that my students *were* indeed Buddhas, radiant with energy and intelligence; second that as their teacher I was unquestionably in the Buddhafield of our mutual awakening; and finally that I was on the front lines of social change. "Education as a field of engaged

Buddhism" was a phrase coined by the Educators' Sangha, a field that was recognized as such by the BPF in its feature on education in the Spring 1991 issue of *Turning Wheel*, and in the education column it carried for the three years following.

With TW returning once more

to the theme, I'm provoked to articulate what I've come to feel in the last four years: that education is a broader field than I ever imagined. I left public-school teaching in large part because I couldn't function any longer in an environment that systematically obscured the light of my 32 Buddhas as they passed from playground to classroom. For one thing, in those numbers and within those cramped confines, their wiggle and noise-and with them the principal conditions for their development-had to be suppressed in the interests of instruction. For another, with California state funding growing stingier year by year, the provision for materials of all kinds-music, art, science, athletics-had dwindled to nearly nothing. There seemed to be only so much space, physically and mentally, that I could keep open for my students, and I began to see myself more as a prison warden than an educator. Moreover, I felt in my own soul the deprivation, and found myself longing for a more abundant environment, for the texture and heft of a broader range of materials. In the midst of the classroom hubbub I began to daydream about gardens.

Such is the power of fantasy that I now find myself a professional landscaper in a tangible garden building tangible stone walls. The contrast between my two vocations couldn't be greater. Rather than the clamor of the classroom I listen to the chatter of squirrels, the squawking of blue jays, and the tapping of my helper's hammer as he chinks up the gaps between our stones. Yet, though I enjoy the relative serenity of my present environment, as I work I find myself sometimes missing those third graders. With Michael, my helper, I may have found their reincarnation, condensed from 32 into one. For I, with 30 years of off-and-on experience in this field, have something to teach, and Michael, 20 years old and new to manual labor, has much to learn: about digging holes, moving soil, grappling with weight; about waking early enough to get to work on time; about pacing himself so he doesn't burn out by noon, while still keeping the pace up so he doesn't lag; about sometimes asking questions when he's stuck, and at other times figuring things out for himself. In the process he's learning respect for the work of the hands, for himself as a manual laborer, and for the ancient tradition of stacking stone. If that weren't enough education, he's at the same time also finding his way in life, stepping out from the security of his parents' home to

Rather than the clamor of the classroom I listen to the chatter of squirrels and the tapping of my helper's hammer. the insecurity of independence, from formal education (he's taking a leave of absence from college) into the non-academic wilds of the intellectual landscape. Over lunch he tells me about his latest forays, into Walden, The Scarlet Letter, and The Electric Kool-aid Acid Test. One day he brings me

his portfolio of drawings: intricate, surrealistic pieces, influenced by Salvador Dali, M.C. Escher, R. Crumb and whoever else can teach him to see. I sense him putting the pieces of his world together, much as we put these walls together: stone by stone, testing for solidity, rebuilding if necessary, searching for the right stone, the right piece of information, to fill in the gaps.

As I work on my section of wall I hear him at his, and feel a teacher's satisfaction in having set up a space in which my student can learn—the very space I found so scarce in the classroom. Soon I'll check in to see how he's doing, but for now I'm preoccupied with my own work. This afternoon the wall has taken a bend around a bank, bringing into the open a small wooden Buddha figure that had been all but lost in the overgrowth of bamboo, ivy, oak and plum. Who knows how long he's been hidden? Decades perhaps, judging from the state of his coiffure, decayed down to the eyebrows by weather and termites. As stone by stone I build up to his level, I sense a rough altar taking shape. Whether that's a good thing or not I can't say. Revealing Buddha nature or building a monument? I just keep on putting one stone atop another, uncertain as yet how they'll all come together.

Having reached the top course of the wall, I step back

for a broader view. Something's not quite right. There the Buddha sits, in the play of light and shadow, a Chinese stone lantern behind. Ah—*that's* the source of the problem. With time and erosion the lantern has tilted to the point that the top-most piece, far from being a protective canopy, threatens to slide off its pedestal and hit the Buddha in his already vulnerable head. I struggle to get the lantern into plumb, but somehow can't. Even though in the course of this job I've stacked up some

dozen tons of rock, arranging four pieces of prefabricated concrete eludes me.

In the midst of my frustration I remember I'm not alone here. I call Michael over to lend me his artist's eye as we shift and tilt the pieces together. Addressing ourselves to the task at hand, we forget who's boss and who's not, and in short order have the lantern straight. standing Michael stands back and gives a critical look. "That's not how it goes," he says, pointing out how, in our focus on verticalitv, we'd stacked the pieces out of sequence. We start over again. By the time we get it right the sun is coming in through the trees at the angle that says it's



this Buddha, or what he has to do with the education of all beings, I'd rather not say much: only as much, for example, as that his school is based on the one-to-one relationship of teacher and student, employer and employee, craftsperson and apprentice; that his laboring world provides vast space and ample materials for the training of craft and caring. I'd rather not tell you: I'd rather invite you to come outside and see for vourself! Better vet, lend a hand: over there's a pile of soil that needs moving. And that stone looks like it's about to tumble out of place. Chink it up, or replace it

entirely-your call.

So if you were to

ask me now what it is

that's revealed with

time to quit. Before bunching up tools we stop for some tea, and as we rest and talk I note Michael's eyes, how wide and clear they are, open as a child's, but with the additional training of art, of reading, of thought. My own eyes are no doubt a bit over-trained, having inevitably narrowed in the course of business to the precise fit of stone on stone, angle to angle, dollar and cents to hours, tonnage to square footage. I need his student's freshness as much as he needs my teacher's critique. Together we have a chance to see a little better who we are and what we are doing, to find ourselves in material acts: the passing of a stone from hand to hand, perhaps. We're in this together, bringing each other out, *educing*, in the root sense of education, that which is without some effort otherwise hidden.

