
O n e n e s s

Quarterly Newsletter of the Rev. Gyomay M. Kubose Dharma Legacy

Vol. 6 No. 2 Summer 2002

Look Within by Rev. Gyomay M. Kubose

In the world news we hear about victims of war, starvation, terrorism, and other unspeakable things. Some people might ask, "Why do such terrible things happen?" There are many causes. Perhaps there are a thousand causes. We don't have to look just at the world news. We have plenty of suffering and cruelty in our own home towns. And we don't have to look only at our home towns – how about in our own lives and our own homes? There are no homes without problems. Let's look into our own hearts and minds. Any hate? Greed? Stupidity?

It is easy to see somebody else's faults. Our eyes are opened toward the outside but they are closed toward the inside. We see external things but we do not look within. We feel we are victimized and controlled by our environment. Why do we get upset? Why do we complain idly? It is because of external factors. "He did that, and that's why I became like this." We are always blaming other people, always blaming conditions, and always blaming something else. We never look deep inside ourselves because we do not live our own lives. Many people have not found their centers, their true selves. When we look within we become aware of our own brutality, our own ignorance, unkindness, and immorality. When we see these qualities in the world we criticize and condemn. But what about ourselves?

Buddha's teaching was to look into one's own life instead of looking outward at the world of others. When one looks within, one becomes more humble and more kind. Supposing one thinks deeply and looks into one's life and concludes, "Well, I have no unkindness, no ugly thoughts, no brutality. I am good and I want to do something good for others." Well, what good can one really do for others? Some people are

so altruistic. Others are so selfish. Either extreme – altruism or selfishness – is wrong. In both, one has forgotten to live his own true life. Neither an inferiority complex nor a superiority complex helps us to live freely.

We should live like the sun. The sun has no intentions such as, "Unless I come out and shine upon the world, people will be cold and sad – so I should shine for the sake of the people." The sun just is. The sun shines and everybody is happy. How nice! It is the same with flowers. A rose never imitates any other flower; a rose is always a rose, a lily is always a lily.

Be yourself. Listen to the inner voice. Buddhism teaches us to live an authentic life which is truth itself. You must live your life. This does not mean that you must detach yourself from others. Although you live in a relative world and have to do things with other people, you still can be the master of the situation anytime, anywhere.

Some people go to their temple with a "Well, I'm just a guest, I'm just visiting," attitude. That's all right, but since you are there the temple is yours. Be useful. Be the center of the whole temple, the center of the whole congregation. If someone needs help, why not take the initiative and help. When you are the center, there is tremendous joy and creativeness.

Don't just be a visitor in life. Be aware of what is needed. Don't be an outsider. Even the first time you go somewhere, be useful since you are there – instead of standing alone or sitting uncomfortably. Do things sincerely and with life. You are a living thing, not just a dead log or dead flesh. Your spirit must be dynamically alive. You do, not because you have to or you ought to, but because you can't help

but do. Life can be enthusiastic, very beautiful, one with all other people.

When people get together and do things together, all become one. Just as American Indians sit down and all smoke from the same peace pipe and become real brothers; so we become one when we eat together and do things together. In the Japanese tea ceremony, everybody drinks tea from the same bowl. I think that communion in Christianity, to eat Christ's flesh, to drink Christ's blood, means to become one with Him.

The oneness is true not only among people but also between people and all things. Take a flower, for example. The flower is living. If the leaves are drooping, water is needed. It's thirsty. When you see this you have a communication with the flower; the flower and you are one.

This is true of everything else in the world. By looking within, you become aware of and one with all things. Buddhism teaches you how to live from the inside to the outside. Look within and live your true life. (The Center Within; pgs.22-24)

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President's Message

By Rev. Koyo Kubose

On March 28, 2002 Adrienne and I loaded up our van and left for a two-week vacation to Florida. One of our stops was the Kennedy Space Center. I had never been there before and it is an impressive place. For security and other reasons, it is strategically and remotely located on 140,000 acres of Merritt Island, next to Cape Canaveral. The tour took us past the Vehicle Assembly Building where the Space Shuttle is assembled on a Mobile Launcher Platform and its connections tested before it is moved out to a Launch Pad. This building stands 525 feet tall and covers an area of eight acres, making it the largest building in the world. Further down the road, we stopped and visited at the Saturn V Center, which houses a fully restored Saturn V moon rocket. We learned about NASA history and the Apollo missions. There were numerous exhibits, including being able to touch a moon rock.

