

O-An Zendo Chants & Verses

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Short Verses

Incense Offering

In gratitude, we offer this incense.

May all beings with whom we are inseparably connected
be liberated, awakened, healed, fulfilled, and free.

May there be peace in this world,

and an end to war, violence, poverty, injustice and oppression.

And may we, together with all beings, complete our spiritual journeys.

Robe Chant

Dai sai ge da pu ku

mu so fuku den-e

hi bu nyo rai kyo

ko do sho shu jo.

Great robe of liberation

field far beyond form and emptiness

wearing the Tathagata's teaching

freeing all beings.

Dai sai ge da pu ku

mu so fuku den-e

hi bu nyo rai kyo

ko do sho shu jo.

Before Dharma Talk

An unsurpassed, penetrating and perfect Dharma

Is rarely met with even in a hundred thousand million kalpas.

Having it to see and listen to, remember and accept,

I vow to taste the truth of the Tathagata's words

After Dharma Talk

May our intention equally extend to

every being and place

with the true merit of Buddha's way.

Beings are numberless, I vow to save them.
Delusions are inexhaustible, I vow to end them.
Dharma gates are endless, I vow to enter them.
Buddha's way is unsurpassable, I vow to become it.

Dedications (After a Sutra or Eko)

All Buddhas in ten directions, past present and future
all Bodhisattvas, Mahasattvas, world-honored ones
the Maha Prajna Paramita

Ji ho san shi i shi hu
Shi son bu sa mo-ko sa
Mo ko ho ja ho ro mi

Sangemon (Confession/Repentance)

All my ancient unskillful actions
from beginningless greed hate and delusion
born through body speech and mind
I now fully avow.

Ga shaku sho zo sho aku go
Kai yu mu shi ton jin shi
Ju shin ku i shi sho sho
Is-sai ga kon kai san ge

Trisarana (Three Refuges in Pali)

Buddham saranam gacchami
Dhammam saranam gacchami
Sangham saranam gacchami

Dutiyam pi Buddham saranam gacchami
Dutiyam pi Dhammam saranam gacchami
Dutiyam pi Sangham saranam gacchami

Tatiyam pi Buddham saranam gacchami
Tatiyam pi Dhammam saranam gacchami
Tatiyam pi Sangham saranam gacchami

Ten Clear Mind Precepts

1. No killing life / Cultivating and encouraging life
2. No stealing / Honoring the gift not yet given
3. No abusing sexuality / Remaining faithful in relationships
4. No illusory words / Communicating truth
5. No misuse of intoxicants / Polishing clarity
6. No dwelling on past mistakes / Creating wisdom from ignorance
7. No praise or blame / Maintaining non-judgemental modesty
8. No hoarding teachings or materials / Sharing understanding, freely giving of self
9. No harboring anger or ill will / Dwelling in equanimity
10. No abusing the three treasures / Respecting the Buddha, unfolding the Dharma, nourishing the Sangha

Fourteen Precepts of Engaged Buddhism

1. Do not be idolatrous about or bound to any doctrine, theory, or ideology, even Buddhist ones. Buddhist systems of thought are guiding means; they are not absolute truth.

2. Do not think the knowledge you presently possess is changeless, absolute truth. Avoid being narrow-minded and bound to present views. Learn and practice nonattachment from views in order to be open to receiving others' viewpoints. Truth is found in life and not merely in conceptual knowledge.

Be ready to learn throughout your entire life and to observe reality in yourself and in the world at all times.

3. Do not force others, including children, by any means whatsoever, to adopt your views, whether by authority, threat, money, propaganda, or even education. However, through compassionate dialogue, help others renounce fanaticism and narrowness.

4. Do not avoid contact with suffering or close your eyes before suffering. Do not lose awareness of the existence of suffering in the life of the world. Find ways to be with those who are suffering, including personal contact, visits, images, and sounds. By such means, awaken yourself and others to the reality of suffering in the world.

5. Do not accumulate wealth while millions are hungry. Do not take as the aim of your life Fame, profit, wealth, or sensual pleasure. Live simply and share time, energy, and material resources with those who are in need.

6. Do not maintain anger or hatred. Learn to penetrate and transform them when they are still seeds in your consciousness. As soon as they arise, turn your attention to your breath to see and understand the nature of your hatred.

7. Do not lose yourself in dispersion and in your surroundings. Practice mindful breathing to come back to what is happening in the present moment. Be in touch with what is wondrous, refreshing,

and healing both inside and around you. Plant seeds of joy, peace, and understanding in yourself in order to facilitate the work of transformation in the depths of your consciousness.

8. Do not utter words that can create discord and cause the community to break. Make every effort to reconcile and resolve all conflicts, however small.

9. Do not say untruthful things for the sake of personal interest or to impress people. Do not utter words that cause division and hatred. Do not spread news that you do not know to be certain. Do not criticize or condemn things of which you are not sure. Always speak truthfully and constructively. Have the courage to speak out about situations of injustice, even when doing so may threaten your own safety.

10. Do not use the Buddhist community for personal gain or profit, or transform your community into a political party. A religious community, however, should take a clear stand against oppression and injustice and should strive to change the situation without engaging in partisan conflicts.

11. Do not live with a vocation that is harmful to humans and nature. Do not invest in companies that deprive others of their chance to live. Select a vocation that helps realize your ideal of compassion.

12. Do not kill. Do not let others kill. Find whatever means possible to protect life and prevent war.

13. Possess nothing that should belong to others. Respect the property of others, but prevent others from profiting from human suffering or the suffering of other species on Earth.

14. Do not mistreat your body. Learn to handle it with respect. Do not look on your body as only an instrument. Preserve vital energies (sexual, breath, spirit) for the realization of the Way. For brothers and sisters who are not monks and nuns:

Sexual expression should not take place without love and commitment. In sexual relationships, be aware of future suffering that may be caused. To preserve the happiness of others, respect the rights and commitments of others. Be fully aware of the responsibility of bringing new lives into the world. Meditate on the world into which you are bringing new beings.