We make arrangements for the next day and Michael

Pencil drawing by Michael Gong

Meanwhile let's not fool ourselves that we're building any monuments here. Even as we work to bring him out into the sun, the Buddha fades into the shadows of the garden. As always he thwarts all attempts to set him up on an altar, to curricularize the Teaching. With what instruction, then, does he leave us, whether we're building walls or educating students—or both? Speaking for myself, my vocation is not as clear as it once was. I have no choice but to follow the Old Teacher into the bamboo and ivy. Disappearing, he opens the Way. **\$**

heads home. I linger, walking the site, looking for stray

tools, as I once walked my classroom straightening up after

the students had left for the day. I look once more to the Buddha. After our work today he's a little more revealed—

not to our minds only, but to our hearts and hands as well. "What did you learn today in school?" my mother used to

ask me. "What did you teach in school today?" my wife

would later ask. I never liked the questions, diminishing as

they did the totality of the experience. You had to be there.

Patrick McMahon wrote the Education Column for TW from 1991 to 1994. An essay of his was recently published in Teaching for Social Justice, published by Teachers College Press.
Michael Gong is a freelance artist and currently works as a

landscape gardener.

Buddhism and Ecology: The Interconnection of Dharma and Deeds Edited by Mary Evelyn Tucker and Duncan Ryuken Williams Harvard Center for the Study of World Religions, 1998, 479 pages, \$19.95, paper.

Reviewed by Lewis Woods

If, as W.E.B. Dubois claimed, the problem of the twentieth century has been the problem of the color line, then the problem of the twenty-first century will be the problem of the environment. Environmental deterioration arises in dependence on our social problems, and in turn aggravates them; environmental collapse has the power to render social problems moot. Thus, ecology is emerging as the proving ground where the world's religions demonstrate their relevance "beyond the temple gates."

Buddhism and Ecology represents the promising beginning of scholarly efforts to evaluate Buddhist ecology and environmental practice. The authors in $B \oslash E$ critique the philosophical contributions of Buddhism to environmental ethics, Buddhist efforts to engage environmental concerns in concert with traditional practice, and the claims of "green Buddhism." The essays cover a wide range of issues, including nuclear ecology, the development of rural ecological communities, and animal rights. Environmental justice/racism concerns are, however, noticeably absent. The essays also cover a diversity of Buddhist traditions and thoughtfully present the thinking of contemporary Buddhist ecologists such as Buddhadasa Bikkhu, Phra Prayudh, Gary Snyder, and Joanna Macy, as well as the teachings of the historical figures Kukai and Dogen.

As the interconnection of dharma and deeds is the soul of engaged Buddhism, this review will focus on those areas of $B \oslash E$ that bear most directly on Buddhist ecology in practice. Stephanie Kaza, Ruben Habito, and Kenneth Kraft address the tension between the demands of traditional dharma practice and the call of environmental work. Former BPF board member and Turning Wheel columnist Stephanie Kaza regards the prioritizing of meditation over environmental work as a manifestation of the blameworthy subordination of nature to culture, and finds no support for such subordination in Buddhist teachings. She seems to ignore, however, just those elements in Buddhism, discussed elsewhere in this book, which value nature not in itself, but for its role in the process of awakening, seeing it as subordinate to the direct cultivation of the mind. Furthermore, as it is only through study, reflection, and criticism that we can discern how to live ecologically, the very field of ecology itself attests to the ethical priority of culture. Thus, the tension cannot be resolved so easily.

Habito acknowledges a tendency on the part of many Zen students towards self-preoccupation in the early stages of practice, but argues that, while this inwardness may temporarily blind one to the need for environmental work, mature Zen practice necessarily leads to action in the world. Even if this were true, it would obscure the responsibility Buddhist teachers and practitioners have for the culture they create within their centers. (On this point, see the essay on ecological culture by Stephanie Kaza.) Where social responsibility is treated as optional—as peripheral to the practice of awakening—the individualistic forces of our society easily overwhelm it.

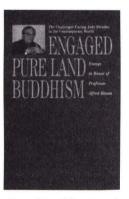
For former BPF board member Kenneth Kraft, the question of priorities is beyond the reach of immediate answers because spiritual practice and the environmental crisis both have an urgent and a protracted side. He cautions us to beware of the dangers of prematurely concluding either that our meditation and ritual activity are themselves environmental work, or that our environmental work is itself spiritual practice. Kraft suggests that the question of priorities is a koan that must be lived, "until one reaches a point where most activity expresses Buddhist awareness and environmental awareness, simultaneously." While Kraft rightly apprehends the challenging nature of this question, a theoretical discussion as well as some practical examples of just how environmental work can function as spiritual practice, for whom and under what conditions, would have been helpful.

In a direct challenge to both deep ecology and ecofeminism, Alan Sponberg offers a fascinating critique of green Buddhism which tends, in his opinion, to reject hierarchy per se. Sponberg reads Buddhist descriptions of the Path as a hierarchy of compassion, according to which, more developed, more compassionate beings are considered higher than the less developed. The wholesale rejection of hierarchy, he argues, rests on a failure to distinguish hierarchies of oppression-institutionalized structures of domination and privilege-from the theoretical and spiritual hierarchy of compassion. He further claims that by rejecting hierarchy outright we fail to recognize Buddhism's most worthwhile contribution to ecology: practices that cultivate virtue, concentration, and wisdom and enable people to live more compassionate, more ecological lives. Sponberg rightly highlights Buddhism's insistence on personal transformation; unfortunately, he neglects to articulate how such transformation leads to more than an individualistic "lifestyle ecology" that, while a good place to start, is relatively powerless to address the structural forces of domination behind our destructive social relationship with nature.

Stephanie Kaza's outstanding ecological assessment of two California Buddhist centers raises the discussion of dharma and deeds to the communal level. In her evaluation of the transmission of ecological culture on the institutional level, she employs Gary Snyder's "reinhabitory ecological ethic," the three aspects of which are: gratitude for, responsibility towards, and contact with the sources of the energy that flows into the life of the centers. Kaza delves into the earthy foundations of community life at the centers, looking at how food, energy, land use, water, etc. are handled. She doesn't, however, evaluate what the centers do to address structural change beyond educating the privileged few who visit them. Whether this reflects a shortcoming in Snyder's ethic or Kaza's method is not clear from the essay. Nevertheless, this essay is important for raising the ethical discussion to the communal level, for providing much that is of practical value to rural Buddhist centers, and for demonstrating the value of criticism to Buddhist ecology.