Back at the Visitor Complex, we saw a 3-D IMAX presentation, "L5: First City in Space," which depicted what it might be like when humans start to live permanently in space on an orbiting colony. On the grounds of the Visitor Complex is a full-sized replica of the Shuttle Explorer. We went inside to view the flight deck, cargo bay, and the mid-deck, which showed where the crew eat, sleep, and go to the bathroom. We paid respects at a national monument where the names of U.S. astronauts who have died in the line of duty are carved into the black granite face of a large Space Mirror. The Space Mirror memorial is designed to allow reflected sunlight to pass through from behind. The resulting effect has the astronauts' names floating among the clouds in the sky.

All during our activities, the question was being asked, "Is the launch still on?" The reply was that fueling was taking place for the 4:38 P.M. scheduled launch and as far as anybody knew, everything was still okay... unless the winds really picked up at the last minute or something else happened... you never could be sure until the actual count down started. Between 1:30 and 2:30 P.M. buses were boarded and left for the Launch Viewing Site, which was about five miles from Launch Pad 39B where the Shuttle Atlantis would be launched with seven astronauts aboard. The eleven-day mission was to install various equipment at the International Space Station, which

was orbiting in space 220 miles above earth.

At the viewing site, everybody spread out across a grassy area and waited. I reflected on my feelings. I was affected by what I had learned close up about the space program. The idea of earth as a spaceship moving through a vast universe certainly gave me a wider perspective of things. I vowed to try and apply this sense of a wider perspective into my daily life. I was also affected by learning about the early history of NASA. There were many failures and mistakes... and astronaut lives were lost. Everyone in the space program knew they had to carry on, even more so because lives were lost. Efforts were renewed and dedicated to the legacy of all who had given their lives. This made me think about what I was doing with my life. I was moved to renew my efforts to do my Dharma work, which has been influenced by many people, past and present. I vowed to become more earnest in carrying on the legacy of my father, who had dedicated his life towards establishing an American Buddhism.

There was great excitement in the air about the impending launch. I knew it was going to be a tremendous experience. I couldn't help but relate the shuttle launching to my own life. I vowed to use the shuttle launch to inspire a "launching" of a new phase of spirituality in my own personal life.

A loud-speaker system at the Viewing Site kept us informed with live communication from the Launch Center. In preparing for the launch countdown, there is a 6-minute window. If the countdown does not start within this 6-minute window, the launch is scrubbed. We all listened as the voice on the loudspeaker said things like, "The window is now five minutes." At one point, a delay in proceeding to the countdown was due to a minor glitch in the computer systems. The window was getting shorter and shorter. "One minute and forty five seconds left in the window." At that point, although nobody around me said anything but I'm sure some of us were thinking that the launch might be scrubbed; what a disappointment that would be. With 45 seconds left in the window, we heard, "Shuttle Atlantis, you are cleared for Countdown!" Everybody cheered; to start the countdown meant that the launch was going to happen.

During the three-minute countdown, all eyes and binoculars were focused on Launch Pad 39B, five miles away, on the other side of the Banana River. Until finally, "...five, four, three, two, Lift Off!" The lift-off

blast was a big ball of yellow fire. There was no noise at first because of the distance; then a deep rumbling was heard and felt. The white wake of smoke billowing behind the rising shuttle was a dramatic testimony to the awesome power of the rocket boosters. Up, up, up the shuttle climbed. After about two minutes, those of us with binoculars could see the two white rocket boosters fall away. The shuttle was now a tiny silver speck high in the sky.

We boarded our bus and as we pulled away, the bus driver said, "Traveling at 17,500 miles per hour, the shuttle right now is passing over Paris." As we rode back to the Visitor Complex, I thought about how it was possible to be awed by natural wonders, like the Grand Canyon or the Niagara Falls, but also by great technological/engineering feats like blasting off into space. I consolidated in my mind the three vows I made earlier about having a wider perspective about things, about appreciating and carrying on the legacy of my Dharma work, and about "launching" a new phase of my own spiritual life. I thought how appropriate it was that the shuttle launch took place on April 8th, Siddhartha Gautama's birthday.

Upon returning home from the vacation, I have many precious memories. I wrote the above description of "Viewing a Shuttle Launch" to share this particular experience with others. Dear Oneness newsletter readers, my wish is for you to be similarly influenced as I was, and use this shuttle launching as a motivational metaphor to inspire some kind of "launching" of a new phase in your life. Rededicate yourself to clarifying your spiritual path. Blast off! Soar up and beyond!

