



O n e n e s s



INDUCTION WEEKEND GEMS

by Dharma Dan



A wise person once said that there are only two things you need to remember in life: “Always be sincere, and don’t forget to laugh.” There were examples of both during the recent Induction weekend held at the Bright Dawn Center (BDC) here in Coarsegold, California.

All six members of LM9 were present for their Induction. They were the ninth group to complete our lay ministry program which involved weekly small group teleconferences. The Induction weekend was the first time for LM9 to meet and interact together in person. One of the most impactful aspects of our program experience is the close bond formed among the group members during the almost two-year period of the program. Although there are no program tuition fees, a long-term commitment and a heavy dose of sweat equity are required.

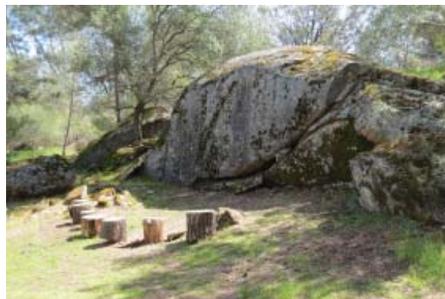
A mother of one of the inductees attended the Induction weekend. She was overheard telling Rev. Koyo, “What you are doing here is a wonderful thing. It is not a money thing; it is not a prestige thing; it is a giving thing.” She is one smart cookie!

I want to share with you some other Induction weekend gems. In talking about the inductees, I will

use the BDC custom of referring to them by using each individual’s given name together with his/her Dharma name. One gem occurred while Rev. Koyo was giving a tour of his vegetable garden. Pointing to some plants along a fence, he said that it was the first time for him to grow shelling green peas. Inductee CJ Daiyo’s eyes got big and he said, “Wow, Shaolin peas!” Ever since then, no wonder Rev. Koyo smiles when he harvests the peas.

One afternoon Rev. Koyo took LM9 on a tour of the property via a path that circles behind the main house around to the Sanctuary. There are three main nature spots along this path. The first is the smiling Altar Rock. Statues of Gautama Buddha show him with a gentle smile. This is not a social smile; it is a “spiritual” smile. Such a smile is spiritual because it shows the contentment of inner peace that is so deep that one can smile even when one is on his death bed.

A person can smile because he knows that the Dharma is his rock.



A bronze plaque of Rev. Koyo’s passage “The Dharma Is My Rock” is mounted on a side boulder next to the Altar Rock. On the front of another nearby boulder is what Rev. Koyo points out as the face of a Japanese Snow Monkey. Behind this “guardian” monkey boulder is an area that Rev. Koyo hopes will be a future memorial garden. He points to a spot in that space and with a smile says, “Right there will be my eternal resting place.”

Continuing on the path, the next nature spot is a natural stone seat. The seat is not visible from the path because the seat is on the back side of a boulder. The seat can be called a hidden Dharma Throne. Each



member of LM9 took a turn sitting on the Dharma Throne. The theme at this nature spot is “Sitting down.”

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Rev. Koyo points out how often during a typical day we take a seat without any significant awareness. We sit to eat, go to the toilet, work at the computer, drive a car, watch television, read, etc. Any of these mundane times of sitting can be associated with some kind of Dharma teaching. Whenever you sit down, you are sitting on a potential Dharma Throne!

The last nature spot is a large pine tree. At the base of the tree is a boulder that the pine cracked open as it grew upwards. This is a dramatic example of perseverance and the power of Keep Going. This tree was called the Power Pine until a visiting construction worker noticed it and yelled, "That's bad ass!" After that, the tree became known as the Bad-Ass Pine. Yes, sometimes it takes a bad-ass attitude to get through



life's difficulties. You just take a breath and Keep Going. To help make this lesson more experiential, Rev. Koyo had each person take turns putting their hands on each side of where the boulder was cracked open, while taking a mindful breath.