Strong as the discussions of individual and communal ethics are, the issue of structural change brings to light the weaknesses of $B \Leftrightarrow E$, and perhaps of Buddhist ecology itself. Only a few of the essays tackle the question of structural social change. Of these, the aforementioned essay by Kenneth Kraft is the most thorough. In his estimation, Buddhist responses to the socio-political side of environmental threats are relatively undeveloped. He also questions the value of ritual and symbolic activities in the face of environmental threats. My suspicion is that the shortcomings outlined by Kraft derive partly from the individualism embedded in traditional Theravada and Mahayana readings of core Buddhist doctrines such as the Four Noble Truths and karma. Thus, we tend to conceive of ecological work in the same personal terms in which we

ENGAGED PURE LAND BUDDHISM



THE CHALLENGES FACING JODO SHINSHU IN THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD

Essays in Honor of Professor Alfred Bloom

> Kenneth K. Tanaka *and* Eisho Nasu, *Eds*.

360 pages, \$18.45 paperback

Since the publication of his first book, Alfred Bloom has worked tirelessly to offer a radically new paradigm for understanding the social dimension of Pure Land Buddhist thought. The contributors do justice to Dr. Bloom's accomplishments and help fulfill his lifelong goal.

> Michio Tokunaga, Professor of Buddhist Studies, Kyoto Womens's University.

Available from: **The Buddhist Bookstore**, Buddhist Churches of America, 1710 Octavia St. San Francisco, CA 94109; Tel: (415) 776-7877; Fax: (415) 771-6293 conceive of spiritual practice. My hope is that green Buddhists will begin to develop effective analyses of, and strategies to address, the structural causes of the environmental crisis, and I suspect that engaging the social ecology of Murray Bookchin is a good place to start. A more developed Buddhist ecology than that presented in $B \heartsuit E$ would reflect as much influence of social ecology as of deep ecology and ecofeminism.

Taken as a whole, the book perpetuates a conception of North American Buddhism that excludes Asian Americans and immigrants. As is common in the literature of European American Buddhists, Asian immigrants figure only as the transmitters of the dharma from the Asian "old country" to the White "new world." Asian American and immigrant traditions are not represented in the section on American Buddhism, the editors neglect to acknowledge this absence, and Stephanie Kaza does not mention any Asian American or immigrant centers among those identified as prospective sites for future field research. Including Asian American and immigrant centers in a study like Kaza's would not be merely politically correct, it would further our understanding of the roots of North American Buddhist ecology.

Similarly, in an otherwise valuable essay on overpopulation-the only essay where the lives of poor people are discussed-Rita Gross states that, "deep spiritual or contemplative practice...is usually taken up after... achieving a certain basic level of Middle Way comfort. Before that, people really do think that once they have enough material things, they will not suffer." Good intentions aside, such rhetoric ignores the spiritual work that is being done in poor communities, and obscures the work that many Buddhist groups have yet to do to make the dharma more accessible to working class and poor people. Furthermore, it rests on an apparent failure to distinguish perceived deprivation from poverty, and deflects our attention from the social forces that foster perceived deprivation. Buddhists do well to work towards the elimination of poverty; we also need to interrogate the assumption that one has to attain a "basic level of Middle Way comfort" before one can understand the unsatisfactory nature of material well-being. The delusion that material goods can satisfy spiritual needs is a socio-spiritual disease to which all classes are susceptible.

B & E is a stimulating and challenging discussion of a vital topic. Its value to engaged Buddhism lies not so much in the answers it provides as in the questions it raises, the thinking it provokes, and the light it sheds on the ecological aspects of diverse Buddhist traditions. B & E also makes plain just how much challenging work remains for Buddhists to do in our encounter with ecology; for this and for the insight its contributors bring to ecology—and the path of engaged Buddhism as a whole—I am deeply grateful. \clubsuit

Lewis Woods is Assistant Director of the Buddhist Peace Fellowship.

Loyalty Demands Dissent: Autobiography of an Engaged Buddhist

by Sulak Sivaraksa Parallax Press, 1998, 253 pages, hardcover, \$22.50

Reviewed by Ken Jones

These memoirs are inspiration and celebration on the sixty-fifth birthday of one of the founders of engaged Buddhism. I found Sulak's story and personality so fascinating, and presented in such a lively and unpretentious way, that I became completely absorbed in its 200 pages and the scatter of original photographs. Also, an eightpage index makes this a serviceable reference book. Editors Susan Offner and Laurie and Alan Senauke, together with Parallax, have done an excellent job.

The reader is constantly reminded of three valuable gifts that Sulak offers us. First, he is invariably and absolutely uncompromising in upholding his principles, particularly in respect of social justice. Thus, reprimanded at an international conference for upsetting the moneyed sponsors by "diverting from the text," Sulak replies: "I speak my mind and I'm willing to go to jail for what I say. If you don't like it, then don't invite me again." Reading this book made me appreciate just how valuable this kind of consistency can be. Too often I find myself in situations where I begin to wonder who is co-opting whom!

Second, the book is alive with Sulak's huge and diverse energies and talents, as organizer, thinker, orator and publicist. He has more than 100 books and monographs to his credit, and has founded more than a dozen international organizations. Just keeping up with such a strong-minded bundle of energy brings its own problems. Yet the disarming bits of self-criticism and doubt that are scattered through the text suggest a lovable as well as a maddening comrade. Sulak has, moreover, always been generous in his support for others' ideas and projects, and in acknowledging his indebtedness—to Thich Nhat Hanh and Ajahn Buddhadasa, for example.

Third, this book is a warm reminder of the gift of friendship, which Sulak gives and receives in abundance.

When I reflect on my life and achievements, I see that I have been able to make many good friends. The Buddha said, "Good friends are the whole of the holy life." Good friends become your other self. They help you, encourage you, and are critical of you. For me, encountering new people and strengthening old friendships has been a wonderful part of my life.

And for Sulak, friendship is an all-embracing thing; it doesn't stop short even of the president of the World Bank: "The more you talk with people in power, the more chance they will eventually listen. Eventually they will be fair. We can make good friends and listen to each other."

Sulak has done as much as anyone to pioneer a socially and ecologically engaged Buddhist perspective, most notably in his book *Seeds of Peace: a Buddhist Vision for Renewing Society* (Parallax, 1991). An alternative to freemarket globalized consumerism, his perspective is spiritually informed, socially just, ecologically aware, founded on self-reliant communities and supported by international interfaith fellowship. In this new book we can trace the evolution of these key ideas. Sulak's own life experience confirms the view that engaged Buddhism arose out of the Buddhist encounter with Western modernity. In Britain Sulak took a university degree, qualified as a barrister, and worked as publicist and broadcaster, returning to his native Thailand when he was already nearly 30 years old.

