

8th January 2021

Global Sangha Newsletter 14

KOANS & MIND

PODCAST GS10 Buddhist Psychology

MIND

Mind is the forerunner of states. Mind is chief, mind-made are they. If one speaks or acts with wicked mind, suffering follows, even as the wheel follows the hoof. Mind is the forerunner of states. Mind is chief, mind-made are they. If one speaks or acts with pure mind, well-being follows, even as a shadow that never leaves.

Dhammapada verses 1 & 2



PODCAST GS10

Click the button at the top for the latest podcast.

You can access transcripts and translations of this podcast series at

https://eleusis.ning.com/notes/GLOBAL_SANGHA_INDEX

This Newsletter

- announces the visit by Dario Sensei, Zen master from Rome, who will talk about a famous koan.
- continues the article "After Awakening" by Robert Joshin Althouse
- has material about ITZI - the International Zen Therapy Institute - and early warning of a forward programme of Buddhist psychology seminars and workshops
- gives links to our on-going weekly meetings

All times are Rome time zone

GUEST SPEAKER

Sunday 17th January at 11 am

Guest Speaker Dario Sensei

I have met Dario Sensei at San Francisco Zen Center where we were both attending a conference on compassion and mindfulness and also in Spain at the meeting of Buddhist Teachers in Europe, where he gave an excellent talk about his work in Italian prisons. He speaks very good English and we got on extremely well. He is coming to our Sunday morning zoom meeting to talk to us on the intriguing subject of

Seijo and her soul separated A famous Zen koan

Dario Doshin Girolami is the Abbot of Centro Zen L'Arco - Zenmon Ji in Rome. He received Dharma Transmission from Eijun Linda Cutts, abbess of San Francisco Zen Center.

He started to practice in 1986 and was ordained as a Zen monk by Zenkei Blanche Hartmann at the San Francisco Zen Center founded by Shunryu Suzuki Roshi. Prior to entering the Zen path in San Francisco he received a Laurea degree in Indian and Eastern Religions and Philosophy at Sapienza University in Rome and studied under the guidance of Zen masters including Tenshin Roshi - Reb Anderson, Thich Nhat Hanh and Maezumi Roshi. He also received the Avalokiteshvara initiation from His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Former adjunct Professor of "Zen" at the John Cabot University of Rome, he holds regular seminars at the faculty of Psychology of Sapienza University, and leads regular meditation courses at the Rebibbia Prison of Rome. He wrote the book: *Lo Zen Soto e I koan - La Via della Presenza di Spirito*.

WHAT IS ITZI?

ITZI <<https://zen-therapy.org/>> is the International Zen Therapy Institute (originally Instituto Terapia Zen internacional) which is now a registered charity (non-profit organisation) in England dedicated to promoting Buddhist psychology internationally.

ITZI has a number of activities, the most important of which are:

- The two year on-line study programme in Buddhist psychology
- Occasional international conferences - there have been three so far
- Psychotherapy and counselling practice and supervision

This year ITZI will offer seminars and workshops on-line on Saturdays, every couple of weeks, alternating between mornings and evenings so as to facilitate attendance by people from different time zones.

SATURDAY MORNING SESSIONS

9th January, 6th February, 6th March, 3rd April,

11.00 Zen Therapy Seminar

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83484765888>

Meeting ID: 834 8476 5888

One tap mobile local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83484765888>

SATURDAY EVENING SESSIONS

23rd January, 20th February, 20th March, 17th April

19.30 Zen Therapy Seminar

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87560868030>

Meeting ID: 875 6086 8030

One tap mobile local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87560868030>

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ARTICLE

reprinted from Tricycle Magazine

AFTER AWAKENING (Part 2)

Faith, practice, and enlightenment in Zen master Dogen's Genjokoan

Adapted from a talk by Robert Althouse :- Winter issue of Tricycle Magazine 2020

The Genjokoan was written as a letter to a lay Buddhist practitioner or possibly a Confucian. We don't know what the practitioner had asked, but we have to assume that Dogen wrote something that a layperson could understand, and that he wasn't trying to be esoteric.

As David Brazier points out, you have to appreciate how, through his experience in China and his upbringing in a Japanese aristocratic family, Dogen was steeped in Chinese culture. Just as we are steeped in a cultural context that is secular, scientific, and humanistic, Dogen was soaked in Daoism and Confucianism. In spite of this larger context, however, Dogen always considered himself a Buddhist.

The central teaching in the Genjokoan uses the image of being a mirror, the dark side of the mirror. Daoist teachings help clarify and bring this important metaphor to life.

Though one may deeply understand the forms of body and mind, though one may deeply understand what the body and mind are saying, still, this is not a reflection in a mirror, nor like the moon in the water, which is only realized on one side when the other side is dark.

