



# GREEN MOUNTAIN ZEN CENTER

5014 SUNSET BLUFF DRIVE, HUNTSVILLE, AL 35803

Volume 1, Issue 12

February 2006

## Zen Glossary

*From Jim Gordon*

**ANANDA** One of Buddha's ten important disciples. He was the Buddha's favourite and also the his personal attendant.

**ANGO** An intensive practice period, usually of three months duration, devoted to meditation, study, and communal work.

**ANJA** The person who serves as the assistant to the jisha.

**AVALOKITESVARA BODHISATTVA (J: KANNON)**

One of the three principal bodhisattvas, Avalokitesvara is the personification of great compassion and is usually portrayed in female form.

**BAI** A striker for the gongs used during service or zazen.

**BODHI** literally means "awakened". Sometimes referred to as the wisdom attained from the experience of enlightenment.

**BODHI DAY** December 8th, the day upon which the Buddha had his great realization after a week of meditation under the Bodhi Tree.

**BODHIDHARMA** The Indian monk that brought Buddhism to China in the late 5th or early sixth century.

**BODHISATTVA** Refers to an individual, who through many lives, vows to attain Buddhahood and constantly helps others to attain the same level of awakening.

**EGO** A false sense of separateness created by living within delusion.

**BUDDHA** 1. Literally means "awakened one". A person who has achieved enlightenment and has seen completely to the source of all dharmas so that he is free of every kind of craving. A Buddha has no reflection. He and the world are simultaneous.

2. The Buddha that was born in 563 B.C.

Siddhartha Gautama, also known as Shakyamuni, meaning "the silent sage". He is known as the Buddha of our age. Without instruction, he came to awakening through his endless vow of many lifetimes to relinquish the source of suffering.

**BUDDHA-DHARMA** The all inclusive term in which all of the teachings of the Buddha fall under.

**BUDDHAHOOD** The state a Buddha attains.

**BUDDHA-NATURE** The basic essence of purity living with all organisms. Zen practice reveals this intrinsic nature. It is not something that requires "seeking"; rather it is always with us.

**BUJI-ZEN** False zen practice. Those who rationalize "since Buddha-Nature is intrinsically with us, there is no need to practice Zazen", neglecting all the effort needed to overthrow delusion.

**CHIDEN** The person responsible for the care and maintenance of the Center's altars and ceremonial items.

**DAIKAN ENO** The Sixth Patriarch of Zen, whose school of "Sudden Enlightenment" became the mainstream of Zen practice and thought. All Zen lineages descend from him.

**DAIOSHO** Lit. "Great Priest," the honorary title given to a priest at a later stage of his life.

**DAISAN** Private interview with a sensei.

**DAISHI** Literally means "great master". A very honorable title given to a great Zen Master many years after death.

**DELUSION** Living within the conceptual mind. Living within the cycle of continuous thought.

**DENNAN** Altar attendant; passes out Sutra books and assists the Chiden with altar setup.

**DENSHO** Name of the large hanging bell in the front gaitan.

**DHARANI** A short Buddhist chant, often untranslatable, which is recited during services as an invocation to encourage a certain attitude of mind.

**DHARMA** The undefineable everything. The basis of life itself. Energy.

**DOAN** Name of a member of the ryo responsible for the playing of various bells and drums during service. May also refer specifically to the person who plays the large Keisu.

**DOGEN ZENJI** The founder of the Soto School of Zen in Japan. He also founded Eihei-ji, the principal Soto training monastery in Japan, and wrote the Shobogenzo, a pivotal Soto text.

**DOKUSAN** A one on one meeting with a roshi. Deemed as being very ceremonial

**DZOGCHEN** Literally means "great perfection". Teaching taught by Tibetan Buddhism in which all practioners strive to realize

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**EIGHTFOLD PATH** The fourth Noble Truth given by the Buddha as the way to end suffering. The Eightfold Path consists of: right views, thought, speech, action, livelihood, effort, mindfulness, and samadhi.

**EKO** A dedication. During service the eko comes after the recited text.

**FOUR NOBLE TRUTHS** One of the Buddha's first teachings concerning life and the way of Buddhism. It states that: 1) life is suffering (dukkha); 2) suffering has a cause; 3) there is a way to end the cause of suffering; and 4) the way to do this is to follow the Eight-fold Path.