I am very critical of the mainstream Western approach—technology, capitalism, consumerism. Even so, I learnt a great deal from my Western education. I am indebted to writers of Western literature for their social commitment and analysis of society. My tradition alone would have made me very conservative, even as an engaged Buddhist (p. 212).

Much about Sulak is paradoxical, even in the title of his book. ("If we want to protect the monarchy, everything should be discussed openly. Real loyalty demands honesty, open criticism, even dissent." p. 194) But paradox, as Jung argued, is at the heart of authentic spirituality, and especially a socially engaged spirituality.

The dynamic paradox of "radical conservatism" is the essence of Sulak's Buddhist engagement. In countries such as Thailand, there is still the best of a premodern social culture that can be blended with the best of Western modernity. Shaping this alternative future has been Sulak's lifework. In the West, however, what was left of pre-modernity and small-scale farming was pretty much wiped out on the ground by the 1950s, is now celebrated mostly in writing (by authors such as Wendell Berry), and is fast solidifying into myth and ideology. So, for Westerners, does a dharmically informed liberal democratic (or radical communitarian) agenda cut deep enough? Are we in danger of idealizing the pre-modern? Is practice not about mindfully questioning our cherished beliefs? And what might be the shape of a profoundly Buddhist modernity? And where, anyway, could such questions even be discussed?

So, yes, Sulak's book is an absorbing read. And it is also the kind of book which, when it has been put down, prompts much quiet reflection.

Ken Jones lives in Cwmrheidol, Wales and is a founder and current secretary of the Network of Engaged Buddhists (UK). He is the author of The Social Face of Buddhism and Beyond Optimism: A Buddhist Political Ecology.

Tashi Jong: A Traditional Tibetan Community in Exile

Film produced & photographed by Barbara Green Available from the Tibetan Video Project, 2952 Pine Ave., Berkeley, CA 94705. (510) 540-8401. \$35.00, including shipping and handling, payable to Four Corners Foundation. Proceeds benefit the Tashi Jong Community.

Reviewed by Anita Barrows

Barbara Green's moving and beautiful film about a Tibetan community in exile portrays a way of life in which meditation, work, study, domesticity, and play are a seamless whole.

When I showed "Tashi Jong" to my psychology graduate students, one of them commented, "Now I can see what helps the Tibetans suffer less from posttraumatic stress disorder." It is clear that their involvement with community and their ability to preserve the forms and meanings of their practice assure their spiritual and psychological survival.

After fleeing the Chinese crackdown in Tibet, Khamtrul Rinpoche (d. 1980) founded the Tashi Jong community in order to keep the teachings and sacred arts of Tibet alive. Located in northern India, Tashi Jong (which means "auspicious valley") includes a monastery, and the life of the 400 or so who live here (including children and laypeople) is centered in the dharma. "The monastery is like a sun," Green is told. "It is the light and warmth of our hearts."

Green's penetrating photography takes us into the daily life of Tashi Jong. We see a nun bending to sweep a courtyard while chanting prayers; an elderly woman walking down a footpath, prayer wheel in hand; a layperson painting a thangka with devotion and unbroken concentration; young children learning to read, write, and dance. It is notable that no one in the film seems to be lost, bored, apathetic. In contrast to films we have seen of refugees in other settings, there is no feeling that the people of Tashi Jong are waiting for real life to begin again somewhere else.

This award-winning film is a visual feast, both for Green's shots of the lush region surrounding Tashi Jong and for the colorful regalia—the reds, golds, saffrons—of the people themselves. Particularly memorable are scenes of the Lama Dances, performed yearly to celebrate Padmasambhava's birthday, with expressive masks and elaborate costumes. But what I love best in the film—which I savor over and over again—are the very ordinary instances, like the woman dipping a red onion into a pot of water, then squatting to chop it. The film shows us life lived with full knowledge both of its impermanence and its sacredness. *****

Anita Barrows is a poet, translator, psychologist, and peace activist, who lives in Berkeley with her two daughters. Her forthcoming book of poetry, A Record, will be published in November.

Queer Dharma: Voices of Gay Buddhists Edited by Winston Leyland

Gay Sunshine Press, PO Box 410690, San Francisco, CA 94141. 1998, 416 pages, \$19.95, paper (\$22.95 post-paid).

Reviewed by Tim Dunn

When Queer Dharma appeared in our local bookstore, the lesbian manager expressed some regret. I thought she was going to complain about the lack of dyke authors in this anthology, but she simply commented, "I don't know about the cover, Tim." She was referring to the image of a naked Buddha-headed man meditating amid clouds, sunshine, lotus, and a giant pink triangle. It took me half a minute to realize that she hadn't yet seen the back cover. When I lifted the book to show her she laughed and blushed. Just as the pink triangle appropriates a symbol of gay oppression, the back cover collage borrows from sacred Buddhist iconography. The sexual embrace of two men in this case cleverly reinterprets the Tibetan yab-yum in queer terms: conscious fucking equals "the union of bliss and emptiness." This graceful graphic irreverence may put off some readers, just as those looking for a thrill may be disappointed by the heady contents.

I'm tempted to call this book my new bible, but I must confess that I skimmed over most of its Old Testament. In Part I, "Historical Essays," the writings of Jose Ignacio Cabezon, Leonard Zwilling and others will appeal to academics and scholars, but those hungry for everyday voices should head straight for Part II, "Personal Accounts." In the first essay, "Practicing Together as a Gay Couple," I met Michael C. Hyman, a gay Zen Buddhist and father, who somehow makes domesticity seem profoundly heroic. John Bernie's essay, "Monk in Drag," made me bow to the 16-yearold fag who reached enlightenment sitting in a large furry bean-bag chair. Two short pieces by Daniel Boutemy Fernandez and Christopher Osborne deal with what it means to be young and gay and Buddhist. Larry L. Saxxon's essay deals with what it means to be black and gay and Buddhist.

Part II's serving includes pieces on coming out, love and loss, recovery, SM, casual sex, working with the dying, and the much-loved queer teacher Issan Dorsey.

Part III consists of a long interview the editor did with John Giorno, about his life, practice, and the AIDS Treatment Project.