This is the crux of the whole Genjokoan. He's saying that when you look at your reflection in water, there's a tipping point: either the water's transparent or it's murky and reflective like a mirror. It doesn't gradually become a mirror. It's either a mirror or it isn't. Dogen is using this as a metaphor: when you drop off the body-mind, when you forget the self, you become a mirror that reflects the dharma.

Dogen is criticizing the interpretation of original enlightenment that claims one can possess the dharma. One may have kensho, but one may not necessarily be aware of it. Waking up allows you to see and appreciate the dharma, and from this point of view the dharma is what is other than you, because the dharma is unconditioned. You and I are conditioned. To wake up, to be liberated, is to be able to reflect the buddhadharma, as it is, without your projection. You don't possess enlightenment. It possesses you.

To make this point, Dogen alludes to Daoist ideas about yin and yang. The concept of yin and yang is very dialectical. You're either on one side or the other. And if you go too far to either extreme, you can flip to the other side. Yang is the active, masculine principle, and yin is the receptive, feminine principle. Daoism would say that you should dwell on the yin side as much as possible, because it's receptive and can see the other side. When we are on the yang side, we tend to be blind and act out in ways that are unbalanced. We need to use this male energy to be in the world, but once we've accomplished the task at hand, it's wise to return to the yin side.

Dogen builds his entire argument around this central metaphor of the dark side of the mirror that reflects the buddhadharma. Later on he uses more opposites and pairs: Fish and birds, Buddhist enlightenment and delusion, shore and the boat, firewood and ash. He's using these metaphors constantly throughout the Genjokoan, and he says the same thing over and over and over again: be on the yin side. He's saying this: To get over yourself, appreciate what is other than you and get on with living, being liberated, free of the karma that we create. Trust the universe and let it carry you along.

To be continued

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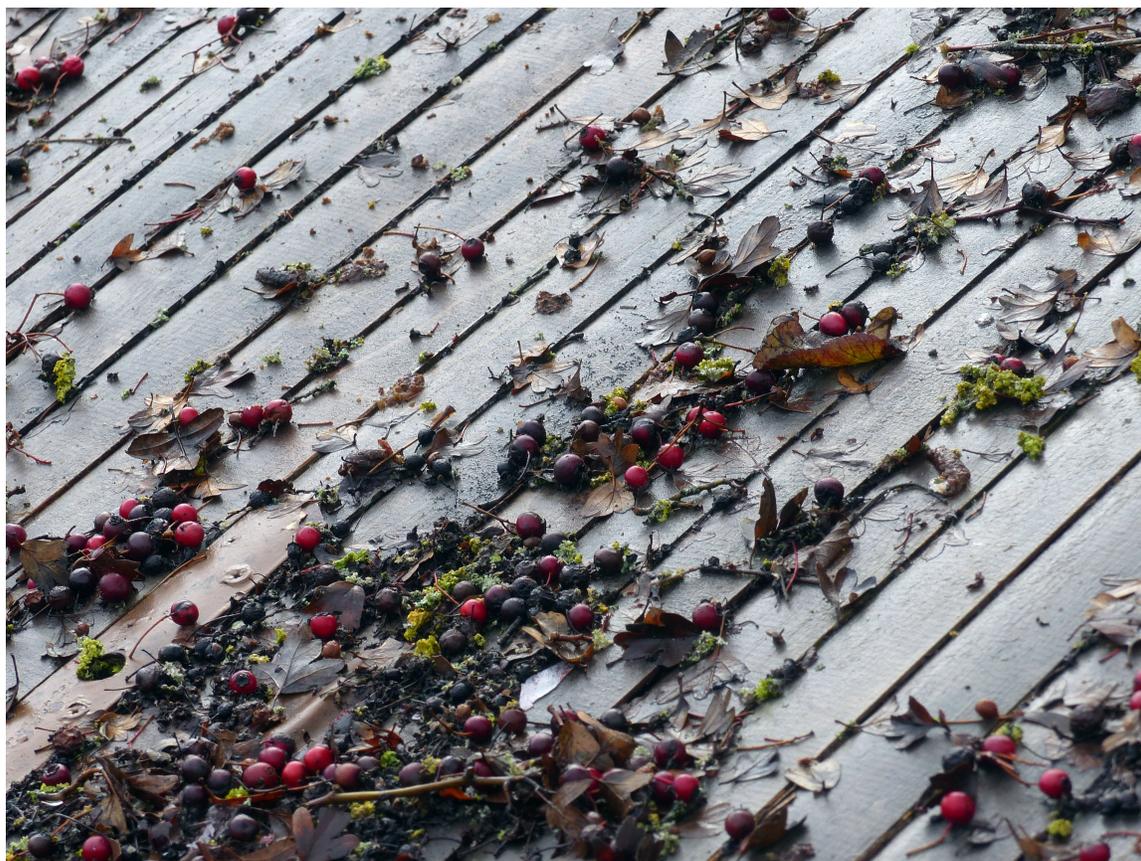


