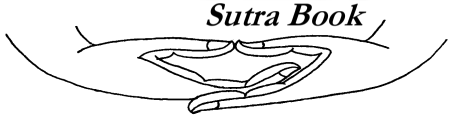
Hollow Bones

Sutra Book



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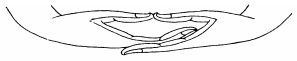

Clearly understand

Use wisely

"What is most essential is the practice of Dhyana, meditative mindfulness, which enables us to experience the Absolute Purity of our deepest nature and to hold that transpersonal truth in the complexity of our personal lives."

Jun Po

~ Dedication ~

This sutra book is dedicated to

Abraham, Siddhartha Gautama, Nagarjuna, Jesus, Patanjali, Lin Chi I Hsuan, Muhammad, Mirabai, Mohandas Gandhi,

Martin Luther King Jr., Mother Teresa and all of our teachers' minds

Prajnaparamita (Mother of all)

All Matriarchs, all Patriarchs

All Dhyana Lineage Holders

Including

Bodhi Dharma,

Hakuin Ekaku, Soen Nakagawa and

Eido T. Shimano

All true Yogis

Including Krishnamacharya

BKS Iyengar and K.P. Jois

The Sufi poet Jelaluddin Rumi

Aikido O-Sensei Morihei Ueshiba

And All True Teachers throughout time.

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Atta Dipa

You are This Light

Leader:

(You are this light) pure selfless awareness.
Rely upon selfless awareness.
Do not rely upon concepts of self and other that appear.
Do not depend upon beliefs, sensations, and emotions, which arise and fall away.
Meditative awareness, clear intention, acting wisely, compassionately and skillfully are this practice.
Rely upon this only!
Rely upon this ceaselessly!

Everyone:

I am this light, pure selfless awareness.
I rely upon selfless awareness.
I do not rely upon concepts of self and other that appear.
I do not depend upon beliefs, sensations, and emotions, which arise and fall away.
Meditative awareness, clear intention, acting wisely, compassionately and skillfully are this practice.
I rely upon this only!
I rely upon this ceaselessly!

Leader:

Mission Statement

Everyone:

We are a sacred order
bringing into being
a harmonious and loving world,
through the practice
of meditative, compassionate awareness
and mindful stewardship.

Leader:

Purification

Everyone:

All of the deluded behavior
ever manifested by me
because of my beginningless greed,
anger and ignorance,
born of my body, speech and mind,
Through meditation and action
I now confess and purify.

Leader:

Three Refuges

Everyone:

I take refuge
in the absolute purity
of this Awakened Mind!

(Buddha)

I take refuge
in this practice
of pure selfless awareness,
wisdom, compassion
and skillful means!

(Dharma)

I take refuge
in this awakening community
and our realization in the truth
of the interconnection,
interpenetration and interdependency
of all sentient and insentient beings everywhere!

(Sangha)

Leader:

Opening This Dharma

Everyone:

This Dharma,
incomparably profound
and minutely subtle,
is rarely met with,
even in hundreds
of thousands
of millions of eons.
We can now see this truth,
listen to this truth,
accept and hold this truth.
May we completely understand
and actualize
this Enlightened Being's
true meaning!

Sutra Leader:

Great Wisdom Heart Sutra

Everyone:

Avalokitesvara, an Awakened One of great compassion, experiencing the clear deep truth of the transcendent wisdom of meditative awareness, clearly saw that all of the images, thoughts, feelings and emotional states of ego mind are empty of any permanent self-nature. Realizing this, he immediately transcended mental confusion and ego suffering and told Shariputra:

Remember that all manifested forms are no other than this emptiness. Emptiness is no other than all these manifested forms. Form is exactly emptiness, emptiness is exactly form. All of our thoughts, feelings, concepts, conscious states and volitional actions are also like this. We must remember that even spiritual life and practice are fundamentally empty. Within this deep meditative awareness, there is no birth, no death, nothing can be defiled, nothing is pure, nothing can increase, nothing can decrease.

Hence, in this emptiness, there is no form, no feeling, no thought, no volition, and no consciousness. There are no eyes, no ears, no nose, no tongue, no body, and no mind. There is no seeing, no hearing, no smelling, no tasting, no touching, and no thinking. There is no world of sight, no world of consciousness. There is no ignorance and no end to ignorance. There is no aging leading to old age and death and no end to aging leading to old age and death. There is no suffering, no craving, no extinction, no path, no wisdom and no attainment. Indeed, there is nothing to be attained.

The Awakened Ones rely upon this transcendent wisdom and experience no ego confusion or hindrance in this mind. No hindrance, therefore, no fear. Far beyond upside down views at last, this enlightened mind we call Nirvana.

Past, present and future, all Awakened Ones, all compassionate ones, rely upon this transcendent wisdom of meditative awareness and, therefore, experience the most supreme awakening: Enlightenment.

Thus, know that transcendent wisdom is the greatest dharani, the brightest dharani, the incomparable dharani. This practice can completely clear the mind and end all ego suffering. This is the truth, not a deception.

So embody this transcendent wisdom, manifest this wisdom, proclaim this dharani and Awaken!

Tadyatha!
Gate, Gate, Para Gate,
Parasam Gate,
Bodhi Swaha!

(Heart Sutra Dharani: the embodiment & manifestation of the teaching it contains—Sanskrit 100-300 C.E.)

Pure Awareness is transcending,
ever transcending,
transcending transcendence,
transcending even the
transcendence of transcendence.
This is Awakened Mind!
Swaha!

Lex Hixon

Dedication

Sutra Leader:

Pure Awareness pervades the whole Universe,
revealing this Self, right here, right now.
Within this service, let us realize and unite with this infinitely compassionate universal life.
Let us dedicate to:

Everyone:

Abraham, Siddhartha Gautama, Nagarjuna,
Jesus, Patanjali, Lin Chi I Hsuan,
Muhammad, Mirabai, Hakuin, Mohondas Gandhi,
Martin Luther King Jr., Mother Teresa and all of our teachers' minds:
All Matriarchs, all Patriarchs,
Our pure meditative mind,
Our truly Awakened Mind,
Our heartfelt mind,
Our truly compassionate mind,
Our pure discernment mind,
Our wisdom mind.
Past, present, future – all Awakened Minds.