Dharma Glimpse

In walking from the bus to the Heartland Sangha service at the Lake Street Church, I stopped in wonder to watch about two dozen bumblebees flying from blossom to blossom. Each bee was separate, but part of a whole. There was no pushing or shoving, no "I saw that blossom first." There was just a harmonious flowing, as they went about their work. Serendipity. A lovely, natural lesson. It inspired me to try and express my feelings in a haiku:

*Bumblebees bee-ing,
Gathering, pollinating,
Ah, new flowering*

This haiku is dedicated in loving memory to my friend Alice Kawamura who loved flowers.

N. S. (Chicago)

American Buddhist Services

The Heartland Sangha holds 11 A.M. Saturday services at the Lake Street Church, 607 Lake Street, Evanston (use courtyard entrance on Chicago Ave.). For more information, please call Heartland Sangha at 773-545-9972. Rev. Koyo Kubose's upcoming Dharma Talk titles are:

- | | |
|---------|-------------------------------------|
| June 15 | TiSarana: Three Treasures |
| July 6 | Zen in Sports |
| July 20 | Expecting / Accepting |
| Aug 3 | Our Spiritual Roots |
| Aug 17 | The Present Moment: 5 Minutes Later |
| Sept 7 | Humanistic Buddhism |

Video Loan Program

Dharma talks from past services are available on video tapes for interested persons (e.g. shut-ins, incarcerated persons, people without a nearby Sangha, or to those who simply wish to hear Dharma talks). Contact the Kubose Dharma Legacy to receive a tape on loan at no charge. Return the tape and another will be sent to you.

Yes, please send me a free Dharma talk video on loan.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Oneness Newsletter Summer 2002

Editors of this issue: Shauna Fleuridor, Kanon Kubose, Adrienne Kubose, Rev. Koyo S. Kubose

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The purpose of the Kubose Dharma Legacy is to offer a non-sectarian, non-dualistic approach, the Way of Oneness, to further individual spiritual growth in everyday life for people of all backgrounds.

Ashes Burial Service of Rev. Gyomay M. Kubose May 11, 2002

by Adrienne Kimura Kubose

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Rev. Kubose's gravesite is near several trees on the northwest side of Montrose Cemetery in Chicago, Illinois. On the morning of his ashes burial service, his gravestone was surrounded by dianthus flowers. His urn was placed in the center of a small table. To the right were two pictures of him: one of him in formal ministerial robes, one of him having a good laugh. To the left was a vase of dark pink tulips. An incense burner was in front of the urn.

It started raining heavily shortly before the service started. Well-made plans were altered by the rain. Umbrellas were everywhere -- protecting the table, video camera, microphone, attendees. The people attending created a warm atmosphere, remarking how they imagined Rev. Kubose would have been in similar circumstances. Many mentioned how he often said, "Every Day is a Good Day."

People gathered around the gravestone. Minnie, Rev. Kubose's wife, was seated in a wheel chair directly in front of the gravestone, with her daughter Joyce at her side. After introductory words by son-in-law, Robert Prosis, the service began with chanting of the Three Sacred Vows Sutra by Rev. Koyo Kubose, son of Rev. Gyomay Kubose. This was followed by granddaughter, Shauna Kubose Fleuridor reading selections from the Dhammapada.

"The good things of this world pass away but the treasures earned through living a sincere life are imperishable and never pass away. Whoever is compassionate is everywhere and beloved; by the kind and good he is prized as a friend; at death his heart is full of peace.

When a traveler at last comes home from a long trip, with what gladness do family and friends receive him. So shall good deeds welcome him, like friends, as he completes life's full journey. Like a true master he now possesses nothing in the past, present, or future. He has moved beyond time. He knows the mystery of both life and death. Nothing of humans or deities can hold him. Nothing in all creation can hold him.

Let us listen to the teachings - and live with love even among those who hate; let us live with contentment, even among the greedy. We too shall pass away; knowing this, how can we quarrel? Upon hearing the truth, the wise become serene, like a deep, tranquil lake. Happiness or sorrow - whatever befalls you, walk with the teachings. Going beyond the darkest sorrows and highest joys, he has done all that had to be done. And now he is One."