Inductee Dawn Chiyō later summarized the three nature spots by writing the following three poems:

Smiling Stone

*Buddha needs no words
To speak truth, just as a stone
Needs no mouth to smile.*

Dharma Throne

*I see my own lap
Fleeting, like all things... I stand
It disappears.*

Bad-Ass Pine

*Living means breaking
In a world of arising,
The tree is the stone.*

Another Induction weekend gem was doing some archery. The topic of archery had come up during one of LM9's earlier tele-conference sessions and Rev. Koyo said that some archery could be done at BDC, and also mentioned the classic book written in 1953 by Eugen Herrigel, *Zen and the Art of Archery*. There is a stack of straw bales on the BDC property that is used as an archery target by Kanon, who is the son of Rev. Koyo and Adrienne. Kanon showed inductees Levi Shinyo and Noah Ma-Yo how to shoot a recurve bow. The two of them must have had fun because after they were finished, they returned to the main house with big smiles on their faces.

Adrienne's taiko drum was taken out of a storage closet and set up in the backyard. Inductee Rob Kanyo currently plays with a taiko group in Chicago. He showed his smooth moves and powerful strokes... very impressive impromptu playing!

One last gem was viewed from my vantage place in the rafters of the SPOT. I, Dharma Dan, together with the many other animal puppets, are very happy to be in the SPOT, rather than stored away in a box on some closet shelf. All of us puppets have helped Rev. Koyo give Dharma talks, especially when he spoke to children. The SPOT (Special Place of Tranquility) is

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Editors: Adrienne Kubose, Rev. Koyo S. Kubose

Phone: (559) 642-4285

Dial-the-Dharma: (847) 386-8836

Email: brightdawn@kubose.com

Live Dharma Sunday (347) 945-7953

Website: www.brightdawn.org

brightdawnsangha.ning.com

Send Poems, Reader Replies To:

28372 Margaret Road

Coarsegold, CA 93614

The purpose of the Bright Dawn Center is to offer a non-sectarian, non-dualistic approach, the Way of Oneness, to deepen individual spirituality in everyday life for people of all backgrounds

2017 LAY MINISTER INDUCTEES

Robert Kanyo Mican



Greetings from Chicago.

Lay ministry induction is both an end and a beginning. We completed the requirements of the lay ministry program, but at the same time we are just starting forth on our own lay ministry journeys. I'm excited to be walking this path with the rest of you.

I didn't have much of a religious upbringing as a child. After spending my high school years searching for some meaningful form of spirituality, I was finally introduced to Buddhism in college. When my Asian Studies teacher started talking about Theravada Buddhism I perked up. It wasn't exactly what I was looking for, but it was close. She moved on to Taoism, and I also perked up there. Again, it wasn't exactly what I was looking for, but it was close. I remember telling my girlfriend that I wished there was some way to combine the aspects of both religions that appealed to me into some coherent form. When my teacher wrote "BUDDHISM + TAOISM = ZEN" on the blackboard the very next day, I realized that I had been a Buddhist all of my life ... it just took me twenty years to figure that out.

My journey through Zen led me to other forms of Japanese Buddhism as well as taiko drumming, which in turn eventually let me to Bright Dawn and the Midwest Buddhist Temple. I'm currently a member of the MBT Taiko group, and I also play two forms of Japanese bamboo flute (shinobue and shakuhachi). I live on the south side of Chicago, and I'm married with three wonderful kids and three adorable birds. My occupational background has mostly been in the realm of information technology, but now I am in the process of ramping up a life coaching business.

I'm very happy to have discovered Bright Dawn in general and this lay ministry program in particular. Gyomay-sensei's and Koyo-sensei's teachings have filled in many gaps that I've had in applying the

Dharma to everyday life and building up our own everyday spirituality. In a way, I'm sorry to see the program come to an end because I've really valued the discussions we've had in our Sunday conference calls. But one end is simply another beginning, and I'm very much looking forward to where this path leads.

Christopher Kakuyo Leibow



Flying here, looking out the window as we were landing, I was watching a car down below, the road was following the path of the our flight and I started to think of the causes and condition that brought me to this point, that brought that unknown driver to that intersection that day, then I thought of the same causes

and condition that brought me to Bright Dawn, the challenging and chaotic childhood, the mentally-ill mother, the constant movement toward another new school all caused by my father's success at work that made up for his failures at home, an adrift family looking for refuge and from there my continual search for refuge, in religion, in love, in poetry, but never quite finding it. Then the first shoot between a crack into the light of the morning sun, when I found the Bright Dawn Way of Oneness Buddhism. Now the causes and conditions that brought me here are carrying me forward as a lay minister. The program, my teachers both Sensei's and Sans have become the fabric of my sails to catch the dharma winds to carry forward and in my induction I join the rest of our Bright Dawn family in our collective studentship. I bow to each of you in my LM9 family in gratitude and joy and in the words of Koyo Sensei, "Keep Going."