Let true Dharma continue.
Let universal wisdom,
compassion and awakening
become complete.

Throughout the ten directions
and the three times, all Awakened Ones,
venerable ones, compassionate ones,
great ones rely upon this incomparable,
transcendent wisdom.

Sutra Leader:

Pure Awareness Dharani

Everyone:

Look, look, Pure Awareness,
Pure Awareness yes!

Pure Awareness is embodied,
is embodied, is embodied!

Pure Awareness, my awareness,
your awareness, all awareness!

Pure Awareness, this awareness,
this awareness, this awareness.
Awake! *Swaha!*

After last line, Everyone shout:
Know/Nooooooooooo!!!!!!

Chanting Instructions:

- Chant the first line looking out with great intentional clarity.
- Chant the second line feeling deeply the fact of conscious embodiment.
- Chant the third line while identifying the consciousness in all three locations.
- Chant the fourth line in a state of appreciation, gratitude and celebration. *Awake! Swaha!*

Sutra Leader:

Awakened One's Vow

Everyone:

When I, a Bodhisattva of no rank, look through awakened eyes at the real form of this universe, all that appears is the never-ending, never-failing manifestation of the mysterious unfolding of truth. In any event, in any moment, and in any place, none can be other than the marvelous revelation of the interplay of this glorious light.

This realization has been the transformational moment causing all of our masters and mentors, patriarchs and matriarchs, to experience true freedom and joy beyond comprehension and to then extend tender care, with a worshipping heart, to all beings, beasts and birds, trees and flowers, even rocks and waters.

This realization teaches us, reveals to us, that our daily food and drink, clothes and protections of life, are the very warm flesh and blood, the merciful incarnation of this ever-present living, divine mystery.

Who then can be ungrateful or disrespectful, even to senseless things, as well as to human beings? Even though some may appear to be fools or so-called enemies, we will remember to be warm and compassionate toward them.

If by chance they should turn against us, abuse and persecute us, we will remember our fearless heart, our path of wisdom, compassion,

nonviolence, and skillful means. Before
we react, we will consider deeply our
personal and collective karma that brought
these conditions and circumstances upon ourselves.

Then, with each moment's arising flash
of our normal feelings and thoughts,
we will simultaneously recognize within us
a field of pure awareness, wisdom, compassion
and skillful means.

All of our minds will now reveal a true Awakened One:
a Christ, a Buddha, a Tara,
compassionately aware and ready,
fearless and wise,
acting skillfully and appropriately.
Then, all of our combined actions
will create a new world,
a world of love and caring,
defended and ordered.

May we awaken and recognize this Mind
throughout the whole universe,
so that we and all beings together
may experience maturity
in Awakened Mind wisdom!

Master Torei

Sutra Leader:

Four Awakened Vows

Everyone:

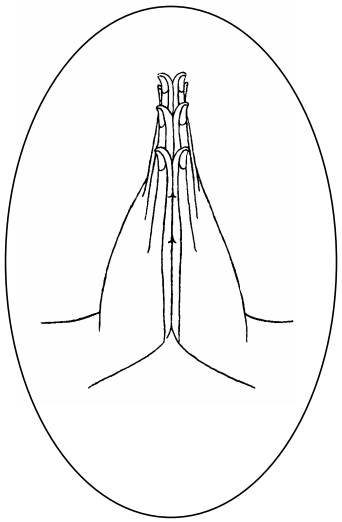
However innumerable
all beings are,
I vow to serve and liberate them all!

However deep and elusive
my shadow states are,
I vow to experience and enlighten them all!

However vast and difficult
true teachings are,
I vow to embody and master them all!

However endless
my true path may be,
I vow to awaken and follow forever!

(Four Bows)



Sutra Leader:

Tara Dharani

Everyone:

Om Tare, Tuttare, Ture Swaha

OM ……Homage to Tara
TARE ……Quick One, Heroine
TUTTARE ……Liberator from all fears
TURE ……Granting all alms
SWAHA ……...To this I bow, Hail!

Tara is universal awakened
compassionate feminine being, and yet far
beyond all gender (Avalokitesvara).
With this chant, we manifest this energy.

Invocation to Kanzeon
The Embodiment of Compassion

Sutra Leader:

Enmei Jukku Kannon Gyo

Everyone:

KAN ZE ON
NA MU BUTSU
YO BUTSU U IN
YO BUTSU U EN
BU PO SO EN
JO RAKU GA JO
CHO NEN KAN ZE ON
BO NEN KAN ZE ON
NEN NEN JU SHIN KI
NEN NEN FU RI SHIN

Translation:

Kanzeon! Salutation and devotion to Buddha!
We are one with Buddha (Awakened Mind)
in cause and effect related to all Buddhas
and to Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha.
Our true nature is eternal, joyous,
selfless and pure.
So let us chant every morning Kanzeon
with Nen! Every evening Kanzeon with Nen!
Nen, Nen arises from Mind!
Nen, Nen is not separate from Mind.

(*Nen is pure Awareness!)*

Sutra Leader:

Awakening Dharani

Everyone:

Awake AHA! Awake OHO!

Direction	Chakra	Intention	State	Awareness
Up	Crown	Enlightenment	Spirit	Consciousness
Center	Heart	Compassion	Spirit & Soul	Unconditional Love
Down	Root	Subconscious	Soul	Conditional Love

Chanting Instruction:

Chant from deep down in your abdomen. Inhale and whisper AWAKE through a partially open mouth. Focus your inhalation in the center of your heart and send a radiant compassionate vibration throughout every cell in your body. Extend this energy infinitely in all directions. Look up, lift your chin, eyes, and open your mouth. Look through pure spirit (Pure Awareness).

Exhale AHA, contracting your lower abdomen and diaphragm. Clear the mind of any views. Inhale, whispering AWAKE through your partially open mouth. Focus your inhalation in the center of your heart, bring your head back to center. Send radiant, compassionate vibrations throughout every cell in your body and infinitely in all directions.