Maka Hannya Haramita Shin Gyo

(Heart of Great Perfect Wisdom Sutra)

Kan ji zai bo satsu gyo jin han nya ha ra mi ta
ji sho ken go on kai ku do is sai ku yaku sha ri shi
shiki hu i ku ku hu i shiki shiki soku ze ku ku
soku ze shiki ju so gyo shiki yaku bu nyo ze sha ri shi ze sho ho ku
so fu sho fu metsu fu ku fu jo fu zo fu gen ze ko ku chu mu shiki mu ju
so gyo shiki mu gen ni bi ze shin ni mu shiki sho ko mi soku ho mu
gen kai nai shi mu i shiki kai mu mu myo yaku mu mu myo jin nai shi
mu ro shi yaku mu ro shi jin mu ku shu metsu do mu chi yaku mu
toku i mu sho tok ko bo dai sat ta e han nya ha ra mi ta ko shin mu ke
ge mu ke ge ko mu u ku fu on ri is sai ten do mu so ku gyo ne han san
ze sho butsu e han nya ha ra mit ta ko toku a noku ta ra sam myaku
sam bo dai ko chi han nya ha ra mi ta
ze dai jin shu ze dai myo shu ze mu jo shu ze mu to do shu
no jo is sai ku shin jitsu fu ko ko setsu
han nya ha ra mit ta shu soku setsu shu watsu
gya te gya te ha ra gya te hara so gya te
bo ji sowa ka han nya shin gyo.

Ji ho san shi i shi hu

Shi son bu sa mo ko sa

Mo ko ho ja ho ro mi.

The Heart Sutra

The noble Avalokiteshvara Bodhisattva,
while practicing the deep practice of Prajnaparamita,
looked upon the five skandhas
and seeing they were empty of self-existence,
said, "Here, Shariputra,
form is emptiness, emptiness is form;
emptiness is not separate from form,
form is not separate from emptiness;
whatever is form is emptiness,
whatever is emptiness is form.
The same holds for sensation and perception,
volition and consciousness.
Here, Shariputra, all dharmas are defined by emptiness
not birth or destruction, purity or defilement,
completeness or deficiency.
Therefore, Shariputra, in emptiness there is no form,
no sensation, no perception, no volition and no consciousness;
no eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, mind;
no shape, sound, smell, taste, touch, no feeling and no thought;
no element of perception, from eye to conceptual consciousness;
no causal link, from ignorance to old age and death,
and no end of causal link, from ignorance to old age and death;
no suffering, no source, no relief, no path;
no knowledge, no attainment and no non-attainment.
Therefore, Shariputra, without attainment,
bodhisattvas take refuge in Prajnaparamita
and live without walls of the mind.
Without walls of the mind and thus without fear,
they see through delusions and finally awakening.
All buddhas past, present and future
also take refuge in Prajnaparamita
and realize unexcelled, perfect enlightenment.
You should know therefore the great mantra of Prajnaparamita,
the mantra of great mystery,
the unexcelled mantra,
the mantra equal to the unequalled,
which heals all suffering and is true, not false,
the mantra in Prajnaparamita is spoken thus:
'Gate, gate, paragate, parasangate, bodhi svaha.'"

Daihi Shin Dharani

Namu kara tan-no tora ya-ya
namu ori-ya boryo-ki-chi shifu ra-ya
fuji sato bo-ya, moko sato bo-ya
mo ko kya-runi kya-ya
en sa hara ha ei shu tan-no ton sha
namu shiki-ri toi-mo ori-ya boryo-ki-chi shihu ra rin to-bo na-mu no ra
kin-ji ki-ri mo ko ho do sha-mi sa-bo
o to jo shu ben o shu-in
sa-bo sa-to no mo bo gya
mo ha te cho
to-ji to-en o bo-ryo ki ru gya-chi
kya rya chi
i kiri mo ko fuji sa-to sa bo sa-bo
mo-ra mo-ra, mo-ki mo-ki
ri to in ku-ryo ku-ryo
ke-mo to-ryo to-ryo ho-ja ya-chi
mo ko ho ja ya chi
to-ra to-ra chiri-ni shihu ra-ya,
sha-ro sha-ro mo mo ha mo ra
ho chi ri yu ki yu ki shi-no shi-no
ora san fura sha ri
ha-za ha-za fura sha ya
ku-ryo ku-ryo mo-ra ku-ryo ku-ryo
ki-ri sha-ro sha-ro shi-ri shi-ri su-ryo su-ryo fuji-ya, fuji-ya, fudo-ya, fudo-ya
mi chiri-ya nora-kin-ji
chiri shuni no
hoya mono somo-ko
shido-ya somo-ko moko shido ya somo-ko shido yu-ki shifu ra ya somo-ko
nora-kin-ji somo-ko
mo-ra no-ra somo-ko
shira su omo-gya-ya somo-ko sobo-moko-shido-ya somo-ko
shaki-ra oshi-do-ya somo-ko hodo-mogya-shido-ya somo-ko
nora-kin-ji ha gyara-ya somo-ko
mo hori shin gyara-ya somo-ko
namu-kara tan-no tora-ya-ya
namu-ori-ya
boryo-ki-chi shifu-ra-ya so mo ko
shite-do modo-ra hodo-ya so mo ko.

The Great Compassion Dharani

Adoration to the Three Treasures—Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha!
Adoration to Avalokitesvara, the Bodhisattva Mahasattva,
the Bodhisattva of Compassion!
Adoration to the one who relieves all fear and suffering!

With the honoring of Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva,
we now recite this dharani which purifies all beings,
which fulfills the wishes of all beings.

Hail to Bodhisattva Mahasattva who embodies the Trikaya
who radiates transcendent wisdom.
Hail to Bodhisattva Mahasattva who continues to save all beings
without defilement in the mind.
Hail to Bodhisattva Mahasattva who sustains the highest complete wisdom
who is free from all impediments.
Hail to Bodhisattva Mahasattva whose expression reveals
fundamental purity in all beings.
Hail to Bodhisattva Mahasattva who wipes away the three poisons
—greed, anger and delusion.
Quick, quick! Come, come! Here, here!
A joy springs up in us.
Help us to enter into the realm of great realization!
Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva, Bodhisattva of Compassion, guide us to
spiritual contentment.
Accomplishment, accomplishment!
Having testified to freedom and compassion with a mind like Avalokitesvara,
Having now purified our body and mind,
Having become brave like the lion,
Having become manifest into all beings,
Having attained to the Wheel of Dharma and the Lotus Flower,
we can now liberate all beings without hindrance.
May the understanding of the mysterious nature of Avalokitesvara prevail
forever.
Adoration to the Three Treasures—Buddha, Dharma and Sangha!
Adoration to Avalokitesvara, the Bodhisattva Mahasattva,
the Bodhisattva of Compassion.