In Part IV, "Essays on Contemporary Buddhism and Homosexuality," Dennis Conkin spells out the fine points of the Dalai Lama's meeting with queer Buddhists. Mark Marion and Tom Moon, gay Buddhist psychotherapists, write about intimacy. (Both these writers also contributed personal reflections in Part II.) Such generosity

(Continued on following page)

Bearing Witness: A Zen Master's Lessons in Making Peace

by Bernie Glassman Bell Tower, 1998, 218 pages, \$22 hard cover.

Reviewed by Barbara Hirshkowitz

For those of you who have read Instructions to the Cook: A Zen Master's Lessons in Living a Life That Matters, by Bernie Glassman and Rick Fields (reviewed in TW Spring 1996), this new volume will be a seamless extension. It brings us along on Roshi Glassman's journey, beginning with a five-day fast and vigil on the steps of the Capitol building—ostensibly a party for his 55th birthday. Part of the outcome was that he founded the Zen Peacemaker Order with his late wife Jishu Holmes. Bearing Witness chronicles the process.

An eloquent summary is provided in the prologue:

This is not a book of answers, for there is little energy in answers. This is a book of questions. More precisely, it's about living a questioning life, a life of unknowing. If we're ready to live such a life, without fixed ideas or answers, then we are ready to bear witness to every situation, no matter how difficult, offensive, or painful it is. Out of that process of bearing witness the right action of making peace, of healing, arises.

The descriptions of retreats at Auschwitz-Birkenau are heart-wrenching: of sitting in the snow surrounded by the legacy of death, and breath by breath opening to the pain. Of reading the names—thousands of names of people who died there in the concentration camp. Of going back, day after day, and bearing witness until a change was felt and some of the hungry ghosts could rest in peace. There are other kinds of stories too—of street retreats in New York City, of the drug compound called Letten near Zurich, and of the experimental and very successful constellation of businesses and services called Greyston Mandala in Yonkers, New York.

Glassman lays great emphasis on letting go and penetrating the unknowing, the one a precondition for the other. Our affluent country, our over-filled lives make these two practices particularly difficult for North Americans and Europeans. On the first street retreats participants allowed were emergency money (\$10/week), but many couldn't resist spending just a little on a cup of tea or a newspaper. Now street retreatants carry no money and must wait for the universe to provide. And it does, often bountifully so, with gifts of fresh pastries delivered to those waiting on line for a soup kitchen meal, free organic vegetarian food for lunch in Tomkins Square Park on the Lower East Side of Manhattan, or a church to sleep in on a cold, wet night. To prepare for these unusual experiences, each participant must assemble a mala, a string of beads similar to a rosary, before joining one of these retreats. The catch is that the cost of the beads (18 beads at \$108

each and one at \$1,080 (adding up to a contribution of \$3104) must not come from the participant himself or herself, but be acquired by "begging"—that is, asking for donations; the money raised is used to support programs for the homeless. For some people, this is too great a departure from the norm, but for those who take up the challenge, it is an invaluable experience.

A wide range of people have become peacemakers in the Zen Peacemaker Order, from Joan Halifax, a wellknown Buddhist teacher, to Fleet Maull, a prisoner serving a long-term sentence on drug charges, to Claude Thomas, a Vietnam veteran. So many people—some Zen, some not—have wanted to be part of the Order that there is now an Interfaith Assembly of Peacemaker Villages.

The Order's vows, in a stripped-down version, are:

I vow to be oneness. I vow to be diversity. I vow to be harmony. I vow to penetrate the unknown. I vow to bear witness. I vow to heal myself and others. I vow not to kill. I vow not to steal. I vow not to be greedy. I vow not to tell lies. I vow not to be ignorant. I vow not to talk about others' errors and faults. I vow not to elevate myself by blaming others. I vow not to be stingy. I vow not be angry. I vow not to speak ill of myself and others.

A more detailed version of these vows is given in the appendix to *Bearing Witness*, and the reader is invited to take one or all of the vows for even a day. When you finish this book you may very well find yourself ready to experiment with these practices—I certainly did.

For the most up-to-date information, e-mail peacemaker@zpo.org or visit the website: www.zpo.org. *****

Queer Dharma, continued

contributes enormously to the scope of Queer Dharma.

Part V contains fiction. Bob Vickery's porn struck me as perfunctory, but I enjoyed Trebor's story, "A Window in the Wall," and I liked his poem in Part VI, the poetry section, called, "If Thich Nhat Hanh Was a Fag Like Me." This section also includes work by John Giorno, the late Allen Ginsberg, and others.

Queer Dharma is Zen-heavy, but there are contributions from several people practicing in the Tibetan and Vipassana traditions. I will return to listen and learn from these voices again and again.

Tim Dunn lives and works in Philadelphia. He is a member of Food Not Bombs, and Books Through Bars, and he works in many capacities with Project Home. He performs and promotes art and film in his spare time and sits Vipassana under the tutelage of S.N. Goenka.

BOOKS IN BRIEF

Inner Revolution: Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Real Happiness by Robert Thurman

Riverhead Books, 1998, 322 pages, \$24.95, hardcover.

Robert Thurman is arguably the most articulate and passionate Western voice for the liberation of Tibet from Chinese oppression. He is also an advocate for the politics of enlightenment, the internal and social liberation he sees modeled in the history and presence of Tibet. *Inner Revolution* is Prof. Thurman's long-awaited manifesto and teaching. It continues along lines he laid out nearly 15 years ago, when he contributed an essay on the Edicts of Ashoka to BPF's *The Path of Compassion*.

I see two challenging threads interwoven here. First, Thurman says that "The greatest obstacle to manifesting a politics of enlightenment is...[to] develop an altruism that goes beyond good works to the desire to take responsibility for ending the suffering of other beings."

Second, "'Transcendental individualism' describes the political principle acknowledging the supremacy of the individual's happiness over the polity's collective needs for security, productivity, order, and celebration."

Are these two principles in contradiction or in real mutual interaction? Thurman seems to argue the latter, and much of this book makes the case with teachings, history, and grand social theories. At times I find myself questioning his assertions, wanting more of the scholar's attention to detail. But I also find his core questions compelling, particularly those concerning the relationship between privilege and enlightenment. Agreeing and disagreeing, let's find our way. I know this is what Thurman would urge us to do. —A.S.