2017 LAY MINISTER INDUCTEES - cont'd

Christopher Joe Daiyo Marbutt



Since discovering Buddhism in 2006, I have been involved in my local Sangha which includes an assortment of Buddhists and seekers. I regularly attend Buddha Heart Village in Auburn, AL and host a local meditation/practice group that meets at the Auburn Unitarian Universalist Fellowship in Auburn.

I am also chairperson of the First Universalist Church of Camp Hill, AL, the oldest UU congregation in the Mid-South District where I occasionally guest speak. Most recently, working with others, I helped partner the First Universalist with the East Alabama Food Bank to provide food and assistance to the needy in the area on a monthly basis.

Before coming to Bright Dawn, I studied with the Prajna Institute, and received the ten Bodhisattva Precepts from that institution as a novice Zen priest in an Americanized Korean Zen Lineage. Before that, in 2010, I was fortunate enough to attend a retreat in Los Angeles and take official refuge in the Jodo Shu, the Pure Land School founded by Honen Shonin.

While my personal practice remains dedicated to the Pure Land Way, my approach to Buddhism remains ecumenical, believing that to be meaningful, each person must find her or his own approach to the Dharma. Also coming from a Neo-Pagan background, I stress Buddhism as an earth-based religion in which everyday life is inseparable from awakening or enlightenment.

My basic values are based on the ideas of simplicity, compassion and gratitude. I live with my husband in the backwoods of rural Alabama, together with an extended network of family including one grandson, friends and fellow wayfarers.

Dawn Chiyo Prince



The first connection I had with Buddhism was from an internal rather than external source. When I was about 7 years old, growing up surrounded by a Baptist family in Southern Illinois, I built a small Buddhist temple in the woods next to our house. I made a statue of Buddha from the creek

there and put it in the temple. Soon after, I carved a wooden fish to beat on and chant. I had no idea where these images and impulses came from, but they were the strongest in my life.

When I was 11 years old my parents allowed me to buy a copy of the book Siddhartha at a second-hand store and more made sense to me. Around that time, my whole family began taking martial arts together we were all exposed to Buddhist ideas and ways of living. Eventually, my father, sister and I became black belts and my mother also became an advanced student. We adopted many habits derived from the precepts. My family became vegetarian and began to be involved in compassionate causes in general.

I accumulated 17 years of experience in both learning and teaching martial arts. Over that time I became interested in using the arts to help the community and make them accessible to people who would not normally find their way into a class, but who needed the skills and foundations of the arts and Buddhism the most. I began free classes for low-income people, survivors of violence, those with disabilities, and people in recovery from substance addiction.

I had long studied and used Buddhist philosophy in my classes, but wanted to formalize my training so I could better serve the wider community. I searched for several years and knew I had found a home when I found Bright Dawn.

I am currently a second-degree black belt, and I am developing a form of martial arts based on my decades of primate studies – specifically the snow monkeys of Japan – which emphasizes moving with playfulness

2017 LAY MINISTER INDUCTEES - cont'd

and joy. I live on my small sanctuary for special needs animals in Southern Illinois and continue a writing career that has grown successful over the years.

Levi Shinyo Walbert



It was at the age of 14 that I had first discovered Buddhism through a documentary which I had watched one day in class. The teachings had impacted me deeply, especially so due to my “spiritual depression” after my decision to leave Christianity. I had soon decided to try what I had heard the Buddha taught,

and soon noticed the positive changes that I needed in that period of teenagerdom. I had continued to learn and practice for a few years, only to look back at myself and realize that I was a practicing Buddhist!

I was in my sophomore year of college majoring in philosophy and I had already been studying Buddhism as a philosophy, its logic, its metaphysics, its ontology. As interesting and wonderful as it is, it was not what I needed. The philosophy of Buddhism stimulated my intellectual life, but I needed something to jumpstart my spiritual life, and that is when I had discovered the Bright Dawn Center through a local sangha. I soon applied, hoping to deepen my understanding of the Dharma, and learn to apply it deeper into my life.