May this dharani be effective.
Hail!

Metta Sutra (Loving Kindness Sutra)

This is the way of those who follow the Dharma,
Who are skilled and peaceful, seek the good, and follow the Path:

May they be able and upright, straightforward, of gentle speech, and not proud.

May they be content and at ease wherever they are.

May they be unburdened, with their senses calm.

May they be wise and not puffed up.

May they not seek praise or fame.

May they live without desire for the possessions of others.

May they not harm any being.

Wishing:

May all beings be happy.

May they live in safety and joy.

All beings, whether weak or strong, young or old, man or woman, wise or foolish, ill or healthy, seen or unseen, near or far, born or to be born.

May all beings be happy.

Let no one deceive another or despise anyone, whatever their status.

Let no one, through anger or hatred, wish harm to another.

As parents watch over their children, willing to risk their own lives to protect them, so with a boundless heart may we cherish all beings and radiate kindness over the entire world—spreading upwards to the skies and downwards to the depths, outward, unbounded, and freed from hatred and ill will.

Whether standing or walking, sitting or lying down, in each instant, may we remain in touch with this heart and practice the Buddha's way with gratitude.

By not holding to fixed views, being endowed with insight, and unbound by sense appetites, one who achieves the way will be freed from birth and death and liberated from suffering.

Song of the Jewel Mirror Samadhi

The teaching of thusness has been intimately communicated
by Buddhas and ancestors.
Since you already have it,
please keep it well.
Filling a silver bowl with snow,
hiding a heron in the moonlight –
Though taken as similar they are not the same;
when you align them, you know what they are.
The meaning is not in the words,
yet it responds to an inquiring impulse.
Move toward it and you are trapped;
back away and you fall into doubt and vacillation.
Turning away and touching are both wrong,
for it is like intensive fire.
Even to depict it in literary form
is to stain it with defilement.
Though appearing bright at midnight,
it will not be noticed at dawn.
It will act as a guide for beings,
and its use removes suffering.
Although it is not fabricated,
it is not without speech.
It is like facing a jewel mirror;
form and image behold each other –
You are not it,
but it is completely you.
Like a baby in the world
with its five aspects complete;
It neither goes nor comes,
neither rises nor stands,
Saying “baba wawa”
but is there anything said or not?
Ultimately it need not apprehend anything
because speech is not yet formed.
It is like the six lines of the illumination hexagram
where the relative and ultimate are joined.
Compiled, they make three,
the complete transformation makes five.
It is all the tastes of the five-flavored herb,
it is like the diamond thunderbolt.
Subtly included within the true
inquiry and response come up together.
When communing with the source, when traveling the pathways
embrace the territory and treasure the road.
Respecting this is fortunate;
do not neglect it.

Being naturally real yet inconceivable,
it is neither in the province of delusion nor enlightenment.
With causal conditions, time and season,
quiescently it shines bright.
In its fineness it fits into spacelessness,
in it greatness it is utterly beyond location.
A hairsbreadth's deviation
will fail to accord with proper attunement.
In both sudden and gradual paths
the various teachings and approaches arise,
and once basic approaches are distinguished
then there are guiding rules.
But even though a basis is reached or approach comprehended,
true eternity still flows.
Outwardly still while inwardly moving,
like a tethered colt, a trapped rat –
The ancient sages had sympathy
and bestowed the teachings.
With the capacity of delusion
even black could be known as white,
But when erroneous imaginations cease
the acquiescent mind realizes itself.
If you want to conform to the ancient way,
please observe the teaching of former times.
When about to fulfill the way of buddhahood,
one gazed at the tree for ten eons
Like a battle-scarred tiger,
like a horse with shanks gone gray.
Because there is the common
there are jewel pedestals, fine clothing.
Because there is the startlingly different
there are house, cat, and cow.
Yi with his archer's skill
could hit a target at a hundred paces,
But when the arrow-points meet head on,
what has this to do with the power of skill?
When the wooden man begins to sing
the stone woman gets up dancing.
It's not within the realm of feeling or discrimination
so how could it admit of consideration in thought?
Ministers serve their lords,
and children obey their parents;
Not obeying is not filial
and not serving is no help.
Practice secretly, working within,
like a fool, like an idiot.
Just to continue in this way
is called the host within the host.

Genjo Koan

When all dharmas are the Buddhadharma, there is illusion and enlightenment, there is practice, there is birth and death, there are ordinary beings and there are buddhas. When these myriad dharmas are without self there is no illusion, no enlightenment, no generation, no extinction, no ordinary being, no buddha. Because the Buddha way is unconstrained by dualities such as fullness or loss, it can be available as both illusion and enlightenment, as both generation and extinction, as both ordinary being and buddha. Even with recognizing this, still we begrudge the fading of a flower, and are dismayed by the flourishing of weeds.

To practice and attempt to confirm existence by conveying a self to it is illusion. For existence itself to come forward practicing, confirming you, is enlightenment. Buddhas are those who thoroughly awaken the delusion. Ordinary beings are those deluded with an idea of awakening. Some also are enlightened beyond enlightenment, and some deluded even in the midst of delusion. A buddha may not necessarily even notice that they are buddha, nonetheless an actualized buddha continues to actualize as buddha.

There is just seeing forms and hearing of sounds with body and mind as one, making them intimate, intimately their own, fully knowing them. This knowing is not like a reflection in a mirror, or like the moon on the water. With the recognition of one side, the other side is darkness. To learn the Buddha way is to learn the self. To learn the self is to forget self. To forget self is to be confirmed by all existence, and to be confirmed by all existence is to effect the dropping off of body-mind identity, and dispersion of identities beyond it as well. With no trace of enlightenment remaining, a traceless, grasplless enlightenment continues endlessly. But at the very moment one seeks this dharma, it escapes the seeking. The dharma has already been correctly transmitted. It is the immediate recognition of one's original face.

