



MOON ON THE WATER

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Newsletter of the Great Lake Zen Center, Milwaukee, WI

August, 2004

Anger

by Michael Zinke, DT

I'm relatively sure; in fact, darn sure that everyone reading this has, at one time or another, been angry. If you've never, ever, in your entire life been angry at anything, please raise your hand. I'd be very interested in meeting you and finding out just how you have managed to go through life without getting mad at something or somebody. Anger is caused by our desires or wants or our likes and dislikes. So if you have never experienced anger then you have never been attached to anything and that would be a remarkable feat

In his teachings, Zen Master Seung Sahn describes four kinds of anger, 1.) attached anger, 2.) reflected anger, 3.) perceived anger, and 4.) love anger. So what are all these types of anger and how do we relate to them, understand them? Are they good or bad? Well, the following is my interpretation of Zen Master Seung Sahn's teaching.

Attached anger occurs when some thing or some thought we have is different than what is really happening. Or someone doesn't do exactly what we feel they should do; like all those idiots driving 45 mph in the left lane on I94. But, I digress. So when we feel that someone should do what we want them to do and that person does something entirely different then, sometimes, we get angry at them. With attached anger, the anger can last for hours, days, weeks, and for some people even years, like in the case of the family feud of the Hatfields and McCoys. I've known people who have been angry at someone for so long they forgot what they were angry at. I'm sure you can relate to that and can quote examples of similar incidents, also. So attached anger stays with you a long time, we call that 'carrying a grudge'. Attached anger doesn't allow your mind to return to being a compassionate, loving person quickly. Your mind holds onto the anger and every chance you get, you let people know that you are angry. Hence the name, attached anger. It attaches to your mind and doesn't let go very easily.

Reflected anger doesn't last quite as long as attached anger. Reflected anger can be described as the anger you feel after the initial anger has worn off. Reflected anger occurs when you start thinking about the situation you were angry at and start to feel depressed about it or you start getting angry about it, again, and again. Reflected anger can also occur when you respond to someone else's anger. They get angry and you reflect that anger. The good news is that reflected anger soon gives way to your mind that realizes what the correct situation is and allows you to help the other person or help correct the situation or just accept the situation as it is. So, reflected

Zen Means No Point of View

by Zen Master Dae Kwang

These days the Persian Gulf war is very much on everyone's mind. This naturally leads to the question I was recently asked, "What is Zen's point of view on the war?" While this may sound like a pertinent and timely question, ultimately it cannot be answered because Zen has no point of view. An ancient worthy once noted that, "the view of all Buddhas and Patriarchs is the same - no view." To someone who just wants to understand something, like our present war, not a lot is offered here. However, in the end this is the one thing which draws us to Zen practice: the basic sanity of "no point of view." So, you will be spared one more analysis of the war.

One thing which is unique about the Buddha, and the Zen Masters in our tradition, is that they do not put forth a religion or a philosophy of life but rather point directly to Truth or, as it is said in Zen, "point directly to the human Mind." This pointing itself is not another explanation but a means to bring one to a deep questioning about life. What am I? What is a human being? Why are we living on this planet? Any meditation practice or spiritual journey boils down to finding the answer to this great question, "Who am I?" As a practice aiming toward attainment, rather than mere understanding, Zen does not rely on concepts, beliefs, theology or ideology. Zen's method is to evoke our own direct experience of life.

Another important aspect of the practice of great questioning is its direction. When the Buddha sat under the Bodhi tree it was not out of self-concern. His questioning was for all of humanity, since he was trying to resolve the question of human suffering, of human existence. Great questioning has this direction - for all beings. Of course, you are one of them. So, even though we may be concerned with our personal quagmire - emotional, psychological, existential or spiritual - ultimately our direction as Zen practitioners is to answer the great question which goes before these "smaller," though not insignificant, concerns.

Recently we all breathed a collective sigh of relief because the threat of nuclear holocaust had been lifted. And now we face another major conflict, the Persian Gulf War. Much of human history is the history of conflict. Desire, anger and ignorance are continually going around and around, on an individual, family, national and international level. This war can contribute to our practice by bringing us to a deeper realization that the mind that creates conflict - this human mind - is also in

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each one of us.