2 BOOKS NEWLY OUT IN PAPER BY BPF AUTHORS!

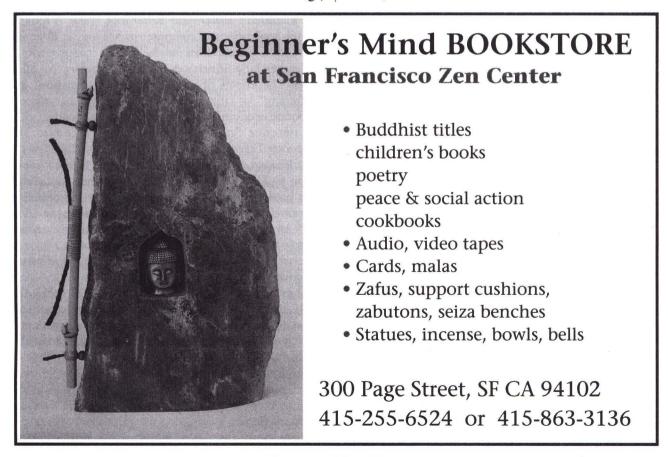
Altars in the Street: A Courageous Memoir of Community and Spiritual Awakening

by Melody Ermachild Chavis. Belltower, \$12.

This compelling and inspiring memoir was reviewed in *TW* Summer 1997, and it's good news for us all that a paperback edition is now available at a reasonable price. The new subtitle does a good job of summarizing the book, but doesn't indicate the warm, down-toearth, thoroughly compassionate style of the writing.

Eloquent Zen: Daito and Early Japanese Zen by Kenneth Kraft. University of Hawai'i Press, \$23.

This highly readable book by a former BPF board member sets the details of Daito's life and teachings in the context of Zen's remarkable flowering in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries in Japan. Kraft also offers a sizeable sampling of Daito's verse and commentary. It's important to learn about this towering Zen figure, little known in the West until now. \clubsuit



WHAT TO DO ABOUT IT

Education = "e" (out) + "ducere" (lead) = to lead out. "To allow the myriad things to come forth and manifest themselves is enlightenment."—Dogen Zenji.

Educate yourself about current events. The true patriot is the person who knows what's going on. Remember that the root problem is our own apathy, not corporate greed or institutional violence. Read the paper and commit to making one phone call or writing a post card once a week.

Engage with your local schools. Listen to the schoolteachers you know. Ask them about their work, their visions, their frustrations. Supporting teachers is a fundamental way to affect the quality of education. Provide forums for teachers to tell their stories.

Visit classrooms and volunteer. There is no end to the resources needed in schools; caring adults are the primary resource affecting students' performance and esteem. Connect with those who need attention, extra help or practice with communication. Be visible, offer skills. Support PTA and other extra-curricular efforts.

Attend School Board meetings. Usually held once or twice a month, school board meetings oversee much policy-making for schools. Board members are elected and, as such, "represent" the parents and community. The community's voice is needed at these meetings to argue for priorities and to ensure that teachers' and students' rights and responsibilities are respected.

Educate yourself about education. Keep track of one or more issues important to you and find some way of responding. What are the pros and cons of tracking students? What are the classroom effects of TV? (By age 5, a child is likely to have watched 5000 hours of TV.) What are the differences among schools in well-off and impoverished areas? How can educational opportunity be made more equally available? How do racism and sexism appear in the classroom? What are the effects of big business' efforts to "target" school children? When is computer literacy helpful and when not?

Bilingual education. Support all citizens' right to a meaningful bilingual education. California courts recently declared that one year of bilingual education is "enough" for non-English speaking children, *despite* recent state test results showing that children in bilingual classes out-performed all others, including native English speakers. Florida has mandated bilingual education for *everyone*. Become acquainted with the issues in your state. Help immigrant families know their rights.

English as a second language. Call a local adult education department, language school or community college and offer to serve as a conversation partner for ESL students. Learn another cultural point of view first hand.

Testing. The trend towards unified, standard testing threatens diversity within schools at all levels. It puts unfair pressure on children of non-mainstream cultural backgrounds and on non-English speakers. It reduces teachers to technicians, expected to administer packages based on standardized textbooks that produce good test scores (with, always, the "failure" level necessary to make the "passage" level real). Support teachers' "skillful means": confidence in their ability to cultivate and use diverse techniques to teach a diverse population.

School gardens can accommodate children with different learning styles. Working outside enables children who are locked into negative classroom-behavior patterns to find positive ways of using energy. School gardens are community builders; they draw parent participation, illustrate and celebrate different cultural backgrounds, and give everyone cause for pride. Contact The National Gardening Association for a wealth of practical information: 180 Flynn Ave., Burlington VT, 05401. www.garden.org

Resources

• Jane Healy, *Endangered Minds; Why Children Don't Think and What We Can Do.* A developmental neuropsychologist describes the growing brain's stages and the effects of television and computers.

• Jane Healy, Failure to Connect: How Computers Affect Our Children's Minds—For Better and Worse. A look at specific applications of computer technology at different ages and how computers may help or be inappropriate.

• Heather-Jane Robertson, *No More Teachers, No More Books.* The effects of globalization on education; the "softening" of citizens' minds to believe that global, corporate economics is now the way of the world.

• Lawrence Soley, Leasing the Ivory Tower: The Corporate Takeover of Academia.

• *Rethinking our Classrooms*, a Rethinking Schools publication (1-800-669-4194, e-mail: RSBusiness@aol.com). This book "begins from the premise that schools and classrooms should be laboratories for a more just society." An excellent, practical, readable book for everyone on how to teach equity and justice in classrooms.

• Jonathan Kozol, Savage Inequalities: Children in America's Schools.

• The National Writing Project. 510-642-0963. Email: nwp@socrates.berkeley.edu. A federally funded, nationwide network that works to improve students' writing and learning skills by training schoolteachers to teach writing.

• Lisa Delpit, Other People's Children.

• bell hooks, Teaching to Transgress.

• Wm. Ayers, et al., eds. Roses and Daggers: Teaching for Social Justice.

—Maylie Scott 🚸

BPF ACTIVIST NEWS

BASE NEWS

We are pleased to announce **three new BASE programs** beginning in Fall 1998 and Winter 1999. Two of the programs will be facilitated by BASE graduates. All programs have in common a six-month commitment to attend weekly meetings and weekend retreats, volunteer or work in a social service or social change setting for at least 5 hours a week, and engage in regular Buddhist practice.