It is like this - if someone were out in a boat and turned to see the shore, they might assume that the shoreline was moving. But if they examined the situation, examined their boat, they would see it is the boat itself that moves. It is same when in attempting to confirm existence with mistaken views, such as attributing permanence to body and mind. If we simply return to ourselves, and make daily activity intimate, intimately its own, then the reason why within all myriad dharmas there is no self will be clear to us.

Once firewood has turned to ash it will not again turn back to firewood. But it should not be presumed that firewood is before or that ash is after. The dharma stage of firewood completely possesses a before and after, and also is fully free of before and after. The dharma-stage of ashes likewise embodies a before and after. Just as firewood does not return, so beings do not return to their lives after death. The teaching does not say life becomes death, but rather that life is without origin. The teaching does not say that death becomes life, but rather that death is non-extinction. Death is its own time, and life is its own time, as are the winter and the spring. We do not suppose that the winter itself becomes the spring, or say that spring itself is now summer.

Enlightenment is received like the moon reflected on the water. The moon does not get wet. The water is not broken. For all the immensity of the moon's height it rests upon a small patch of water. The moon and the sky in their entirety settle on a single dewdrop in the grass, on a mere drop of water. Enlightenment presents no harm to a person just as the moon would not harm the water, and the person does not obstruct enlightenment, any more than a dewdrop would obstruct the moon or sky. In the depths of that dewdrop resides the full measure of the

moon's greatness. With this, consider also the duration of light, the water's greatness or smallness, the aspect of the moon, and the vastness of the sky.

When truth has not yet filled body and mind, we may feel complete. But when the dharma has thoroughly filled body and mind, we know something is missing. Again, it is as if we were out in a boat, past the view of any mountains. Then the expanse of the ocean might appear to be round. But it is neither round nor square. Inexpressible virtues still remain as "ocean." It could even be considered a palace or a necklace of jewels, but for that moment the eye sees only a circle. The experience of phenomena is commonly like this.

Aspects of this dusty life as well as a pure life are perceived only to the extent that practice and the eye of insight will penetrate. In our understanding of things, as well as being round or square, the ocean may manifest in infinite variety. There are worlds there, in all directions. There are worlds also within us, and worlds even in one drop of water.

When a fish swims in water, in the swimming there is no end to water. When a bird flies in the sky, in the flying there is no end to sky. This is because from the beginning they are in accord with the water or the sky. With extensive activity comes extensive use, and with modest activity, less use. Yet essentially and everywhere, the full use is made of all that is functioning, and all that is functioning turns and moves freely. Leaving the water or leaving the sky would immediately be the leaving of life, for with the fish, water is life, and for the bird, sky is life. Also for the sky, the bird is life. For the water, the fish is life. Life is bird and sky. Life is fish and water. It is the same with practice, with realization, and with everything in life's duration.

Like the bird and fish, we must first manifest in our element before extending further, or we will not find our way or place. There is just the arrival at this place. Everyday activity is the manifestation of absolute reality. The way is everyday activity actualizing everything.

The way, this place, is not large or small, not self, not other, not from before, not newly emerging. It is just this. The Buddha way is within the meeting of one dharma is the fulfillment of that one dharma, and the full engagement of one action is the fulfillment of all activity.

So here is the place. It is here that the way opens. With no distinct boundaries to realization, simultaneously knowing and not knowing come forward, and simultaneously we practice with Buddha as Buddha. Realization is not an acquisition. It is not necessarily manifest. Nevertheless it is here, immediately before us, and it is inconceivable.

Once the teacher Bao-chi was fanning himself and a monk asked: "The nature of the wind is to abide and to pervade everywhere, so why do you then fan yourself?" Bao-chi said "You may know that the wind abides, but you do not yet understand 'pervading everywhere.'" "What is the meaning?" the monk asked. Bao-chi simply continued to fan himself. The monk then bowed in understanding. This is the actualization of the Buddhadharma, the vital transmission of the way. Not to see the function of the wind within the function of the fan, or fan within wind, is to miss the seeing of either wind or fan.

The dharma-wind abides, and it pervades everywhere. So from this broad, golden earth, and from the intimate home of the Buddha, the wind, this way, is offered like a ripened, nourishing, medicinal drink, and extends outward into the vastness like a long, flowing river.

Guidepost for Silent Illumination

Silent and serene, forgetting words,
bright clarity appears before you.

When you reflect it you become vast,
where you embody it
you are spiritually uplifted.

Solitary and shining, inner illumination
restores wonder.

Dew in the moonlight, a river of stars,
snow-covered pines,
clouds enveloping the peak.

In darkness it is most bright,
while hidden all the more manifest.

The crane dreams in the wintery mists.
The autumn waters flow far in the distance.

Endless kalpas are totally empty,
all things completely the same.

When wonder exists in serenity,
all achievement is forgotten
in illumination.

What is this wonder?
Alertly seeing through confusion
is the way of silent illumination
and the origin of subtle radiance.

Vision penetrating into subtle radiance
is weaving gold on a jade loom.

Upright and inclined yield to each other;
light and dark are interdependent.

Not depending on sense faculty and object,
at the right time they interact.

Drink the medicine of good views.
Beat the poison-smear drum.

When they interact,
killing and giving life are up to you.

Through the gate the self emerges
and the branches bear fruit.

Only silence is the supreme speech,
only illumination the universal response.

Responding without falling into achievement,
speaking without involving listeners,
the ten thousand forms majestically glisten
and expound the dharma.

All objects certify it,
each one in dialogue.

Conversing and certifying,
they respond appropriately to each other;
but if illumination neglects serenity
then aggressiveness appears.

Certifying and conversing they respond
to each other appropriately;
but if serenity neglects illumination,
murkiness leads to wasted dharma.

When silent illumination is fulfilled,
the lotus blossoms,
the dreamer awakens.

A hundred streams flow into the ocean,
a thousand ranges face the highest peak.

Like geese preferring milk,
like bees gathering nectar,
when silent illumination reaches the ultimate,
I offer my teaching.

The teaching of silent illumination penetrates
from the highest down to the foundation.

The body being empty,
the arms are in activity,

From the beginning to end
the changing appearances and
ten thousand differences share one pattern.

But even a gift of precious jade has its flaws.

Facing changes has its principles,
the great function is without striving.

The ruler stays in the kingdom,
the general goes beyond the frontiers.

Our school's affair hits the mark
straight and true.