Exhale completely, mouth open. Bend forward at the waist, lean your head toward your knees. Exhale completely, accentuating OHO! Direct this energy to enter deeply into your subconscious mind and release attachments to feelings and story.

Whisper AWAKE through your partially opened mouth. Inhale deeply. Lift your head and return to your beginning position, eyes closed. Focus your inhalation in the center of your heart. Send radiant, compassionate vibration throughout every cell in your body, extending infinitely in all directions. Exhale AHA. . . . . Repeat.

Intention:

The purpose of this practice is to revitalize our body, refresh our mind and deepen our concentration with a short and quick technique of breath mantra practice. This practice will not only re-establish mental clarity, it can also penetrate into and loosen the shadow aspect of ego.

Five Training Elements

Sacred Stewardship

What is sacred stewardship? What does this stewardship include? How am I as an individual fulfilling my commitment to stewardship, and am I acting with integrity in this chosen responsibility? How do the patterns of my consumption affect the earth and environment I live within? On what do I spend my energy and money? How does stewardship relate to community? Does a good steward have an organic standard?

Do I take a stand? If so, where?

Philosophical and Cognitive Re-indoctrination

How do I, as a contemplative being who seeks to understand and walk in conscious spirituality, think differently? What are the core statements about spirit and consciousness that I base my thinking upon? What story do I tell myself and others about the deepest qualities of spirit, and how does this story influence behavior in my life? Do I choose the clarity of wisdom and non-judgmental awareness and the warmth of compassion over self-righteousness and selfishness?

Am I willing to change my mind?

Emotional Maturity and Integrity

Am I capable of experiencing the deeper feelings of fear, sadness, grief and compassion which underlie my normal conditioned reactions of anger and shame ? Am I then willing to choose to respond from the truth of compassion that this deeper realization brings forth?

Do I realize that I choose my reactions to feelings, and am I willing to make other choices? Am I willing to stay mindful and watch a negative reaction like anger or shame manifest, and then skillfully and compassionately choose another response? Do I realize the angst of negative emotional reactions as liberating Emotional Koans, and embrace these opportunities for Mondo Zen transformational practice?

Am I willing to enter into transformational awareness and actually change the way I react and feel?

Conscious Embodiment

Am I comfortable and at ease in my body? Am I fit and ready to respond as a warrior who might need to defend his/her family? Do I delight in this body enough to give a dance performance at the drop of a hat?

Is it necessary to have a conscious embodiment practice to remain physically aware and fit?

Genuine Insight

Have I tasted the pure, sweet truth of the Divinity within myself? Do I consider my personal insight and self-realization adequate? Have I experienced the freedom that is promised and offered by all of the contemplative traditions?

Where could the kingdom of heaven really lie if not within me?

Three Cultural Poisons

Denial – The environment is fine.
Cynicism – What can I ~ one person ~ do?
Hypocrisy – My behavior is exemplary.

Meditation ***Instruction:***

Meditation Practice in our tradition follows the Koan forms of our ancient Chinese and Japanese Zen schools. ZEN is how the Japanese translate the word CHAN, the Chinese pronunciation of the Sanskrit word DHYANA. Dhyana means effortless, empty compassionate awareness (Clear Deep Heart/Mind). Concentration/ Meditation leads to the realization and experience of this awareness and compassion. This realization is accomplished in two linked stages of practice: Dharana and Dhyana. Samadhi (Unreasonable Enjoyment) is the result of this practice realization.

Concentration or Dharana is the first stage of meditation practice. Concentration practice is essential! We concentrate and bring the mind to a "single point" by silently repeating a word. In this way, we can experience silent mindfulness, Clear Deep Heart/Mind, mind deeper than whatever is arising within it. When we experience pure silence, we discover our true nature. Our concentration practices (dharana), although extremely valuable, are ultimately just preparatory. They deliver us to our deeper goal, the realization of Deep Clear Heart/Mind (dhyana). Concentration practices without clear understanding can cause ego reinforcement and rigidity. Traditionally this problem of ego inflation and rigidity has been called "Zen disease."

When concentration and meditation are properly understood and practiced, we develop insight into the clear empty nature of our mind; hence, ego-deflation, openness and compassion occur naturally.

Characterizing ego as a permanent separate entity that must be annihilated is a common confused practice view. Such a misunderstanding can lead to the trap of nihilism. Our Zen practice view is that an ego is just a temporary arising self-reference point in a field of pure consciousness, "a figment of divine imagination."

Clear Deep Heart/Mind awareness or Dhyana (Zen) is the second stage of meditation training. When we achieve one-pointed concentration, there is a realization of non-opinionated, imperturbable, effortless, compassionate mind. This insight realization is a knowing of ourselves deeper than our thinking, feeling and sensing. In our meditation practice, we look out from and directly into who we are beyond our senses - no one!

This practice must not just accomplish an intellectual speculative understanding. The insight within this practice must come from an actual realization. After this profound visceral realization, we can transform our ordinary way of understanding ourselves and our world.

Through this practice we experience our ego as just a temporary, self-referencing process, a "figment of divine imagination" that arises in the pure silent space of spirit within us called Shunyata and Emptiness in the Zen tradition, and "soul" in the mystical Christian and Vedanta traditions.

It is generally necessary to continue practicing Dharana concentration to maintain a stable experience of Dhyana, Clear Deep Heart/Mind.

Samadhi or Unreasonable Enjoyment describes "ordinary mind" after experiencing philosophical re-indoctrination, genuine insight, and emotional transformation. There is a new appreciation in experiencing the delightful quality of ordinary mind. This deconstruction of our ego and consummate experience of fearless emptiness effortlessly reveals great compassion. In time, we ultimately recognize that "Emptiness is form; Form is emptiness" (Great Wisdom Heart Sutra). Samadhi is called "unreasonable" because it is not caused, violated or confined by any thought, feeling, or sensing experience. Samadhi is called "enjoyment" because within this realization, we experience a subtle state of joy. This joy comes with the gift of life.