A group will begin in **San Francisco** in mid-October, co-sponsored by Spirit Rock Meditation Center, and coordinated by Belinda Griswold and Mary Senchnya. The Bay Area will also be the home of an innovative program, the **Bay Area Prison BASE**, beginning in mid-January, 1999. All participants will volunteer or work in Bay Area jails, prisons, or prison reform organizations. BAP-BASE will be coordinated by Terry Stein, with mentoring and dharma teaching by Maylie Scott, a priest at the Berkeley Zen Center.

We are also offering BASE internships in partnership with **Kindness House**, a rural interfaith spiritual community in North Carolina. Their main work is to run the Human Kindness Foundation and its long-standing Prison-Ashram Project. Two BASE interns will live and work at Kindness House and join members of the **Raleigh/Durham Triangle BPF** chapter for weekly meetings and retreats.

Applications for these programs are available now at the BPF office.

We are also focusing on building community for BASE graduates through a newsletter, "Touching BASE," and a series of monthly one-day retreats to begin in October in the Bay Area.

CHAPTER NEWS

We welcome a new chapter at Tassajara Zen Mountain Center in Carmel Valley, CA, and a new affiliate, the Lesbian Buddhist Sangha in Berkeley, CA.

The recently formed **Twin Cities, MN** chapter sponsored a workshop and lecture by Joanna Macy in late June. Both events were well attended and, based on feedback from participants, very successful. The events were intended to announce the chapter's existence, provide a public forum for discussion of deep ecology, motivate the chapter to network across Buddhist and environmental communities, and raise a few dollars for mailings and miscellany. All of that was accomplished, and more.

Both the lecture and workshop were enhanced by a literature/resource table. Violin music and thunderstorms added resonance to the lecture. The day-long workshop was held at a retreat center on the St. Croix River, providing a perfect setting for bodhisattva training.

In addition to the two main events a small, potluck

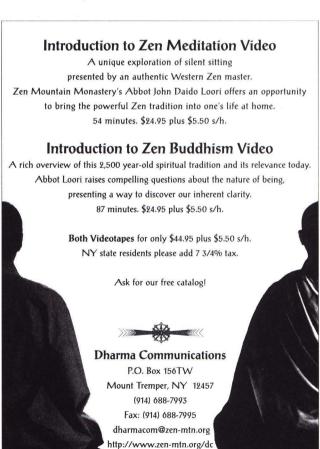
brunch was held with Joanna, the event organizing committee, key supporters, and leaders from various Buddhist centers.

The Colorado BPF group is constructing a large, flagstone patio for an assisted living facility in the Denver suburb of Wheatridge. The elder-care Temenos House was started and is managed by Buddhist practitioners. The residents requested the work and have monitored its progress. The group is considering helping to construct a sacred space at the Boulder County Homeless Shelter in August.

Boston, MA chapter members are discussing the U.S. arms trade and its relation to greed. A smaller group is considering what actions they could take on these themes.

In **Honolulu**, **HI**, about 25 people attended a potluck to reactivate the chapter. They formed a variety of study/action groups including Buddhism 101, Buddhism and the Environment, Living and Dying in Buddhist Societies, Buddhism and Addiction Prevention and Recovery, Tibet, and Cambodia.

The New York chapter is also being reactivated. An August meeting was devoted to a discussion of the first precept: not killing or harming living beings. The theme of the September meeting is "Working with Suffering as a Spiritual Path," and will include Cambodian-American activist Chath pier sath. & *—Tova Green*



TURNING WHEEL © FALL 1998

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

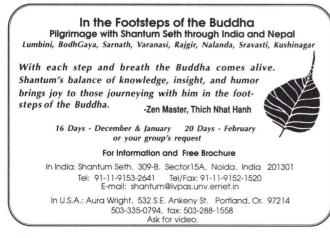
The shadow side of interbeing is complicity. I've been thinking about this since the May nuclear tests in India and Pakistan. The shock of these explosions, the new and old fears that rose in a mushroom cloud, provoked another kind of explosion—righteous indignation—from world leaders and the press. But I have been asking myself as an engaged Buddhist koan: what is my real connection to these tests half a world away?

One answer is very close to home. Between 1994 and 1997 more than 400 Indian scientists visited and worked at Livermore and Los Alamos National Laboratories, where U.S. bomb research and design is done. Many of these visitors worked on ostensibly "peaceful" areas of research, but resources, technology, and the flow of ideas easily convert to weapons work. In this same time frame, with the Clinton administration's blessing, IBM sold a highly advanced supercomputer to a suspected Indian weapons facility.

Another factor in the equation is the U.S. government's Stockpile Stewardship Program, a benignsounding cover for continuing weapons testing, design, and replacement. Despite an international ban on nuclear testing, the U.S. government has held so-called subcritical tests of warheads with nuclear materials in the name of stockpile stewardship. When these tests were begun, they were vigorously protested by the Indian government as a breach of the testing treaty. How did our government's refusal to honor the spirit of the treaty contribute to India and Pakistan's decisions to go ahead with their testing?

One columnist speaking about the entanglement of U.S. and Indian high-energy nuclear research quoted Walt Kelly's cartoon character Pogo: "We have met the enemy, and he is us." This is engaged Buddhism in a nutshell.

Finally, I will ask another question I have asked before. How are we personally complicit with our government's actions and policies? What privileges do we



derive from our nation's military and economic power? How do we let go of that privilege, and how do we encourage others to take a stand?

This month here in Berkeley we have been hosting and learning from a group of Zen pilgrims, led by Claude AnShin Thomas, who have walked across America in five months flat. AnShin is a Vietnam War Veteran and a Soto Zen priest in Roshi Bernie Glassman's new Zen Peacemaker Order. His own experiences of war and violence led him to Thich Nhat Hanh and then to this practice of walking and bearing witness—a fundamental way to renounce privilege and encourage others without carrying one's own dualistic agenda.

The pilgrims made the trip with nothing more than the requisites in their backpacks, good shoes, and sturdy walking sticks. They carried no money, but collected food and alms along the way. Most days they knocked on church doors, seeking food and shelter from strangers. Some places they were warmly welcomed; in a few places they were turned away in fear. Where they could help out with community work they pitched right in. In Denver they led a street retreat for other Buddhists. Most days they just walked, 15 or 20 miles, bearing witness to themselves and to the heart of suffering across the nation.