Transmit it in all directions
without desiring to gain recognition.

Harmony of Difference and Equality

The mind of the great sage of India
 is intimately transmitted from west to east.
While human faculties are sharp or dull,
 the way has no northern or southern ancestors.
The spiritual source shines clear in the light;
 the branching streams flow on in the dark.
Grasping at things is surely delusion;
 according with sameness is still not enlightenment.
All the objects of the senses interact and yet do not.
 Interacting brings involvement. Otherwise, each keeps its place.
Sights vary in quality and form,
 sounds differ as pleasing or harsh.
Refined and common speech come together in the dark,
 clear and murky phrases are distinguished in the light.
The four elements return to their natures
 just as a child turns to its mother;
Fire heats, wind moves,
 water wets, earth is solid.
Eye and sights, ear and sounds,
 nose and smells, tongue and tastes;
Thus with each and every thing,
 depending on these roots, the leaves spread forth.
Trunk and branches share the essence;
 revered and common, each has its speech.
In the light there is darkness,
 but don't take it as darkness;
In the dark there is light,
 but don't see it as light.
Light and dark oppose one another
 like the front and back foot in walking.
Each of the myriad things has its merit,
 expressed according to function and place.
Phenomena exist; box and lid fit.
 principle responds; arrow points meet.
Hearing the words, understand the meaning;
 don't set up standards of your own.
If you don't understand the way right before you,
 how will you know the path as you walk?
Progress is not a matter of far or near,
 but if you are confused, mountains and rivers block your way.
I respectfully urge you who study the mystery,
 do not vainly pass through sunshine and shadows.

Shosaimyo Kichijo Darani

No mo san man da
moto nan
oha ra chi koto-sha
sono nan to ji to-en
gya gya
gya-ki gya-ki
un nun
shihu-ra shifu-ra
hara shihu-ra hara shihu-ra
chisu-sha chisu-sha
chishu-ri chishu-ri
soha-ja soha-ja
sen chi gya
shiri ei so mo ko

Enmei Jukku Kannon Gyo

Kanzeon namu butsu
yo butsu u in
yo butsu u en
buppo so en
jo raku ga jo cho nen
kanzeon bo nen
kanzeon nen nen
ju shin ki nen nen
fu ri shin

Names of Buddhas and Ancestors (Busso)

Bibashi Butsu Dai-o-sho, Shiki Butsu Dai-o-sho, Bishabu Butsu Dai-o-sho,
Kuruson Butsu Dai-o-sho, Kunagon Muni Butsu Dai-o-sho, Kasho Butsu Dai-o-sho,
Shakamuni Butsu Dai-o-sho, Makakasho Dai-o-sho, Ananda Dai-o-sho,
Shona-Washu Dai-o-sho, Uba-kikuta Dai-o-sho, Dai-taka Dai-o-sho,
Mishaka Dai-o-sho, Bashu-mitsu Dai-o-sho, Butsuda-nandai Dai-o-sho,
Fuda-mitta Dai-o-sho, Barishiba Dai-o-sho, Funayasha Dai-o-sho,
Anabotei Dai-o-sho, Kabimora Dai-o-sho, Nagyahara-Juna Dai-o-sho,
Kana-daiba Dai-o-sho, Ragorata Dai-o-sho, Sogya-nandai Dai-o-sho,
Kaya-shata Dai-o-sho, Kumorata Dai-o-sho, Shayata Dai-o-sho,
Bashu-banzu Dai-o-sho, Manura Dai-o-sho, Kakuro-kuna Dai-o-sho,
Shishi-bodai Dai-o-sho, Basha-shita Dai-o-sho, Funyo-mitta Dai-o-sho,
Hanya-tara Dai-o-sho, Bodai-daruma Dai-o-sho, Taiso-ekka Dai-o-sho,
Kanchi-sosan Dai-o-sho, Dai-i-doshin Dai-o-sho, Daiman-konin Dai-o-sho,
Daikan Eno Dai-o-sho, Seigen Gyoshi Dai-o-sho, Sekito Kisen Dai-o-sho,
Yakusan Igen Dai-o-sho, Ungan Donjo Dai-o-sho, Tozan Ryokai Dai-o-sho,
Ungo Doyo Dai-o-sho, Doan Dohi Dai-o-sho, Doan Kanshi Dai-o-sho,
Ryozan Enkan Dai-o-sho, Taiyo Kyogen Dai-o-sho, To Sugisei Dai-o-sho,
Fuyo Dokai Dai-o-sho, Tanka Shijun Dai-o-sho, Choro Seiryō Dai-o-sho,
Tendo Sagaku Dai-o-sho, Setcho Chikan Dai-o-sho, Tendo Nyojo Dai-o-sho,
Eihei Dogen Dai-o-sho, Koun Ejo Dai-o-sho, Tettsu Gikai Dai-o-sho,
Keisan Jokin Dai-o-sho, Meiho Sotetsu Dai-o-sho, Jhugan Dochin Dai-o-sho,
Tessan Shikaku Dai-o-sho, Keigan Eisho Dai-o-sho, Chuzan Ryoun Dai-o-sho,
Gizan Tonin Dai-o-sho, Shogaku Kenryu Dai-o-sho, Kinen Horyu Dai-o-sho,
Taishitsu Chisen Dai-o-sho, Kokei Shojun Dai-o-sho, Sesso Yuho Dai-o-sho,
Kaiten Genshu Dai-o-sho, Shuzan Shunsho Dai-o-sho, Chozan Sennetsu Dai-o-sho,
Fukushu Kochi Dai-o-sho, Meido Yuton Dai-o-sho, Hakuho Genteki Dai-o-sho,
Gesshu Soko Dai-o-sho, Manzan Dohaku Dai-o-sho, Sogen Tekisui Dai-o-sho,
Houn Keido Dai-o-sho, Hogen Tantei Dai-o-sho, Issen Shucho Dai-o-sho,
Ungai Shuin Dai-o-sho, Gimon Ryoho Dai-o-sho, Hakuryu Kanzui Dai-o-sho,
Daiju Bussan Dai-o-sho, Dairin Kanchu Dai-o-sho, Giun Koshu Dai-o-sho,
Hozan Koei Dai-o-sho, Houn Kobun Dai-o-sho, Houn Kobun Dai-o-sho, Houn Kobun Dai-o-sho.