Rev. Koyo Kubose gave a Dharma Talk (as edited from a videotape recording):

"This is really something. In Japan they usually wash off the headstone with water when visiting a grave. We don't have to do that... the skies and clouds are helping us out today. As Rev. Kubose would say, 'Every day is a good day... sunny day or rainy day.' I chose to chant the Three Sacred Vows Sutra, San Sei Ge, and would like to comment on what the three sacred vows are for today:

The first sacred vow is Rev. Kubose's life. He made a vow as a young man; he had a dream to further Buddhism in America. This was his vow. To make a vow is one thing but to live it is another. Rev. Kubose lived his vow. His whole life stands for spreading the Dharma in America. It took a lot of courage and vision. He has said publicly, I don't want to establish Indian Buddhism, or Chinese or Japanese Buddhism. I want to establish an American Buddhism, using terminology understandable by Americans. He and his wife Minnie had this strong vow from deep within. This vow was the cardinal point of his whole life.

The 2nd sacred vow is my vow. I vow, not so much to carry on my father's work because it's already being carried on. His life is unique. My life has to be unique. I can't walk in his footsteps. Nobody can imitate someone else. Each person has to live his own life. So I make my vow to live my life 100% in the Dharma. Whatever he taught me is within me. I just have to be myself and live fully.

The 3rd sacred vow is your vow. You should make a sacred vow. What is the point of your life? What is the central thing your life rests on? There are many important things. It doesn't have to be one thing. Look deep within and see what the whole point of your life is and make a commitment to it. Determine how you want to live your life and make your vow.

A vowed life is a beautiful thing but you have to make it happen. You can't just wait around. Standing in a

cemetery is certainly a place to become more aware of impermanence. We know we don't have all the time in the world. We have to be earnest, sincere and decide how we want to live our lives. As was just read from the Dhammapada, 'We too will pass away.' We can see the reality of that truth. So these are the three sacred vows and I hope on this occasion the spirit of Rev. Kubose will help us affirm and fulfill these three sacred vows."

Following Rev. Koyo's message, Rev. Kubose's daughter-in-law Adrienne Kimura Kubose said words of appreciation. Bookmarks had been made and were given to those who attended the service. The book marks had Rev. Kubose's calligraphy of "Every Day is a Good Day" printed on them. The service concluded with everyone offering incense and placing some earth into the grave.

ABS

By Don Kubose

Saturday, May, 11, 2002, was the day of my Dad's Ashes Burial Service. I was rushing around trying to get everything done before dialing in to hear the service. It was the day before the annual picnic of the Nakayama Social Club and as chairman of the Bingo committee, I was to meet with another member at Costco to purchase the Bingo prizes. Right at 9am I dialed in and heard my brother's voice chanting the Three Sacred Vows sutra. It had the effect of immediately slowing me down and putting me into the service.



It occurred to me that the acronym for the Ashes Burial Service is ABS. This is also the acronym for the braking system on the automobile that prevents the wheels from locking up and causing an uncontrolled skid when you slam on the brakes in a panic stop. The ABS allows the wheels to continue turning so you can continue to steer the car to maintain control while bringing the car to a stop as quickly as possible.

The subject of my brother's sermon was that we should all have our individual vow. My brother has the ability to personalize ideas and this "vow" discussion was no exception. It really made me think about what my vow should be. At the same time, I thought that this ABS acronym should be applied; it will prevent any "uncontrolled skids" while it brings me quickly to apply my vow without causing any crashes. In other words, it will allow me to apply my vow in a manner that will be clearly thought out and not be a "flash in the pan".

My vow? I have several and I need to determine which one will be the best for me. I will use ABS to make the choice.

Reader Replies

I would like to contribute this haiku I wrote (one of many) while camping on an isolated bluff overlooking the Mississippi River last summer.

A Song for Pepper

*Dharma bums get it right
End of the day starts the night
Fill the darkness with light*

One Thus Gone,
S. L. P.

I am writing to relate an experience I had. I seem to be the only Buddhist in my area. I saw in a local paper that there was going to be a talk on Buddhism at a Presbyterian church. I was eager to hear anything on the subject. So there I sat amidst several dozen Christians who looked at all the faults of Buddhism. I heard silly things like, "How can they function in society?" and "Why did they bomb Pearl Harbor?" The pastor explained that Buddhists rely on themselves for being and doing good. She said she didn't think she would have the will power to do any such thing and that was why she and them should rely on God for that strength. I thought that was pretty sad. Well, I didn't say anything; I didn't utter a word. I am positive of the truth of the Buddha's teachings and felt like I should defend myself and change their perceptions but I kept my mouth shut, and later it bothered me. I of course have a lot to learn, but these people seemed ignorant.

Two days later while taking a shower, I had this want for a newsletter from you, it was very strong. I wondered if I was taken off the list or if something else had happened.