I could say much more about this, and what inspired and challenged me about these pilgrims, but Susan Moon will be writing an article about the pilgrimage for a future *Turning Wheel*. It was wonderful to have them with us for two weeks at Berkeley Zen Center. In that short time they entered the life of the community and we all felt at home with each other.

The first week of August has also been a time of anniversaries. August 6 and 9 mark the fifty-third anniversary of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, watershed events in the history of human destruction. August 8 is the tenth anniversary of the bloody repression of the democracy movement in Burma. That repression continues with the military junta's refusal to dialogue with Aung San Suu Kyi and the National League for Democracy, the rightful governing party in Burma. But with hope for a peaceful end to military rule, I honor 18 international Burma activists who were arrested just days ago for distributing pro-democracy materials in Rangoon. In sorrow I also mark what would have been my mother's seventy-fifth birthday on August 8. If my family and I had been more able to bear witness to her own suffering and addiction, and not turn away in fear, we might be celebrating rather than grieving. Uncovering our own grief within the interpenetrating realms of personal and social suffering is very much our work. * -Alan Senauke

ANNOUNCEMENTS & CLASSIFIEDS

INEB IN BANGKOK is hiring an Executive Secretary, to begin in Feb., 1999. Salary is equivalent to other Thai NGOs. Send CV plus a letter describing interest by Oct. 30 to INEB, PO Box 19, Mahadthai Post Office, Bangkok 10206, Thailand. E-mail: *ineb@loxinfo.co.th.*

HOMELESS AND HOUSED people meet weekly in Berkeley, California, for meditation and discussion. Volunteers from Berkeley Zen Center and East Bay Insight Meditation facilitate sessions oriented toward stress reduction. Free coffee and bagels. Mondays, 7:30–9 PM, 2345 Dana St., Berkeley. For more info, call the Chaplaincy to the Homeless at 510/548-0551. All are welcome.

THE UNTRAINING is designed to help you "untrain" the subtle programming of white liberal racism. Put your meditative awareness to work for all beings. Ongoing groups: 510/235-6134.

SOCIAL CHANGE SANGHA. A sangha for those interested in blending mindfulness practice in the tradition of Thich Nhat Hanh and social change work is forming in the Berkeley-Oakland area. If interested contact Lawrence (e-mail is best: *le@dnai.com*; or call 510/482-0750).

PRISON SANGHA. Theravadin group in Michigan requests books, tapes, incense, robes, pictures or posters of Buddha, an altar cloth, and a visit from a Bikkhu. Contact Richard L. Kaufman, #224865, Riverside Correctional Facility, 777 West Riverside Dr., Ionia, MI 48846.

BISEXUAL BUDDHIST ASSOC. affirming unity, positive self-image, and bisexual identity for those committed to meditation and mindfulness practice. P.O. Box 858, Amherst, MA 01004.

GAY BUDDHIST FELLOWSHIP: sittings, speakers, and discussions every Thursday evening and every other Sunday morning in San Francisco. Classes, workshops, retreats, monthly potluck dinners, and work in Buddhist AIDS projects. Newsletter, with information and articles on topics of concern to gay Buddhists, available for \$15/8 issues. (See inside back cover for address). PLANET DRUM FOUNDATION'S GREEN CITY PROJECT JOB LISTING. The Green City Project is now offering an Environmental Job Listing Service. The service, which publishes listings every two weeks, is a compilation of great internships and job announcements that pass through our office. Jobs range from entry-level to executive director positions. The Job Listing Service is free to businesses and organizations. Simply fax your job announcements to 415/285-6563 and we'll list them until your position is filled. Subscription to the service for those seeking employment is \$15 for three months of bi-monthly listings. To subscribe, call our office at 415/285-6556 and request an application form. Get a chance at that dream job!

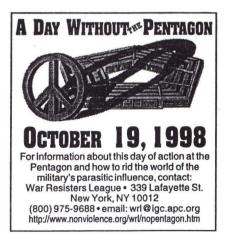
K. SRI DHAMMANANDA will be giving a lecture entitled "Buddhism 2000" at the Chinese Cultural Center in El Monte, CA on September 19. He will also be hosting a seminar, a dinner, and a discussion Sept. 16-Sept. 20. K. Sri Dhammananda is 78 years old and has been teaching the Dharma in the Theravadin tradition for more than half a century. He is the author of more than 100 books on Buddhism. His most famous book is the classic, "What Buddhists Believe." For more information, please contact Rev. Dhammajoti Sam Haycraft at 714/432-0520 or Venerable Bhante Chao Chu, Rosemead Buddhist Monastery, Los Angeles Buddhist Union, 7833 Emerson Place, Rosemead, CA 91770. 626/280-1213.

HELPING HOMELESS WOMEN AND CHILDREN: You can help by donating personal care items that are greatly needed—toothbrushes, toothpaste, soap, shampoo, hair brushes, combs, and hand lotion—to the Women's Daytime Drop-in Center in Berkeley. Volunteers are also needed to work with the women and children. For more information call: 510/548-6933.

THE CONCH-US TIMES, the Journal of the Dead Buddhists of America, for those appreciating both Grateful Dead and Buddhist cultures: \$8/yr. Payable to: Ken Sun-Downer, Box 769, Idyllwild, CA 92549. **SUPPORT HOMELESS PEOPLE:** The Berkeley Ecumenical Chaplaincy to the Homeless is seeking supporters for its "Community of Compassion," a group of people underwriting monthly rent for the Haste St. Transitional House, which seeks to empower adults in their move to permanent housing. This interfaith program involves homeless people in counseling, volunteer work, job development and community living. For information, write: 2345 Channing Way, Berkeley, CA 94704, or call 510/548-0551.

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ROOM AVAILABLE IN PALO ALTO, CA. Person disabled with CFIDS/MCS offers quiet Palo Alto room in exchange for adult live-in care. Pleasant, clean, 2 bedroom apartment with hardwood floors. Approximately 15 hours per week, depending on experience. Includes shopping, cooking, and cleaning. Seeking person with awareness of chemical sensitivi/ties (no fragrances, etc.), who is environmentally conscious, and who is thorough at shopping, etc. Please call late afternoons and evenings only. 650/494-3849



HELPING TURN THE WHEEL

BPF gratefully acknowledges contributions above membership received between April 1 & June 31, 1998.

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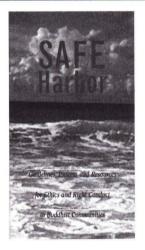
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