After realizing this, we can consciously and compassionately embrace all of the experiences of our lives, not only the so-called *good*, but also the so-called *bad*. Clear Deep Heart/Mind does not react superficially but sees clearly everything as it is while remaining imperturbable and equanimous, responding compassionately to our ever-changing circumstances. After this realization and clarification of understanding, compassion and right action follow naturally. This state is not to be confused with dissociation, denial of life experience, or even some state of manic bliss. This Samadhi allows us to be fully engaged in life while aware of our true nature. This realization is the fruit of mature practice. Remember:

"ORDINARY CLEAR DEEP HEART/MIND IS THE WAY!"

Meditation Form Instruction

Sit with your spine comfortably erect. If on a cushion, sit with your hips elevated slightly above your knees, weight on your sit bones, hips tilted slightly forward. Let your eyes be softly open. Drop your gaze to the floor three to six feet in front of you. Blink when necessary. If you cannot sit in comfort perfectly still for thirty minutes, it is essential that you look deeply into your psychology and conscious embodiment practices and discover why you cannot. Your psychology and body are telling you something!

Place your hands in your lap and form the Dhyana mudra, the mudra of meditation hands in your lap, thumb tips touching. Or place your hands palms down on your thighs or knees, thumb and tips of index fingers touching in the Gyan Mudra, the mudra of Self knowledge. We call this two-hands-on-knees Gyan form the Mondo Mudra.

Soften and deepen your breath. Drop your chin. Have your tongue rest lightly on the upper palate just behind your teeth. Allow your attention to follow the flow of your breath perfectly.

Now begin "Insight Koan" concentration practice with Tang Dynasty Chinese Zen master Joshu's Mu Koan, "Does a dog have Buddha nature?" Joshu answered, "Wu" (no in Chinese). The Japanese answer, "Mu"; in English we answer, "NO." We practice this Koan using the words "KNOW" on the in breath and "NO" on the out breath.

What did he mean Know/No?

With your in-breath, silently recite the word "KNOW." Follow the word into the pure receptive silence within you. On the out breath recite "NO." Remember, this "NO" is not in opposition to anything but a bringing forth and presenting the deeper silence from within. Every time your mind wanders off with distracting thoughts or feelings, gently and firmly bring it back to the sensation of breath and the awareness in which the words "KNOW" and "NO" are arising.

This practice is a foundation for awakening. Stabilizing our mind, realizing the openness, silence, fearless imperturbability, freedom and ultimate emptiness of mind is Dhyana, Clear Deep Heart/Mind.

Inevitably, this Koan KNOW/NO! Becomes YES! Samadhi!

When you finally realize that all of the joy and sorrow of your life is a sacred gift and that your ego is indeed just a temporary, value-weighting view, a figment of divine imagination, you will experience a new state of freedom, gratitude, compassion and enjoyment of conscious being. This new enjoyable way of understanding, feeling and being is traditionally called Samadhi, or Enlightenment.

These meditation practices form the last two steps on our traditional eight-step Zen practice path to an awakened, liberated and compassionate life. These are the eight steps of this traditional path:

1. Clear view/understanding
2. Precise purpose, thought/feeling
3. Honest speech
4. Compassionate action
5. Conscious livelihood
6. Great effort/determination and passion
7. Deep concentration/meditation
8. Liberating Samadhi

We address, walk, and accomplish this path through our following five training elements:

1. Sacred Stewardship
2. Philosophical and Cognitive Re-indoctrination
3. Emotional Maturity and Integrity
4. Conscious Embodiment
5. Genuine Insight

Hollow Bones Rinzai Zen Lineage

GAUTAMA SAKYA	MUNI				
MAHA KASYAPA	MUNI	PU TI TA MO	CHANSHI	NAM PO SHO MYO	ZENJI
ANANDA	MUNI	TAI TSU HUI KO	CHANSHI	SHU HO MYO CHO	ZENJI
SANA VASA	MUNI	CHIEN CHI SENG TSAN	CHANSHI	KAN ZAN E GEN	ZENJI
UPA GUPTA	MUNI	TA I TAO HSIN	CHANSHI	JU O SO HITSU	ZENJI
DHRI TAKA	MUNI	TA MAN HUNG JEN	CHANSHI	MU IN SO IN	ZENJI
MIC CHAKA	MUNI	TA CHIEN HUI NENG	CHANSHI	NIP PO SO SHUN	ZENJI
VASU MITRA	MUNI	NAN YUEH HUAI JANG	CHANSHI	GI TEN GEN SHO	ZENJI
BUDDHA NANDI	MUNI	MA TSU TAO I	CHANSHI	SEK KO SO SHIN	ZENJI
BUDDHA MITRA	MUNI	PAI CHANG HUAI HAI	CHANSHI	TO YO E CHO	ZENJI
PARSVA	MUNI	HUANG PO HSI YUN	CHANSHI	TAI GA TAN KYO	ZENJI
PUNYA YASAS	MUNI	LIN CHI I HSUAN	CHANSHI	KO HO GEN KUN	ZENJI
ASVA GHOSHA	MUNI	HSING HAU TSUN CHAING	CHANSHI	SEN SHO ZUI SHO	ZENJI
KAPI MALA	MUNI	NAN YUAN HUI YUNG	CHANSHI	IAN CHISATSU	ZENJI
NAGAR JUNA	MUNI	FENG HSUEH YEN CHAO	CHANSHI	TO ZEN SO SHIN	ZENJI
KANA DEVA	MUNI	SHOU SHAN HSING NIEN	CHANSHI	YO ZAN KEI YO	ZENJI
ARYA RAHULATA	MUNI	FEN YANG SHAN CHAO	CHANSHI	GUDO TO SHUKU	ZENJI
SANGHA NANDI	MUNI	SHIN SHUANG CHU YUAN	CHANSHI	SHIDO BUNAN	ZENJI
GAYA SATA	MUNI	YANG CHI FANG HUI	CHANSHI	DO KYO E TAN	ZENJI
KUMA RATA	MUNI	PAI YUN SHOU TUAN	CHANSHI	HAKUIN E KAKU	ZENJI
JAYATA	MUNI	WU TSU FA YEN	CHANSHI	TO REI EN JI	ZENJI