Photo by Tineke Osterloh - Fallen berries

WEEKLY MEETINGS

All times are Rome time zone

MONDAYS

Monday 2 - 3.30 pm is **Nembutsu Service** with Vajrapala, Susthama or other Order member. Especially for those who have taken refuge or are thinking about taking refuge or want to go deeper in the theme of refuge

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85954136440?pwd=WmRMMllydlQzaWF2Mi9RbFZWTVRZz09>

Meeting ID: 859 5413 6440

Passcode: 670414

TUESDAYS

17.30 Sangha Group Meeting in Italian

Details from Angela <ange.romani.2017@gmail.com>

WEDNESDAYS 14.30 On-line Meeting with Vajrapala

This is a meeting of friends of Amida Benelux Sangha - all welcome - see end of newsletter below

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83616599261?pwd=d3QrL1U0RG9RQXJPQU1yTzJkY3FXUT09>

Meeting ID: 836 1659 9261

Passcode: 129104

SATURDAY 9th January and subsequent Saturdays

14.00 Refuge Group. Open to all who have taken refuge.

Codes separately notified.

SATURDAY 9th January and then 4 weekly

11.00 Zen Therapy Seminar

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83484765888>

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83484765888>

Meeting ID: 834 8476 5888

One tap mobile local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/u/kc0P1T379c>

SATURDAY 23rd and then 4 weekly

19.30 Zen Therapy Seminar

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87560868030>

Meeting ID: 875 6086 8030

One tap mobile local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/u/ky1Zf711X>

SUNDAY 3rd January & subsequent Sundays

11.00 Global Sangha Interest Group

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87840519127>

Meeting ID: 878 4051 9127

One tap mobile local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/u/kWbW3Qs0L>

SUNDAY 3rd January & subsequent Sundays

20.00 Friendship Group

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83106781029>

Meeting ID: 831 0678 1029

EVENTS

To stay informed or sign up for any of the following: jisshas@googlegroups.com

JANUARY FULL MOON UPAVASTHA

- Koteswara & Dharmavidya

Thursday-Friday 28-29 January 2021

An on-line retreat consisting of (with approximate start times - Rome time zone)

- 16.00 Assemble
- 16.30 Puja: Nembutsu, Nei Quan Chih Quan, Vajrasattva with short Dharma talk, Sange (Confession of faults) and Refuge Ceremony (Taking refuge & renewal)
- 18.00 Chanting Quan Shi Yin into the night until midnight or later, wherever you are
- Morning meditation
- 10.00 Gathering for sharing
- End before midday

Upavastha signifies the full moon time when the gods come to visit one's home. In Buddhism this is traditionally the time for confession, contrition and renewal. This retreat is offered as an experiment. Please book. No cost. If it is popular it can be repeated on other full moon nights.

FEBRUARY FULL MOON

Weekend 27th-28th

Programme to be announced

EASTER RETREAT

2-5 April 2021

Dharmavidya & Tineke Osterloh

A four day on-line event over Easter weekend focussed upon The Summary of Faith & Practice. Study, with discussion, practice, Dharma encounter, chanting, and ritual.

More information here:

<https://www.tinekeosterloh.com/kurse/summary-of-faith-practice/>

To stay informed or sign up for any of the above: jisshas@googlegroups.com

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THIS PROGRAMME IS NOW FULLY BOOKED
THERE WILL BE A SECOND IN THE AUTUMN
NOW THREE QUARTERS BOOKED FOR WHICH
BOOKINGS ARE STILL BEING TAKEN

TRANSMISSION OF MIRROR TEACHINGS Dharmavidya & Tineke Osterloh

Dharmavidya & Tineke Osterloh An initiation into "dark side teachings" based on the book *Dark Side of the Mirror*. Three hours per week. Participants should be fully committed to attendance and have read the book before commencing the course. The mirror teachings bring together Pureland and Zen with some practices from other schools as this teaching reaches the core of the Buddhist message.

This is a private teaching for a small select group of disciples; a heart to heart transmission of the text, meaning and experience. Maximum group size 12. The sessions will not be recorded. There is no fee but donations are possible.

Full details: <https://eleusis.ning.com/events/transmission-of-mirror-teachings>
and
here: <https://www.tinekeosterloh.com/kurse/transmission-of-mirror-teachings/>

You ask, Am I pure
or am I a bad person?
I have no idea.
Amida knows all of me.
Amida does everything.

Torino - Photo by Angela Romani



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To myriad tathagatas
Their offerings they make
Bowling, rejoicing and returning to
The land of peace and nurturance

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You can see other Global Sangha materials, past podcasts and articles via :
https://eleusis.ning.com/notes/GLOBAL_SANGHA_INDEX

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If you wish to contact me personally, you can do so at dharmavidya@fastmail.fm or via my Facebook [@davidbrazierauthor](#) or on my website - click the Global Sangha at Eleusis link below.

Thank you very much
Namo Amida Bu
Dharmavidya
David Brazier

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