The finger of blame which historically has been pointed at the Saddam Husseins of the world can also be pointed at us. Zen Master Seung Sahn was once asked where atomic bombs come from; what kind of person would do that? He said, "They are made by the mind which likes this and doesn't like that." And that is inside each one of us. The mind that wants to go to war is us. This same mind also has Buddha nature, though more or less hidden. So, this war can benefit us if it brings home more than ever the great question in each one of us, "What am I?" If we can resolve this question we have taken a step toward true world peace and helping others.

YMJJ Retreat Scheduled

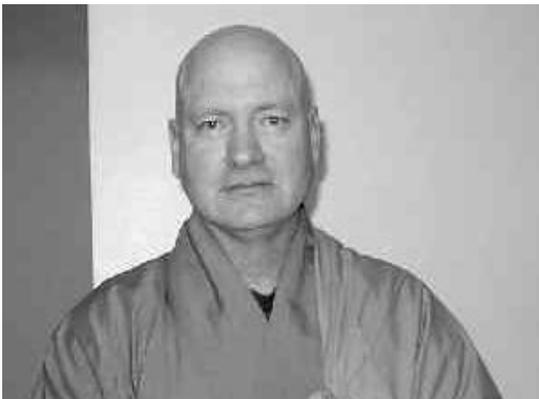
October 1 – 3 with Zen Master Dae Kwang

Saturday 6:00 AM - 9:30 PM

Sunday 6:00 AM –3:30 PM

A YMJJ retreat has been scheduled with GLZC Guiding Teacher Zen Master Dae Kwang for October 1-3, 2004. The retreat will be held at GLZC. Zen Master Dae Kwang will be leading this retreat and conducting interviews. The price of the retreat is \$70 for both days, or \$40 for one day. The price includes vegetarian meals. Sleeping space can be arranged if required at no extra charge. Those needing sleep space should notify Peter or Laura and should bring a sleeping bag, pillow, and washcloth/towel.

The retreat will begin with a free public talk with Zen Master Dae Kwang at 7:30 PM on Friday. Please plan on joining us for some very strong practice. A precepts ceremony will follow the end of the retreat on Sunday. Please plan on attending to see your fellow sangha members take precepts and strengthen their practice. **You may register for this YMJJ by signing up at GLZC or by contacting Peter or Laura.**



Calendar of Upcoming Events

Friday, October 1: Free Public talk with Zen Master Dae Kwang, GLZC 7:30pm.

Saturday, October 2 and Sunday October 3: YMJJ with Zen Master Dae Kwang, GLZC 6:00am – 9:40pm. With precepts ceremony following the end of the retreat on Sunday.

Friday November 19: Extended Practice. GLZC, 7pm – Midnight. Join us for all or part of the evening.

Wednesday, December 8: Buddha's Enlightenment Day Ceremony, GLZC, 7:30pm

Introduction to Zen, the first Monday of every month, Dharma talks by GLZC teachers the 4th Wednesday of every month

"Beginner's Mind" Retreat

A well attended beginner's mind retreat was held Sunday, August 22nd. GLZC teachers gave talks on zen, chanting, sitting and walking meditation, formal meals, etc. 13 people attended the one day retreat with many new faces and curious visitors. Perhaps we will see some of those new faces again.

Buddhist Conversation Series

The next in a series of discussions organized by the Buddhist Peace Fellowship will have Vegetarianism as its subject. The talk will be held at the Milwaukee Zen Center, 2825 N. Stowell Ave. on September 25th from 4:00pm – 6:00pm. The discussion includes panel members from GLZC, The Milwaukee Mindfulness Center, The Milwaukee Zen Center, and the Shambala Center. This is a great chance to learn about other practice centers and meet fellow Buddhists. Plan on attending for a stimulating discussion on

how Buddhists view vegetarianism. A flyer will be displayed soon with directions and more information. The next talk will be on Jan. 29, 2005 and will be on Foundations of Our Buddhist Practice at The Mindfulness Center.

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anger comes and goes whenever you think about a situation you were previously angry at.