VASU BANDHU	MUNI	YUAN WU KE CHIN	CHANSHI	GASAN JITO	ZENJI
MANO RHITA	MUNI	HU CHIN SHAO LUNG	CHANSHI	TAKUJU KOSEN	ZENJI
HAKLE NAYA SAS	MUNI	YING AN TAN HUA	CHANSHI	SO ZAN GEN KYO	ZENJI
ARYA SIMHA	MUNI	MI AN HSIEN CHIEH	CHANSHI	KA SAN ZEN RYO	ZENJI
BASIA SITA	MUNI	SUN YUAN CHUNG YUEH	CHANSHI	SO HAN GEM PO	ZENJI
PUNYA MITRA	MUNI	YUN AN PU YEN	CHANSHI	GEM PO GI YU	ZENJI
PRAJNA TARA	MUNI	HSU TANG CHIH YU	CHANSHI	SO EN GEN JU	ZENJI

Throughout the ten directions and the three times,
all Matriarchs, all Patriarchs,
all Awakened Ones, venerable ones, compassionate ones, great ones,
rely upon this incomparable transcendent wisdom.

Sacred Laughter Emotional Koan

Practice responding to fear with laughter rather than reacting with anger or shame. Use an Emotional Koan.

First Round - Remember a recent incident where you reacted to fear with anger or shame. Realize how foolish, how painful this has always been. Laugh to express this realization. Not with derision, but recognizing the ignorant choice made in expressing, with anger or shame, the deep concern underlying the emotion . This has always been a foolish and ignorant choice. Heartily acknowledge this folly with joyous insight. We have been deliberately but unintentionally expressing our clear, innocent and compassionate awareness with such a lack of integrity. This is amusing. Get the Joke!

Second Round - Close your eyes and look into your body and remember an incident, a reaction to the emotion fear with anger or shame. Feel the visceral contraction. As feeling arises, recognize the empty sharp clarity of mind the feeling is arising in. Feel the concern within that clarity. Now draw your awareness into your Clear Deep Heart/Mind center. Slowly, open your eyes, inhale deeply and, as you begin to exhale, express this shame or anger with laughter. Experience the difficulty of responding with laughter instead of reacting violently, habitually. Stay connected with anger and choose your response. Release the physical and emotional contraction. Observe the quality of your consciousness during and after the process. Enjoy yourself! Get the joke! No one has ever made you angry. You have chosen anger.

Third Round - Laugh from the depth of your being for no reason other than joy, start with a subtle smile connected to the realization of the fearless core of being.

Intention

The intention of sacred laughter is to use an Emotional Koan to transform our negative emotional reactions into conscious responses. When we see the truth that we are choosing to react with violence or deliberate avoidance, this realization frees us to make other choices. We now know that we have always chosen our reactions to feeling. Practicing sacred laughter as an Emotional Koan is a foundation for Mondo Zen Emotional Koan transformational practice. Practicing sacred laughter, we realize the freedom of expression underlying the sacred gift of our emotional awareness.

Meditation alone will not transform these negative reactions to feelings. These unconscious reactions must be made conscious, and this process requires adding a skillful means to accomplish this transformation. It is essential that psychological re-education and practice be done along with meditation to finally realize that, "*Feeling is information*." In deep dhyana meditation, the feeling of fear is experienced as excitement and opportunity, and anger is experienced as intense clarity of mind and deep caring. Violent projections of anger externally or shame internally become inconceivable.

We have discovered a skillful method for transforming negative reactions into positive compassionate responses. We no longer need to react habitually, foolishly or immaturely. We do not need to repress these wonderful, rich energies. We need neither fear nor deny them. We can use them to kill or to liberate, to be violent or loving. Through this practice we transform and then:

"Our angst becomes our liberation."

Meal Reflections

Before:

Let us reflect upon our work
and the whole process and efforts
of those who brought us this food.

Let us be aware of the quality of our deeds
and the purity of this food
as we receive this meal.

What is most essential is the practice
of mindful awareness, which enables us
to understand, transform and transcend
greed, anger and ignorance.

We deeply appreciate this food, this warm flesh and
blood of life, which sustains
the good health of our bodies and minds.

In order to continue the life of true
awareness, wisdom, compassion, and skillful means,
for all beings, we accept this offering.

After:

Having finished this meal, we give thanks and
remembrance. May all beings be happy, may all
beings be loved and well fed,
may all beings awaken to find their ways.

Four Awakened Vows

However innumerable all beings are,
I vow to serve and liberate them all!

However deep and elusive
my shadow states are,
I vow to experience and enlighten them all!

However vast and difficult
true teachings are,
I vow to embody and master them all!

However endless my true path may be,
I vow to awaken and follow forever!

Sacred Silence

When we sit in silent contemplation, we are experiencing the empty depth of our ordinary minds. We need only become perfectly still and inquire within in order to experience this truth. Within ourselves, beyond our sense of ego, there is selfless purity.

Realizing this causes us to delight in all things. Anything that arises in our mind is welcome. We are imperturbable, from the very beginning at peace with this world. Our true nature – primal consciousness – illuminates our senses; our feelings and thoughts arise spontaneously.

What does this illumination look like and feel like? Where within us does this illumination take place? If you know this, how do you recognize that you know?

Sit In Silence!

Sacred Chanting

Dharani chanting is the embodied experience of an actual state of insight and intention manifested through language as a state of being. It is not just reciting words. It is the spirit presentation of Zazen wisdom and compassion, embodying Samadhi physically and emotionally within the chanting.

Chant with your whole heart,
mind, body and will!

Service Ceremony and Vows

We are conceptual beings. The language we use defines and limits our experience. We embody our thoughts. At the foundation of our ego lie core beliefs about who we think we are. The language used in our service, ceremonies, practices and vows is a process of philosophical re-education used to enlighten a confused ego-view.

The statements we make during our services and practices introduce new language, a philosophical, psychological and cognitive reorientation reflecting the attitude of an Awakened being. This new view is understood and felt as deeply as possible. In this way we are experiencing how a disciplined awakening mind thinks and feels. Our new language reflects and maintains the experience of Genuine Insight and sacred ritual in our daily lives. This change of view is essential if we are going to interrupt our ego's immediate habitual response. Un-awakened ego exploits new experiences for the sake of self-inflation by incorporating those new experiences into a familiar view.