**FUDOMYO** The Immovable One; he represents the will to enlightenment amidst greed, hate, and delusion.

**FUKUETSU** The assistant Ino (the one who leads services when the Ino is absent).

**FUSATSU** The ceremony, usually held twice a month, for the renewal of vows taken at Jukai. Based on the centuries-old ceremony of Upasatha (twice-monthly recital of the precepts), fusatsu allows us to both renew our vows and rededicate ourselves to practice. It consists of bowing, reciting the Gatha of Atonement for one's evil karma, vowing to be one with the Past Seven Buddhas, reciting the Four Great Vows, and the Adoration of the Three Treasures.

**FUSHINZAMU** Each day for a set time, everybody sets aside their regular jobs and cleans the Center's grounds and buildings. An integral part of practice, Fushinzamu is a wonderful opportunity to express our zazen as samu and group practice. It is also a chance to work with people who would normally have different jobs, and thus brings the Sangha closer together.

**GAITAN** The entry areas immediately outside of the zendo. In the case of Hazy Moon, the landing at the head of the stairs.

**GAKKI** Memorial Service for well-known Masters in our lineage.

**GASSHO** Mudra of placing the two palms together.

**GATHA** A verse of four or more lines. Different Gathas are chanted during the day at monasteries and Zen centers: before talks, during meals, etc.

**GENJO-KOAN** "Life is Enlightenment". The great master Dogen Zenji's most famous chapter of his book, Shobo-genzo.

**GODO** A Godo is a building used as a second zendo and as a place for seminars.

**HAISHIKI** The mat at which the officiant stands and does his bows during services.

**HAKAMA** The black skirt-like garment worn both by men and women during zazen.

**HAKO** The incense box brought in by the Jiko during services.

**HAKUIN ZENJI** The modern Patriarch of Japanese "Rinzai" Zen, Hakuin Zenji systematized Koan study into the form by which it is known today. All modern Rinzai Masters trace their lineage through him.

**HAN** Hanging wooden block on which a mallet is struck to announce the time for zazen.

**HANAMATSURI** A festival celebrating the Buddha's birthday. Observed on April 8th.

**HARA** The region in the lower abdomen that is the seat of awareness in zazen. It is located approximately two inches below the navel.

**HIGAN** The services held to celebrate the spring and autumn equinoxes.

**HINAYANA** The "smaller vehicle" of Buddhism. Based on the Pali canon (Tripitaka), the emphasis is on individual enlightenment only. Dominant tradition in Southeast Asia.

## Question Box

*A Spot for the Curious*

How does practicing meditation influence your day?

Or your sleeping hours?

Email your reply to:

[Shelley.a.quinn@comcast.net](mailto:Shelley.a.quinn@comcast.net)

Replies to be posted in the March issue. ♦

## ZAZEN SERVICES

SUNDAY SERVICES AT 6:00 PM TO 7:30PM

**NEWCOMERS' MEDITATION INSTRUCTION:**

EVERY WEDNESDAY

AT 7:00 PM

**DHARMA DISCUSSION GROUP:**

FEBRUARY 26<sup>TH</sup>, 2006

AT 6:00 PM

DHARMA DISCUSSION AND TELECONFERENCE WITH *TaiUn*  
MICHAEL ELLISTON, ABBOTT, ATLANTA SOTO ZEN CENTER  
TOPIC: WHAT IS A BODHISATVA, AND WHAT DOES ONE LOOK  
LIKE? LED BY *BODHIN* GARY BEARD

**LOOKING FORWARD:**

MAY 12 - 14, 2006

WEEKEND SESSHIN

FEATURING GUEST TEACHER FROM ATLANTA SOTO ZEN CENTER

**CONTACT JIM GORDON FOR MORE INFO:**

(256) 882-0513 (HOME)

(256) 426-3344 (CELL PHONE)

**OR GO TO THE WEBSITE:**

**HOSAN** (lit. no dokusan) - Means no scheduled activities (a day off).

**HOSSEN** A ceremony at the end of Ango, in which the Shuso (Head Monk or Trainee) holds Dharma Combat with the trainees and others.