When I went to the mailbox, bam... there it was, with your article on interfaith dialogue. Amazing! I have had many such coincidences before and sometimes I feel blessed with a little magic. I bowed in Gassho.

T.O. (Niles, MI)



Seasonings

sayings to add a little flavor to life



The world is wide; do not waste your life in friction when it could be turned into momentum.

In the right light, at the right time, everything is extraordinary.

Life is like pizza. Even when it's bad, it's good.

Acknowledgements with Gratitude

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Legacy Catalog

Books by Rev. Gyomay Kubose

EVERYDAY SUCHNESS. A classic collection of short articles first published in 1967, hailed as one of the most significant books in Buddhism because of its simple explanations and reference to everyday life. 142 pages.

THE CENTER WITHIN. This continues the approach of "Everyday Suchness" and speaks directly to the ordinary layperson. The collection of 58 essays reflects Rev. Kubose's unique, down-to-earth presentation of the Dharma teachings which offer to all people a richer, more meaningful life. 134 pages.

THE CENTER WITHIN audio cassette; 3 hours.

AMERICAN BUDDHISM. Covers a brief history of Buddhism in America, Four Noble Truths, Eightfold Path, problems in terminology and misunderstandings common to Westerners. 29 pages.

Translations by Rev. Gyomay Kubose

THE FUNDAMENTAL SPIRIT OF BUDDHISM by Haya Akegarasu (Rev. Gyomay Kubose's teacher). Translated by Rev. Kubose, this book gives an idea of Rev. Akegarasu's life (1877-1954) and teachings. 87 pages.

TAN BUTSU GE. (Translation and commentary). This sutra tells the story of Dharmakara who became Amitabha, the Buddha of Infinite Light. 56 pages.

HEART OF THE GREAT WISDOM SUTRA. (Translation and commentary). This sutra deals with the teachings of non-self and nothingness. 35 pages.

Highly Recommended Books

BUDDHISM: PATH OF ENLIGHTENMENT. Simple, concise introduction to basic Buddhism. Teachings are superimposed on beautiful full-color photographs of nature scenes such as water ponds, rock gardens, bamboo grove, etc. 20 pages.

INVISIBLE EYELASHES by Rev. Nikkyo Niwano. Combines time-honored Buddhist teachings and stories with examples from modern life to show how attitude affects happiness and how flexibility of mind helps us grow spiritually, making us more productive at work and better able to relate to others. 175 pages.

OCEAN: AN INTRODUCTION TO JODO-SHINSHU BUDDHISM IN AMERICA by Rev. Kenneth K. Tanaka. Uses a question and answer format to present Jodo-Shinshu Buddhism and to answer questions frequently asked by non-Buddhists. This book can help Jodo-Shinshu Buddhists understand their own religious tradition and also help in communicating it to others. 270 pages.

RIVER OF FIRE, RIVER OF WATER by Taitetsu Unno. Introduces the Pure Land tradition of Shin Buddhism using personal anecdotes, stories, and poetry. The Pure Land practice is harmonious with daily life, making it easily adaptable for seekers today. With spiritual insight and unparalleled scholarship, this book is an important step forward for Buddhism in America. 244 pages.

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THE MONK WHO DARED by Ruth M. Tabrah. A historical novel of Shinran, the founder of Jodo-Shinshu Buddhism. Set in 13th century, this story covers the drama and crucial inner changes of Shinran's life. 329 pages.



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| JUNE | <p>Theme: Mindfulness Purpose: To be calm and centered while driving Method: "Dharma Steering Wheel:" Sit quietly before driving off. Trace the circle of the steering wheel with your hand as a reminder to keep a Dharma perspective while driving.</p> |
| JULY | <p>Theme: Present-Centeredness Purpose: To make use of time at stop lights Method: "Pause Gassho:" When waiting at a stoplight, place your hands together in your lap, take a deep breath & say, "Ah... what a great opportunity to pause and refresh myself." Smile.</p> |
| AUG | <p>Theme: Patience and Courtesy Purpose: To lessen one's self-centered attitude while driving Method: "Letting-In Wave Gassho:" When possible, let other drivers in using a one-handed wave Gassho of waving your hand in front of you to signal the other driver to go ahead of you.</p> |

Mailing List Update

Our mailing list has welcomed new additions from many sources and referrals. We are happy to continue sending our newsletter to all interested persons. One reason for staying on the mailing list is to find out when new books come out. Also, you never know when you might want to order a book for a relative or friend in a future time of need. If you know someone who would like to be added or removed from our mailing list, please indicate below and send to:

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