Listen as you never have before!
Articulate, state,
ordain and understand!
Make these statements
from your pure heart!

Precepts

1. Affirm Life ~ I respect all sentient and insentient beings and always act with compassion towards them. In order to live, it is necessary for me to take life. I do so with reverence for the life taken. In gratitude, I do not take my own life for granted.
2. Act Generously ~ I act with generosity and open-handedness. I receive only things that are freely given to me. I remember that clinging and attachment are the root of suffering.
3. Be Loving ~ I am conscious and loving in all of my relationships. In sexuality, I discern the difference between love and lust and do not take advantage of other human beings. I transform the arising of lust into true loving.
4. Manifest Truth ~ I honor honesty and truth. I speak with integrity from the depth of my heart.
5. Respect Clarity ~ I act at all times with mindfulness and clarity. I do not abuse my body or cloud my mind with the misuse of intoxicants.
6. Honor Silence ~ I remember the preciousness of silence. I see the perfection in others and refrain from gossip and frivolous conversation. I remain thoughtful and mindful of the effects of my speech.
7. Celebrate Others ~ I rejoice in the good fortune of others. I do not, through my thoughts, words or actions, separate myself from others through coveting, envy or jealousy.

8. Be Giving ~ I give generously of myself, sharing freely my love, my gifts, my talents and my abundance for the benefit of all. I do not selfishly withhold. I do not add any more suffering to the world.
9. Embody Compassion ~ I recognize and enlighten my greed, anger and ignorance. I transform my negative emotions and act with equanimity, sympathetic joy, compassion and loving kindness.
10. Steward the Earth ~ I hold sacred this planet Earth. I seek to understand Nature's interconnections and celebrate my own interdependency. I work toward achieving a lifestyle that gives more back to this Earth than I take from it.
11. Manifest this Way ~ I hold precious this Sangha and the sacred life we embody, especially these three treasures:

This absolute purity
of our Awakened Mind!
(Buddha)

This life filled with wisdom,
compassion and skillful means!
(Dharma)

This never–ending mystery
of life unfolding!
All brothers, all sisters, all beings!
(Sangha)

A poem by the Sufi poet Rumi best sums up the idea of taking and breaking of precepts and vows:

"Come, come, whoever you are.
Wanderer, worshiper, lover of leaving.
Ours is not a caravan of despair.
Come, it does not matter
if you've broken
your vow a thousand times.
Still, come, and yet again come!"

After the taking of sincere precepts or vows, we will be amazed to find that it was only our doubt, our lack of invincible true faith and our lack of unalterable true commitment that obscured our clear vision of compassionate Awakened Heart Mind. These doubts acted like the dark clouds that block the bright sun from our view. We have now been informed, educated, empowered, initiated and set firmly upon the path.

Our Awakened Mind, our "true woman or man of no rank," has always been here waiting for us. Right here
…within us!

Awake Swaha!

Lao Tzu

Empty your mind of all thoughts.
Let your heart be at peace.
Watch the turmoil of beings,
But contemplate their return.

Each separate being in the universe
returns to the common source.
Returning to the source is serenity.

If you don't realize the source,
You stumble in confusion and sorrow.
When you realize where you come from,
you naturally become tolerant,
disinterested, amused,
kindhearted as a grandmother,
dignified as a king.
Immersed in the wonder of the Tao,
you can deal with whatever life brings you,
and when death comes, you are ready.

Hakuin

The ogre outside shoves at the door, the ogre inside holds it fast;
Pouring sweat from head to foot, battling for their very lives,
Fighting on all through the night, until the dawn appears and laughter fills the early light.
They were friends from the start!

A boundless unencumbered place, perfect, open, still;

Earth and hills and rivers, are but names, nothing more.

The Mind may be quartered, and Forms lumped into one,

But they're both still just echoes in empty ravines.

It's clearly ungettable within the Three Worlds—

An empty sky swept clean away. Not a particle left.

On the zazen seat, in the dead of night, cold as steel;

Moonlight through a window, bright with shadows of plum!

Dokusan

Interview ~ Meeting of Minds

Interviews – a genuine meeting of two minds. In these meetings both individuals are asked to bring their deepest insight with the sincere intention of sharing their understanding of these teachings. There are really no masters of Zen! Yet, there is sometimes an insightful and well-trained teacher who can hold up the correct mirror. In this mirror, we can find reflected our true spiritual image, our own spiritual truth and being that is beyond our conceptual ego view; this is our "true woman or man of no rank." This special kind of meeting with a teacher can be extremely effective at clarifying understanding. The more honest and challenging the inquiry, the broader and more profound the realization.

Mutual realization – true awakening – is possible for all of us when we are ready and willing for it to occur. Mind to mind, heart to heart, being to being!

Interview with a lineage holder is called Dokusan, with a priest or teacher is called Daisan.

Bring yourself pure!
Bring yourself with an Empty cup!

Bring yourself with Hollow Bones!

Song of Zazen

Sentient beings are from the very beginning Buddhas.
It is like ice and water: apart from water,
No ice can exist. Outside sentient beings,
Where do we find the Buddhas?

Not knowing how near the Truth is,
We seek it far away. What a pity!
We are like a person who, in the midst of water,
Cries in thirst so imploringly.
We are like the child of a rich house
Who has wandered away among the poor.

The cause of our circling through the six worlds
Is that we are on the dark paths of ignorance;
Going astray further and further in the darkness.
When are we able to be free from birth and death?

As for Zazen practice of the Mahayana,
It is beyond all our praise.
The virtues of perfection such as charity, morality
And the invocation of the Buddha's name,
Confession and ascetic discipline,
And many other good deeds of merit,
All these return to this!

Even those who have practiced meditation
For just one sitting,
Will see all their twisted karma erased.
Nowhere will they find twisted paths,
But the pure land will be near at hand.