**HOSSU** Originally a fly-whisk, the hossu is now used by the officiant during special services.

**IHAI** A memorial tablet with the deceased's name and date of death. It is placed on the altar during memorial services for that person.

**INKIN** Small handbell struck with a metal beater.

**INO** One of the head positions in the zendo, the Ino is the leader of the services being held there.

**INRYO** Abbot's quarters.

**JAKUGO** A phrase which a student presents to this teacher during dokusan to sum up his understanding of a Koan.

**JIKIDO** The time-keeper for the zendo.

**JIKO** The assistant to the jisha for zendo activities. The Jiko brings the hako in and out of the zendo during services.

**JISHA** The attendant of a teacher, the Jisha works with the teacher during interviews (dokusan, daisan, etc.) and also attends to the teacher's personal needs.

**JIZO BODHISATTVA (BOSATSU)** One of the major bodhisattvas, Jizo is the protector of children and beings suffering in hell

**JORIKI** Literally means "power of mind". The long term strength that is carried through everyday life by the raising of concentration. With strong joriki, one can direct the mind in any direction, at any time.

**JUBAN** The half-kimono undergarment worn under kimono or robe.

**JUKAI** The ceremony at which one receives the Precepts and becomes a lay Buddhist. This ceremony both acknowledges who we are and our commitment to realize and actualize our self. Through Jukai, one becomes a member of the Buddhist family and establish a special connection between the preceptor and oneself. The ceremony is begun with nine bows: three each to Manjusri Bodhisattva, one's parents, and the preceptor (Sensei). The student then receives the Sixteen Precepts (that is, the Three Treasures, the Three Pure Precepts, and the Ten Grave Precepts). After vowing to maintain them, the student then receives a Dharma (Buddhist) name, rakusu, and lineage chart, and receives greetings from everyone present (jahai). Jukai is also called Zaike Tokudo or "remaining-at-home-ordination."

**JUNKO** Walking with the waking stick (kyosaku).

**JUNRYO** Ceremony of offering incense at home altars.

**KAAN** Assistant to the shika (guest-master).

**KAISANDO** Founder's shrine room.

**KANSHO** The bell hit by the jikido to signal the beginning and end of zazen periods.

**KARMA** Cause and Effect. From an absolute standpoint, karma is the circumstance of the moment. Relatively, it is the endless chain of cause and effect that defines the future events of an individuals life.

**KEISU** A large gong used during services.

**KEIZAN ZENJI** The Fourth Patriarch of the Soto School in Japan. Keizan Zenji was largely responsible for the spread of Soto Zen and noted for his meticulous instructions regarding all aspects of monastic life.

**KENSHO** The experience of seeing ones true nature. Rising to the surface and being fully awake.

**KENTAN** Checking rounds done before dawn zazen (and before sesshin) by the most senior teacher present.

**KESA** The outer-most monk's robe which is worn over one shoulder by monks and nuns. It goes over the koromo. It originated in India and is symbolic of the Buddha's robes. It is received during the shukke tokudo ceremony.

**KIMONO** The undergarment worn beneath robes (monk or lay).

**KINHIN** Walking zazen done between periods of seated zazen.

**KOAN** A brief anecdote recording an exchange between master and disciple or a master's enlightenment experience. Koans are used to bring a student to realization or to help clarify his enlightenment. At this center, the implication is that we study ourselves by studying koans.

**KOKONOHAI** Ceremony of leaving the temple.

**KORO** Incense bowl.

**KOROMO** The outer full, black robe worn by monks and nuns during services and zazen. This robe originated in China.

**KOTSU** Short, wooden stick used by senior officiants during service.

**KYOSAKU** Literally, "waking stick"; a wooden stick used to encourage and wake up people during zazen. At this center it is not used if it is not asked for.

**MAHAYANA** The "greater" vehicle of Buddhism, Mahayana developed in India and spread to China, Japan, and Korea. It emphasizes compassion and the bodhisattva ideal of saving all sentient beings. It originated as a lay movement.

**MAKYO** Illusions, fantasies, or hallucinations that sometimes arise during zazen; by continuing to sit, these makyō are dispelled.

**MANJUSRI BODHISATTVA (MONJU)** One of the three principal bodhisattvas, Manjusri is the personification of wisdom and is often depicted riding a lion. (The lion symbolizes strength and bravery.)