After you have been practicing for a while and you start to believe in yourself 100% then anger becomes more perceived anger. Perceived anger is when you feel anger but you don't show your anger to others; you are able to control your mind and suppress the outward anger that you are feeling. You can talk kindly and lovingly to someone you are angry at and still appear in control on the outside while being angry at the person on the inside. Perceived anger should be practiced by a lot more people than really practice it. I'm sure we have all seen people suddenly react with anger to some small thing only to have that anger grow because they can't get to the perceived anger level and suppress the outward emotions. When you show your anger then people tend to shy away from you. The whispers start, "leave him/her alone, s/he's mad about" whatever. With perceived anger you avoid all that discomfort, embarrassment, and suffering because no one really knows you are angry at something or somebody

The last kind of anger that Zen Master Seung Sahn identifies is love anger. Physically and mentally love anger is the opposite of perceived anger. With love anger you have anger on the outside but no anger on the inside. Love anger is used for helping others. So when our kids do something really stupid, we get angry at them on the outside to let them know what they did was really stupid and not to do it again. But on the inside there is no anger, only love for the child. So when a little child is playing, gets mad at something and throws it across the room, outside you show anger (not a lot of course) and instruct the child not to throw things. But sometimes, they are so cute or the situation is so funny that you then run from the room in order to laugh without the child seeing you. That's love anger, a little show of anger to help the child understand, but no anger inside; only complete love, understanding, and compassion. So love anger passes very quickly, a flash of anger to help a situation and then it is gone. Nothing remains, there is no residual anger in the mind, only love for the person.

So, how do we deal with anger? Do practicing zen students get angry? Of course they do. When you get angry, just be angry. That's all you can do. You will always have attached anger unless you can give up all attachments to things and if you've ever tried that you realize how difficult it is. You will have reflected anger whenever something bad happens and you look back and dwell on it because, try as we may, we can never really let anything completely go, can

we? But what we should do is work on our practice and trust in ourselves 100% and that will get us to perceived anger and then we won't show anger outwardly even though we are angry on the inside. And love anger will always be with us as an aid in helping others. So when anger appears, be angry -- just don't attach to it and keep the anger within yourself for days, weeks, months, years, or whatever. Attached anger can be very destructive to your body and mental health. The stress that is involved with attached anger can cause physical discomfort and mental distress. Don't get involved in the old family feud syndrome. When anger comes, feel it, analyze it, look deeply into the anger and figure out just what happened to make you angry, recognize what caused it, then deal with it, and let it go. You'll be much happier if you do and, more importantly, our anger harms others, even those we think we are trying to help.

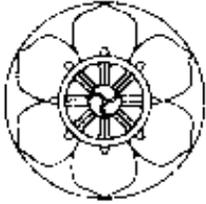
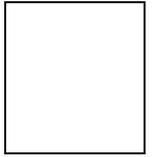
Take a look at your life right now. Can you identify times when you have experienced the different types of anger? How did you handle the anger? How will you handle anger in the future? Was the anger justified in your mind? Can you give up your attachment to things and rid yourself of attached anger at least? Sometimes we get so angry at the smallest of incidents. When that happens figure out why you got angry. Figure out what you were attached to that was the cause of the anger and work towards letting go of that attachment.

When I was young a friend of mine was getting married. My mother thought it would be nice if she bought my friend a wedding gift for me to give the couple. Since I was in college and didn't have much money, that was an awfully nice gesture. But how did I react? I think she bought them a blender or something of the sort; much more than I could have afforded at the time. But instead of being grateful, I got really angry at her and started yelling at her in the store. I had a different idea for a gift, I can't remember what it was now and surely couldn't have afforded anything better but the blender wasn't what I had in mind. I also remember telling her it was my friend not her friend and she had no right buying the gift. So there's the like mind and the dislike mind and the oncoming attached anger, right? Look at different situations in your past and how you reacted at the time and then think about how you would react today given the same set of circumstances. Hopefully, your reaction will be different now than it was at the time.

"The most terrifying thing is to accept oneself completely"

Carl Jung

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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

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Regular Practice Schedule of the Great Lake Zen Center

Monday and Wednesday at 7:30PM;
Saturday at 8:00AM

Other special events as described elsewhere in the newsletter. Unless otherwise noted, all events are held at the Great Lake Zen Center.

Beginners Always Welcome!

Unless noted otherwise, *Introductions to Zen* are offered on the first Monday of each month. Dharma Talks are offered on the fourth Wednesday of each month. Both are at 7:30PM.