With a reverent heart, if we listen to this Truth
Even once, and praise it and gladly embrace it,
We will surely be blessed most infinitely.

If we concentrate within
And testify to the truth that self-nature is
no-nature,
We have really gone beyond vain words.

The gate of the oneness of cause and effect is open.
The path of non-duality and true clarity runs
Straight ahead.

To regard the form of no-form as form,
Whether going or returning,
We cannot be any place else.
To regard the thought of no-thought as thought,
Whether singing or dancing,
We are the voice of the Dharma.

How boundless the clear sky of Samadhi!
How transparent the perfect moonlight of the
Fourfold Wisdom!

At this moment, what more need we seek?
As the Truth eternally reveals Itself,
This very place is the Lotus Paradise!
This very Body is the Buddha!

Master Hakuin

Rinzai Roku

Those of you who wish to discipline themselves in Buddha's Dharma must seek true understanding. When this understanding is attained, you will not be defiled by birth and death. Whether walking or standing still, you will be your own master. Even when you are not trying to achieve something extraordinary, it will come to you all by itself.

All followers of the Way, from olden times each of my predecessors had his own way of training his disciples. As to my way of leading people, all that they need is not to be deluded by others. "Be independent" and go your own way whenever you desire; have no hesitancy.

Do you know where the disease lies which keeps you learners from reaching "True Understanding"? It lies where you have no faith in your Self. When faith in your Self is lacking, you find yourself hurried by others in every possible way. At every encounter you are no longer your master; you are driven about by others this way and that.

All that is required is all at once to cease leaving yourself in search of something external. When this is done, you will find your Self no different from the Buddha or the Patriarch/Matriarch.

Do you want to know who the Buddha is? Buddha is no other than *the* one who is, at this moment, right in front of me listening to my talk on the Dharma. You have no faith in yourselves and, therefore, you are in quest of someone else somewhere outside. And what will you find? Nothing but words and names, however excellent. You will never reach the moving spirit in the Buddha, or Patriarch/Matriarch. Make no mistake.

Followers of the Way, one who is a renouncer of home, must indeed study the Way. Take me, for example. In bygone days, I devoted myself to the vinaya (precepts) and also delved into the sutras (written teaching) and sastras (commentaries on sutras). Later, when I realized that they were medicines for salvation and displays of doctrines in written words, I once and for all threw them away, and searching for the way, I practiced meditation. Still later I met great Teachers. Then it was, with my Dharma eye becoming clear, that I could discern all the old teachers under heaven and tell the false ones from the true. It is not that I understood from the moment I was born of my mother, but that, after exhaustive investigation and grinding discipline, in an instant I knew of myself.

Virtuous monks, don't use your minds mistakenly. The great sea does not need dead bodies. But all you do is rush about the world carrying them on your shoulders. You yourselves raise the obstructions that impede your minds. When the sun above has no clouds, the bright heavens shine everywhere. When there is no cataract on the eye, there are no imaginary flowers in the sky.

Followers of the Way, if you wish to be Dharma as is, just have no doubt. Spread out, It fills the entire Dharmadhatu; gathered in, the smallest hair cannot stand upon It. Distinctly and radiantly standing alone, It has never lacked anything. No eye can see It, no ear can hear It – then by what name can It be called? The man of old said, "To speak about a thing is to miss the mark."

Just see for yourselves: What is there? I can keep on talking forever. Each of you must strive for yourself. Take care of yourselves.

Mumonkan – The Gateless Gate

by Mumon Ekai Zenji

A monk asked Joshu, "Has a dog Buddha nature?" Joshu answered: "*MU! (NO!)*"

Mumon Comment:
In order to master Zen, you must pass the barrier of the Patriarchs. To attain this subtle realization, you must completely let go of your attachment to thinking/feeling. If you do not pass the barrier and do not let go of your attachment to thinking/feeling, then you will be like a ghost clinging to the bushes and weeds. Now I want to ask you, what is the barrier of the Matriarchs/Patriarchs? Why, it is this single word *MU/NO!* That is the front gate to Zen. Therefore, it is called the "Gateless Gate of Zen." If you pass through it, you will not only see Joshu face to face, but you will also go hand in hand with the successive Patriarchs, entangling your eyebrows with theirs, seeing with the same eyes, hearing with the same ears. Isn't that a delightful prospect? Wouldn't you like to pass this barrier?

Arouse your entire body with its 360 bones and joints and its 84,000 pores of the skin; summon up a spirit of great doubt and concentrate on this word *No.* Carry it continuously day and night. Do not form a nihilistic conception of vacancy or a relative conception of has or has not. It will be just as if you swallow a red hot iron ball, which you cannot spit out even if you try. All the illusory ideas and illusive thoughts accumulated up to the present will be liberated, and when the time comes, internal and external will be spontaneously united.

You will know this, but for yourself only, like a dumb man who has had a dream. Then all of a sudden a remarkable awakening will occur, and you will astonish the heavens and shake the earth.

It will be as if you snatch away the great sword of the valiant general Kanu and hold it in your hand. When you meet the Buddha, you kill him; when you meet the Matriarchs/Patriarchs, you kill them. On the brink of life and death, you command perfect freedom. Among the six-fold worlds and four modes of existence, you enjoy a merry and playful Samadhi.

Now, I want to ask you again: How will you accomplish this? Employ every ounce of your energy to work on this *NO*. If you hold on without interruption, behold: A single spark, and the holy candle is lit!

Note
The Japanese word *MU* is the first koan practiced in our Rinzai Zen tradition. The actual word spoken by Joshu was the Chinese word *WU*. Both of these words mean *NO*. But it is obvious that the dog exists. Isn't all that exists part of Buddha nature? What then is meant by this answer? This answer is a *universal KNOW/NO.*

This *KNOW/NO* is absolute. This *KNOW/NO* cuts through any conceptual attachment. What part of *NO* do you not understand? This *KNOW* is beyond comprehension. This *NO* in time becomes *Know* and then, *YES!*

This is the Know/No of Not-Knowing!