**MANTRA** A short scripture, similar to a dharani, which is chanted to aid concentration, or to express the essence of a sutra.

**MOKUGYO** (J. Fish) wooden drum used to keep the beat while chanting. It is traditionally shaped like a fish.

**MUDRA** Symbolic hand positions or gestures.

**NENJU** A ceremony at the end of the week thanking the teacher for his teaching and declaring the beginning of Hosan.

**NIRVANA** The final liberation where nothing else could be more pure. Nirvana has no conditions. No cause, no effect.

- NIRVANA DAY** February 15th, the day upon which the Buddha left this life and passed into Parinirvana (Nirvana after life).
- NYOI** A short wooden staff symbolizing the nyoi jewel, which is capable of removing all suffering. A symbol for the Three Treasures.
- NYUDONOHAI** Trainee entering ceremony held in the zendo after a trainee has done the one-day sitting.
- OBI** The belt-like garment used to hold kimonos closed and in place under robes.
- O-BON** Festival held in summer to commemorate and transfer merit to one's ancestors, especially those recently departed. This festival is accompanied by a service (segaki) and offerings. Bon is from the Sanscrit word, "Ullambara" (being hung upside down) and symbolizes the suffering of all beings. This service is to relieve that suffering.
- ORYOKI** O = to respond; ryo = capacity; ki = container. Oryoki symbolizes our life as the container which fully responds to its needs. The term "oryoki" is most often used to refer to the nested set of eating bowls which we use during formal meals in the zendo. Specifically it is the first (Buddha bowl) bowl.
- OSHO** Priest. The first stage of priesthood, obtained after having shiho.
- PRACTICE** The term may be used in one way to refer to one's continued zazen (i.e., one's "practice") or understood in a broader sense to include any and all aspects of one's life as practice.
- PRECEPTS** Teachings regarding personal conduct, which are both ethical guidelines and, more broadly, aspects of reality itself. At both jukai and tokudo ceremonies, sixteen precepts (kai) are received.
- RAKUSU** The smallest of the Buddhist robes, the rakusu is made of five strips of cloth which are sewn together and suspended from the neck by a cloth halter. It is worn by monks, nuns, and lay persons. It is received during the jukai ceremony.
- ROSHI** literally means "venerable teacher". A rarely received title in which the one who receives it has been widely recognized as a Master of the Dharma.
- RYO** The designation for a group of people who all serve one particular function in the zendo (e.g., Doan-ryo: all those who function as doans during service).
- RYOBAN** The positions to the east and west of the altar filled by the administrative and training officials during services and ceremonies.
- SADDHARMA PUNDARIKA SUTRA (LOTUS SUTRA: J: MYOHO RENGE KYO)** A presentation of Buddha's teaching, in verse and prose, of the one vehicle and all beings being able to attain perfect enlightenment. One of the most widely read Buddhist texts.
- SAMADHI** Even absorption. A state of absorption attained through intense concentration. Once concentration has reached a certain level in meditation, rather than the absorption leaving the persons everyday life, it maintains and carries itself.
- SAMANTABHADRA BODHISATTVA (J: FUGEN)** One of the three principal bodhisattvas, Samantabhadra is associated with practice and active love.
- SAMBO** Platform shaped tray used to carry different ritual items.
- SAMU** Communal work done at the Center. Samu is working zazen.
- SANGEMON** The gatha of repentance chanted during fusatsu.
- SAYUMONJUN** Standing bows done after the morning meal; done to the left, right, and center.
- SENSEI** Lit. "one who goes before on the path." A certified Teacher.
- SESSHIN** An intensive meditation retreat lasting from two to ten days. Sesshin offers the best opportunity for deep, intense practice, and should be approached with an attitude of total willingness to give one's all.
- SETSU** The scraper (spatula) used to wipe and clean the eating bowls during formal meals. In Japan a cloth-tipped stick is used.
- SEVENTY-TWO LABORS** The traditional number of positions (jobs) in a Japanese monastery.
- SHASHU** Hand position used when walking or standing in the zendo (left hand in a fist, thumb tucked in and covered by the right hand; both are placed against the solar plexus).
- SHIHO (TRANSMISSION)** The week-long ceremony in which an accomplished student becomes a Dharma successor to a master, and is recognized by him/her as a Teacher (Sensei). This is a Soto sect term.
- SHIKANTAZA** The purest form of sitting meditation literally meaning "just sitting." According to Dogen Zenji, it is a state of brightly alert attention that is free of thought, directed to no object, and attached to no particular content.
- SHOJI** Attendant to Manjusri (image on the zendo altar); makes offering during formal meals.
- SHOKEI** Small keisu (gong).
- SHOKEN NO HAI** Shoken = to meet individually; hai = bowing. This ceremony is a formal expression of the relationship that the teacher and student have entered into.
- SHOKI** The head monk's assistant for Ango.
- SHOSAN** A public Dharma dialogue presented in a ritualized, ceremonial style. The Shosanshi (Shosan leader, either Teacher or a senior monk) gives a short Dharma talk and then holds dialogue with those attending the event. These students come up one at a time and kneel facing the Shosanshi. They either ask a question or make a comment on the opening talk given by the Shosanshi; dialogue ensues. Traditionally, the shosan form was the only means for study with a teacher; only in later Zen history did private study develop. Shosan is generally held once a month during intensive training periods and may or may not be held at other times.
- SHOSU** A service position: the person who plays the densho and sometimes the han.
- SHUKKE TOKUDO** see Tokudo.
- SHUSO** The head monk for Ango.
- SHUSO HOSSEN** Ceremony of testing the Shuso's understanding (aka Dharma Combat).