Names of Women Ancestors

Acharya Mahapajapati, Acharya Mitta, Acharya Yasodhara, Acharya Tissa,
Acharya Sujata, Acharya Sundari-nanda, Acharya Vaddhesi,
Acharya Patachara, Acharya Visakha, Acharya Singalaka-mata,
Acharya Khema, Acharya Uppalavanna, Acharya Samavati, Acharya Uttara,
Acharya Chanda, Acharya Uttama, Acharya Bhadda Kundalakesa,
Acharya Nanduttara, Acharya Dantika, Acharya Sakula, Acharya Siha,
Acharya Dhammadinna, Acharya Kisagotami, Acharya Ubbiri,
Acharya Isidasi, Acharya Bhadda Kapilani, Acharya Mutta,
Acharya Sumana, Acharya Dhamma, Acharya Chitta, Acharya Anopama,
Acharya Sukka, Acharya Sama, Acharya Utpalavarna, Acharya Shrimala Devi,
Acharya Congchi, Acharya Lingzhao, Acharya Moshan Liaoran,
Acharya Liu Tiemo, Acharya Miaoxin, Acharya Daoshen, Acharya Shiji,
Acharya Zhi'an, Acharya Huiguang, Acharya Kongshi Daoren,
Acharya Yu Daopo, Acharya Huiwen, Acharya Fadeng, Acharya Wenzhao,
Acharya Miaodao, Acharya Zhitong, Acharya Zenshin, Acharya Zenzo,
Acharya Ezen, Acharya Ryonen, Acharya Egi, Acharya Shogaku,
Acharya Ekan, Acharya Shōzen, Acharya Mokufu Sonin,
Acharya Myosho Enkan, Acharya Ekyu, Acharya Eshun, Acharya Soshin,
Acharya Soitsu, Acharya Chiyono.

Fukanzazengi

The way is basically perfect and all-pervading. How could it be contingent upon practice and realization? The dharma-vehicle is free and untrammelled. What need is there for concentrated effort? Indeed, the whole body is far beyond the world's dust. Who could believe in a means to brush it clean? It is never apart from one, right where one is. What is the use of going off here and there to practice?

And yet, if there is the slightest discrepancy, the way is as distant as heaven from earth. If the least like or dislike arises, the mind is lost in confusion. Suppose one gains pride of understanding and inflates one's own enlightenment, glimpsing the wisdom that runs through all things, attaining the way and clarifying the mind, raising an aspiration to escalate the very sky. One is making the initial, partial excursions about the frontiers, but is still somewhat deficient in the vital way of total emancipation.

Need I mention the Buddha, who was possessed of inborn knowledge? The influence of his six years of upright sitting is noticeable still. Or Bodhidharma's transmission of the mind-seal? The fame of his nine years of wall-sitting is celebrated to this day. Since this was the case with the saints of old, how can we today dispense with negotiation of the way?

You should therefore cease from practice based on intellectual understanding, pursuing words and following after speech, and learn the backward step that turns your light inwardly to illuminate your self. Body and mind of themselves will drop away, and your original face will be manifest. If you want to attain suchness, you should practice suchness without delay.

For sanzen, a quiet room is suitable. Eat and drink moderately. Cast aside all involvements and cease all affairs. Do not think good or bad. Do not administer pros and cons. Cease all the movements of the conscious mind, the gauging of all thought and views. Have no designs on becoming a buddha. Sanzen has nothing whatever to do with sitting or lying down.

At the site of your regular sitting, spread out thick matting and place a cushion above it. Sit either in the full-lotus or half-lotus position. In the full-lotus position, you first place your right foot on your left thigh and your left foot on your right thigh. In the half-lotus, you simply press your left foot against your right thigh. You should have your robes and belt loosely bound and arranged in order. Then place your right hand on your left leg and your left palm (facing upward) on your right palm, thumb-tips touching. Thus sit upright in correct bodily posture, neither inclining to the left nor to the right, neither leaning forward nor backward. Be sure your ears are on a plane with your shoulders and your nose in line with your navel. Place your tongue against the front roof of your mouth, with teeth and lips both shut. Your eyes should always remain open, and you should breathe gently through your nose. Once you have adjusted your posture, take a deep breath, inhale and exhale, rock your body right and left and settle into a steady, immovable sitting position. Think of not-thinking. How do you think of not-thinking? Nonthinking. This in itself is the essential art of zazen.

The zazen I speak of is not learning meditation. It is simply the dharma-gate of repose and bliss, the practice-realization of totally culminated enlightenment. It is the manifestation of ultimate reality. Traps and snares can never reach it. Once its heart is grasped, you are like a dragon gaining the water, like a tiger taking to the mountains. For you must know that just there (in zazen) the right dharma is manifesting itself and that from the first dullness and distraction are struck aside.

When you arise from sitting, move slowly and quietly, calmly and deliberately. do not rise suddenly or abruptly. In surveying the past, we find that transcendence of both unenlightenment and enlightenment, and dying while either sitting or standing, have all depended entirely on the strength of zazen.

In addition, the bringing about of enlightenment by the opportunity provided by a finger, a banner, a needle, or a mallet, and the effecting of realization with the aid of a hossu, a fist, a staff, or a shout cannot be fully understood by discriminative thinking. Indeed, it cannot be fully known by the practicing or realizing of supernatural powers either. It must be deportment beyond hearing and seeing - is it not a principle that is prior to knowledge and perceptions?

This being the case, intelligence or lack of it does not matter, between the dull and the sharp-witted there is no distinction. If you concentrate your effort single-mindedly, that in itself is negotiating the way. Practice-realization is naturally undefiled. Going forward in practice is a matter of everydayness.

In general, this world and other worlds as well, both in India and China equally hold the buddha-seal; and over all prevails the character of this school, which is simply devotion to sitting, total engagement in immovable sitting. Although it is said that there are as many minds as there are persons, still they all negotiate the way solely in zazen. Why leave behind the seat that exists in your home and go aimlessly off to the dusty realms of other lands? If you make one misstep you go astray from the way directly before you.

You have gained the pivotal opportunity of human form. Do not use your time in vain. You are maintaining the essential working of the buddha way. Who would take wasteful delight in the spark from the flintstone? Besides, form and substance are like the dew on the grass, destiny like the dart of lightning - emptied in an instant, vanished in a flash.