Yoga Sutra Quotes

Tantric Yoga

Of what consequence are all the processes
of meditation? In spite of them, you have to
die alone and in pain. Take leave of all the elaborate
practices of yogic control (bandha) and false hope for
the deceptive supernatural gifts, and accept the side
of voidance (shunyata) to be your own.
Lohipada of the Sahaja School

Hatha Yoga

Lightness resulting from breath control (pranayana),
perception of the Self from meditation (dhyana), and
the untainted [state] from ecstasy (samadhi) – this
last state is undoubtedly liberation (mukti)
Gheranda-Samhita Sutra (1.11)

Classical Dualist Yoga

The mind is said to be two-fold:
pure or impure.
It is impure from contact with desires,
Pure when free from desires.

When one has liberated the mind from sloth and
heedlessness and made it immovable and then attains
to the mindless state, this is the supreme estate.
Maitrayaniya-Upanishad

Gospel of Thomas

(1st-2nd Century)

The disciples said to him, "Tell us who you are, so that we can trust you." Jesus said, "You search for me through heaven and earth, but you don't know the one who is right before your eyes because you don't know how to search into this very moment."

The disciples said to him, "Tell us what our end will be." Jesus said, "If you haven't found the beginning, why ask about the end? For where the beginning is the end is also. Blessed are those who stand at the beginning, for they will know the end, and they will not taste death."

Jesus said, "Recognize what is in your sight, and what is hidden will become clear to you."

Jesus said, "When you see the one who was not born of a woman, bow down and worship him. That one is your father."

Jesus said, "If you bring forth what is inside you, what you bring forth will save you.
If you don't bring forth what is inside you, what you don't bring forth will destroy you."

Jesus said, "Whoever believes that the all is deficient, are themselves deficient."

Rumi

Praise to the emptiness that blanks out existence;
this place made from our love
of that emptiness! Yet somehow comes emptiness,
this existence goes.
Praise to that happening, over and over!

For years I pulled my own existence out
of emptiness. Then one swoop, one swing
of the arm, that work is over. Free of who I was, free
of presence, free of dangerous fear, hope, free of
mountainous wanting.
The here-and-now mountain is a tiny
piece of straw blown off into emptiness.

These words I am saying so much begin to lose
meaning: existence, emptiness, mountain, straw.
Words and what they try to say sweep out the win-
dow, down the slant of the roof.

I have lived on the lip of insanity, wanting to know
reasons, knocking on a door. It opens. I've been
knocking from the inside.

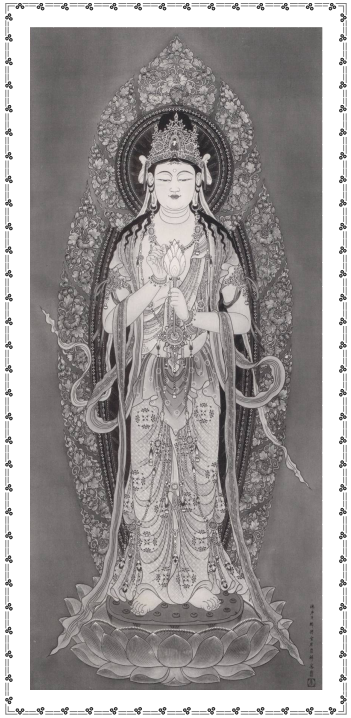
Out beyond ideas of wrong and right doing, there is a
field. I'll meet you there. When the soul lies down in
that grass, the world is too full to talk about. Ideas,
language, even the phrase "each other," don't make
any sense.

Einstein

The true value of a human being can be found in the degree to which he has attained liberation from the self.

A human being is a part of the whole that we call the universe, a part limited in time and space. He experiences himself, his thoughts and feelings, as something separated from the rest – a kind of optical illusion of his consciousness. This illusion is a prison for us, restricting us to our personal desires and to affection for only the few people nearest us. Our task must be to free ourselves from this prison by widening our circle of compassion to embrace all living beings and all of nature.

The most beautiful and profound emotion we can experience is the sensation of the mystical. It is the sower of all true science. He to whom this emotion is a stranger, who can no longer wonder and stand rapt in awe, is as good as dead. To know that what is impenetrable to us really exists, manifesting itself as the highest wisdom and the most radiant beauty, which our dull faculties can comprehend only in their primitive forms – this knowledge, this feeling, is at the center of true religion.



Avalokitesvara

On Zen

There is a reality prior to Heaven and Earth.
Indeed, it has no form, much less a name.
Eyes fail to see it;
It has no voice for ears to detect.

To call it Mind or Buddha
Violates its nature, for it then becomes
Like a visionary flower in the air.
It is not Mind or Buddha;
Absolutely quiet, and yet illuminating
In a mysterious way,
It allows itself to be perceived
Only by the clear eye.

It is Dharma
Clearly beyond form and sound;
It is Tao having nothing to do with words.

Wishing to entice the blind,
The Buddha has playfully let words
Escape his golden mouth;
Heaven and Earth are ever since
Filled with entangling briars.

All my good worthy friends gathered here,
If you desire to listen
To the thunderous voice of the Dharma,

Exhaust your words, empty your thoughts,
For then you may come
To recognize the One Essence.

Daio Kokushi

Diamond Sutra

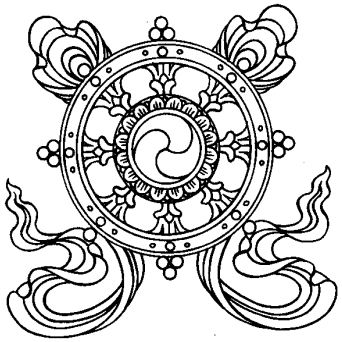
Thus shall ye think of all this fleeting world:

A star at dawn, a dewdrop in the morning sun,
A bubble in a mountain stream;
A flash of lightning in a summer cloud;
A flickering lamp, a shadow, a phantom, and a dream.

And they are thus to be regarded!

Siddhartha Gautama

When the Buddha finished this discourse,
the venerable Subhuti and all attending
were filled with joy by his teaching,
and taking it sincerely to heart
they went their separate ways.



"Never doubt the imperturbability of your true pure awareness!
Never doubt the invincible compassion of your true, pure heart!"

Jun Po