**SIX PARAMITAS** The perfections practiced by the bodhisattva. They are prajna (wisdom), dana (giving), virya (effort), dhyana (meditation), kshanti (patience), and sila (kai or precepts).

**SIX REALMS** The different states of existence (heavenly beings, human, animal, hungry ghosts, fighting spirits, hell-dwellers) that symbolize different aspects of our -life.

**SIX TASTES** Bitter, sour, sweet, hot, salty, and bland.

**SOGEI** The person who rings the hand-bell (inkan) to lead the officiant in and out of the zendo. The Sogei is one of the three attendants.

**SUTRA** A dialogue or sermon attributed to the Buddha. The sutras and their commentaries form one-third of the Buddhist Canon. (The other two parts are the Shastras and Abhidharma.)

**TABI** White sock-like garments worn by monks, nuns, and other seniors for gakki and other special services.

**TAN** Raised platform seats in the zendo upon which people sit for zazen.

**TANTO** The person in charge of the zendo.

**TATAMI** Straw mats upon which one places a zabuton and zafu.

**TEISHO** A talk given by a roshi, usually on a koan or other Zen text. Teisho manifests the "mind" or living spirit (as opposed to an intellectual explanation) and should be grasped by the student with the body-mind. Dharma Talks are given by a sensei, assistant teacher, or special guests, and can be either very similar to teisho or a more general presentation on some aspect of Buddhism.

**TEN VIRTUES** Virtues coming from the food we eat. These ten are physical strength, substance, long life and pleasure, maintaining training, cleansing the body, settling the mind, satisfying hunger and thirst, and improving health.

**TENKEI DENSON** One of the most important modern Soto Zen masters, he is responsible for the reformation of the Soto School. He is also one of the major commentators on Dogen Zenji's writings.

**TENZO** Person in charge of the kitchen at a monastery or Zen center.

**THREE WORLDS** (a) The worlds of desire, form, and formlessness; or b) The past, present, and future.

**TOKUDO** The ceremony at which one becomes a monk or nun. At this ceremony, the prospective monk or nun renews his or her vows and receives the robes and bowls.

**UNSUI (LIT., CLOUDS AND WATER)** A term used to refer to monks who have not yet had shiho.

**VAJRAYANA** The Diamond Vehicle, a form of Buddhism developed in Tibet. It emphasizes the guru-disciple relationship.

**ZABUTON** Flat, black mat upon which a zafu is placed.

**ZAFU (LIT. SITTING CUSHION)** Round, black cushion used for zazen.

**ZAGU** Foldable cloth mat upon which monks and nuns do their bows.

**ZAIKE TOKUDO** see Jukai.

**ZAZEN** literally means "sitting absorption". The most concentrative meditative form of zen practice. Zazen is the fastest means to awakening

**ZAZENKAI** One-day retreat.

**ZENDO** Meditation hall.