Please, honored followers of Zen. Long accustomed to groping for the elephant, do not be suspicious of the true dragon. Devote your energies to a way that directly indicates the absolute. Revere the person of complete attainment who is beyond all human agency. Gain accord with the enlightenment of the buddhas; succeed to the legitimate lineage of the ancestors' samadhi. Constantly perform in such a manner and you are assured of being a person such as they.

Your treasure store will open of itself, and you will use it at will.

Kobun's Introduction

What is zazen, shikantaza? What kind of sitting are we doing here? There is a little misunderstanding about so-called Zen or Buddhist life; I'd like to clear it up a little bit, and reassure your sense of basic confidence that however you are is the way it should be. I mean daily life, however you manage your daily life, that is how it should be. For a long time this sitting was done only in a closed society like a monastery. It was the traditional way of protecting the quality of this practice.

My basic intention is to really open this sitting opportunity to everybody who is ready to do it and enjoy it. No division between monks and nuns, young and old. I want you to understand this kind of practice. Some people trained in a monastery or communal situation with well set schedules and regulations may have a quite a difficult time with almost no rules. People come and go and there is no scolding and no one carrying a stick to beat you like an old rug or dumb man. Many people say that's not sitting, but I believe this is the real sitting!

Whoever sits, that person's mind embraces the whole situation, centered by that person. So each person has full responsibility and full understanding by themselves for what sitting means to them. The teaching is within that person. Each person's sitting includes how they live, how they think things, where they came from. Nothing is missed, nothing is needed to change from how you are actually living to how it should be. There is no "should be" kind of thing. In one sense, it's a terrible state, the hardest kind of situation.

There is no crutch, nothing to hang onto to order your mind.

I say you cannot call this Zen or Buddhism. Then what is it? People get mad at me! They ask, "Then what are you?" To have no identification is so insecure in one sense; people are very shaky sometimes. But as you notice, no one forces you or

orders you to do this. My great hope is for success in a real sense, for satisfactory practice in this sitting.

I would like to reveal the natural nature of sitting fully as it is. If I put some concept on this and make you understand what I think is a ideal way to sit, I would be a kind of special gardener who fixes boxes and lets you go through to become square bamboo. Or I would be an automatic newspaper man who runs a newspaper, whoever comes, I would just put you in the machine and make you flat and you would come out a squished being, or something like this!

In Japan there is still a strong force of tradition where monasteries closed people out from sitting. Now it is like a secret teaching has been brought to us from a deep secret place; no one knows how valuable it is. People in Japan still feel strongly that sitting shouldn't be done so easily. A sort of hoarding of teaching is going on. But even if this treasure is brought to us, this kind of treasure is not seen by people, so there is actually no danger. The only danger is if you guide people the wrong way with it. In this sense, Dogen Zenji was very right, if you want to do zazen or any kind of practice properly, the only way to master it is to study with the right teacher.

Too much talk about zazen or shikantaza is not so good for you. It's impossible to teach the meaning of sitting. Until you really experience and confirm it by yourself, you cannot believe it. It has tremendous depth, and year after year this gorgeous world of shikantaza appears. It's up to you to cultivate it. Because you are Buddhas yourselves, you can sit. Dogen named this sitting "great Gate of Peace and Joy". Simply, it is peaceful, eternally peaceful, pleasurable and joyful. Shikantaza doesn't have the name of any religion, but it is, in its quality, a very true religious way to live.

Kobun on Shikantaza

The great pleasure, the great accomplishment of your way-seeking is in the realization of sitting. This form of sitting, this place to sit on this earth, this time to sit, the twentieth century, all have lots of problems. The shikantaza way is giving birth to the Buddha seed. It is not a person becoming a better person, it is the actualization of what we are.

To sit in shikantaza is very uncomfortable at first. It's rather more peaceful to sink into a warm soft couch and have a nice drink. That's peace, we may say. But to recover our basic view of sanity and clarity, to see how everything actually arises and falls moment after moment is how to take this sitting posture.

Awakening, continuous awakening is nothing but our basic nature. Putting that awakening into some form as so-called being, as a man or a woman, explains what shikantaza is. When you jump into the Buddha's world, you place yourself in the center of annuttara-samyaksambodhi. That is shikantaza's real meaning, real action. Shikantaza is immeasurable, it's unthinkable. You can use your entire system of knowing, but it is impossible to completely understand it.

Shikantaza is not what we usually think, it is truly personal deeds, because only if one decides to sit does it appear. Sitting cannot be fully experienced by imagination. Shikantaza has a kind of slippery feeling to it. This means that it is easy to slip off of it. It's quite slippery because it relates to your everyday condition. In each sitting you have to sense it without anyone's help. There are no techniques; there is no measuring stick with which to evaluate it. There is no way of knowing what it is or what you are doing. All kinds of conceptualizations, ideas, hopes fall away from it. They cannot stay in your meditation.

Sitting on your cushion is not relaxation, it is the result of all your knowledge. Every experience you have come through sits there each time. It is very serious. Otherwise, you sit because it feels good, and you are comfortable, and once in a while you feel an ecstatic sensation in your body. You feel calmness, stillness, clarity, and forget there are hungry people on this earth. You forget there are lots of diseases which are killing people. If you do not observe that in your sitting, you are just escaping into your desire. It happens if you mistake or limit the focus of your sitting practice.

Sitting shikantaza is the place itself, and things. The dynamics of all Buddhas are in it. When you sit, the cushion sits with you. If you wear glasses, the glasses sit with you. Clothing sits with you. House sits with you. People who are moving around outside all sit with you. They don't take the sitting posture!

Sitting shikantaza does not depend on human intellect. It is not something you understand. It's indescribable. We say the contents of sitting are beyond our thinking system or our sensations. Belief or confidence is not what we usually think it is. Doing shikantaza shows utter trust and belief in it. If you explain shikantaza it becomes something which you don't understand, but you can experience sitting with everything with the understanding that everything is there, is there with you.

Buddha's sitting is way beyond purity and impurity, holiness and unholiness. It is beyond Bodhisattva's sitting, which is endless. Bodhisattva's sitting is like a seed which never stops flourishing; it always comes back.

Guidepost for the Hall of Pure Bliss

By seeking appearances and sounds
one cannot truly find the Way.

The deep source of realization
comes with constancy,
bliss, self, and purity.

Its purity is constant,
its bliss is myself.

The two are mutually dependent,
like firewood and fire.

The self's bliss is not exhausted,
constant purity has no end.

Deep existence is beyond forms.
Wisdom illuminates
the inside of the circle.

Inside the circle the self vanishes,
neither existent nor non-existent.

Intimately conveying spiritual energy,
it subtly turns the mysterious pivot.

When the mysterious pivot
finds opportunity to turn,
the original light auspiciously appears.

When the mind's conditioning
has not yet sprouted,
how can words and images be distinguished?

Who is it that can distinguish them?
Clearly understand and know by yourself.

Whole and inclusive with inherent insight,
it is not concerned with discriminative thought.

When discriminating thought is not involved,
it is like white reed flowers shining in the snow.

One beam of light's gleam
permeates the vastness.

The gleam permeates through all directions,
from the beginning not covered or concealed.

Catching the opportunity to emerge,
amid transformations it flourishes.

Following appropriately amid transformations,
the pure bliss is unchanged.

The sky encompasses it, the ocean seals it,
every moment without deficiency,
In the achievement without deficiency,
inside and outside are interfused.

All dharmas transcend their limits,
all gates are wide open.

Through the open gates
are the byways of playful wandering.

Dropping off senses and sense objects
is like the flowers of our gazing
and listening falling away.

Gazing and listening
are only distant conditions
of thousands of hands and eyes.

The others die from being too busy,
but I maintain continuity.

In the wonder of continuity
are no traces of subtle identifications.

Within purity is bliss,
within silence is illumination.
The house of silent illumination
is the hall of pure bliss.

Dwelling in peace and forgetting hardship,
let go of adornments and become genuine.

The motto for becoming genuine:
nothing is gained by speaking.

The goodness of Vimalakirti
enters the gate of non-duality.

Song of the Grass-Roof Hermitage

I've built a grass hut where there's nothing of value.
After eating, I relax and enjoy a nap.
When it was completed, fresh weeds appeared.
Now it's been lived in - covered by weeds.

The person in the hut lives here calmly,
Not stuck to inside, outside, or in between.
Places worldly people live, she/he doesn't live.
Realms worldly people love, she/he doesn't love.

Though the hut is small, it includes the entire world.
In ten square feet, an old man illumines forms and their nature.
A Great Vehicle Bodhisattva trusts without doubt.
The middling or lowly can't help wondering;
Will this hut perish or not?

Perishable or not, the original master is present,
not dwelling south or north, east or west.
Firmly based on steadiness, it can't be surpassed.
A shining window below the green pines —
Jade palaces or vermilion towers can't compare with it.

Just sitting with head covered, all things are at rest.
Thus, this mountain monk doesn't understand at all.
Living here he no longer works to get free.
Who would proudly arrange seats, trying to entice guests?

Turn around the light to shine within, then just return.
The vast inconceivable source can't be faced or turned away from.
Meet the ancestral teachers, be familiar with their instruction,
Bind grasses to build a hut, and don't give up.

Let go of hundreds of years and relax completely
open your hands and walk, innocent
Thousands of words, myriad interpretations,
Are only to free you from obstructions.
If you want to know the undying person in the hut,
Do not separate from this skin bag here and now.

Hsin Hsin Ming (Song of Trusting Mind)

The Great Way isn't difficult for those who are unattached to their preferences.
Let go of longing and aversion and everything will be perfectly clear;
when you cling to a hairsbreadth of distinction,
heaven and earth are set apart.
If you want to realize the truth, don't be for or against.

The struggle between good and evil is the primal disease of the mind:
not grasping the deeper meaning, you just trouble your mind's serenity.
As vast as infinite space, it is perfect and lacks nothing,
but because you select and reject, you can't perceive its true nature.

Don't get tangled in the world, don't lose yourself in emptiness;
be at peace in the oneness of things and all errors will disappear by themselves.
If you don't live the Tao, you fall into assertion or denial:
asserting that the world is real you are blind to its deeper reality;
denying that the world is real you are blind to the selflessness of all things.
The more you think about these matters, the farther you are from the truth;
step aside from all thinking and there is nowhere you can't go.

Returning to the root, you find the meaning; chasing appearances, you lose their source.

At the moment of profound insight you transcend both appearance and emptiness.
Don't keep searching for the truth, just let go of your opinions.
For the mind in harmony with the Tao, all selfishness disappears
with not even a trace of self-doubt; you can trust the universe completely.
All at once you are free with nothing left to hold on to,
all is empty brilliant perfect in its own being.

In all the world of things as they are, there is no self no non-self.
If you want to describe its essence, the best you can say is "not two";
in this "not two" nothing is separate, and nothing in the world is excluded.
The enlightened of all times and places have entered into this truth;
in it there is no gain or loss. One instant is ten thousand years;
there is no here, no there; infinity is right before your eyes.

The tiny is as large as the vast when objective boundaries have vanished;
the vast is as small as the tiny when you don't have external limits.
Being is an aspect of non-being; non-being is no different from being:
until you understand this truth you won't see anything clearly.
One is all, all are one; when you realize this what reason for holiness or wisdom?
The mind of absolute trust is beyond all thought, all striving, is perfectly at peace,
for in it there is no yesterday no today no tomorrow.

Shantideva's Vow

May I be a guard for those who are protectorless
A guide for those who journey on the road.
For those who wish to cross the water,
May I be a boat, a raft, a bridge.
May I be an isle for those who yearn for land,
A lamp for those who long for light.
For all who need a resting place, a bed,
For those who need a servant, may I be their servant.
May I be the wishing jewel, the vase of plenty,
A word of power and the supreme healing.
May I be the tree of miracles,
And for every being, the abundant cow.
Just like the earth and all the elements
That endure like the sky itself endures,
For boundless multitudes of beings,
May I always be their ground and sustenance.

Atta Dipa

Atta Dipa

Viharatha

Atta Sarana

Anna Sarana

Dhamma Dipa

Dhamma Sarana

Ananna Sarana

Dwell!

You are the light.

Rely on yourself.

Do not rely on others.

The Dharma is the light.

Rely on the Dharma.

Do not rely on anything other

than the Dharma.