Although I was nervous joining, these strangers in my group soon became a great Dharma family to me, never before had I experienced such a spiritual community! I was forced to open up and express my struggles, my ignorance, and my hopes...in return I was met with compassion, wisdom, encouragement, and support! Our teacher Sensei Koyo Kubose exemplified the teaching I unknowingly was looking for, the way of everyday spirituality, everyday Oneness. The teachings of Sensei Koyo and Gyomay Kubose had taken the

long and intimidating tradition of Buddhism and brought it into the light of the modern world without diluting its truth and wisdom. Who would have known a spiritual practice founded thousands of years ago in India could be so applicable to the life of a modern American college student!

Joining the Bright Dawn family has been one of the most rewarding experiences in my life. Bright Dawn has transformed my understanding of Buddhism taught from books and long lectures into a dynamic understanding of life as it truly is. I hope that I can help share what I have learned with others.

Noah Ma-yo Rasheta



Several years ago, I was intrigued by the idea of using meditation as a tool for coping with difficult emotions. This curiosity drove me to study the origins of meditation, and that led to studying Buddhist philosophy. I was immediately hooked!

After several years of self-study, I was introduced to Bright Dawn and I eagerly signed up for the Lay Ministry program. I really love the open and universal approach that Koyo Sensei and Bright Dawn offer. There was never a feeling of having to pick one school or approach over another and this was very appealing to me. Over the many months of working with my fellow classmates in the LM9 program, I came to have a deep appreciation for all approaches to teaching the Dharma. This journey marks both the end and the beginning of an incredible journey into the study of the nature of my own mind. The insight I've been able to gain regarding my habitual patterns that lead to my habitual reactivity, has been priceless. Thanks to Bright Dawn, I feel much more equipped now to continue on my spiritual journey with the right skill set to be able to detect my own delusions more quickly than before. I'm honored to be able to continue with Bright Dawn teaching and practicing these time-tested techniques/perspectives that ultimately, help me to become better versions of myself.

a 10' X 12' building behind the main house that is also used to display Rev. Gyomay Kubose's religious artifacts from his temple office.



During Induction weekend, the SPOT was used as an intimate gathering place for LM9 just prior to the Induction Ceremony held in the Sanctuary. Seated on the floor in a circle with LM9, Rev. Koyo explained the purpose of

their gathering was to pay tribute to each other... to give thanks for their experiences together during the two-year program. He led them in chanting a Thank-You Sutra and kept the rhythm by hitting a Mokugyo wooden fish instrument.

Rev. Koyo had an idea that came to him during a flight of imagination, as he prepared for the Induction weekend. His idea was a variation of a common pre-game football team ritual that was done to spark team solidarity. As shown on televised NFL games, players would gather in a circle and put their hands together in the center of the circle. After a short motivating speech, one of the team leaders led a concluding shout. For example, if the team was the Oakland Raiders,

he would say, "Raiders on three!" and the players would move their hands up and down to a three count and then throw their arms up high, shouting "Raiders!"

With a laugh, Rev. Koyo said he imagined doing this with LM9 using the yell, "One Two, Three, Dharma!" After saying it would probably be too corny to actually do, he started to get up from the seated circle. Inductee Christopher Kakuyo stuck out his hand in a bold Zen-like move. Everyone immediately followed suit, putting their hands on top of his in the center of the circle, and yelled "One Two, Three, Dharma!" as arms were flung up in a grand gesture of celebration. What a great finish!

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Not only is making a memorial donation a way to remember and honor a loved one, it is a karmic action that fosters awareness of the two main teachings of interdependency and impermanence. Acknowledging one's "roots" also nurtures a feeling of gratitude, which is the foundation of a spiritual life. A memorial donation does all this and at the same time helps support the mission of a worthy organization of one's choice.

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BOOK LIST

Book by Rev. Koyo Kubose

BRIGHT DAWN: Discovering Your Everyday Spirituality.
Describes the author's daily morning ritual and how ordinary things and activities can deepen one's spirituality. 152 pages.

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.

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Translations by Rev. Gyomay Kubose

THE FUNDAMENTAL SPIRIT OF BUDDHISM by Haya Akegarasu (Rev. Gyomay Kubose's teacher). Translated by Rev. Kubose. 99 pages.

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

Other Recommended Books

BUDDHIST SYMBOLS. Handy brochure explaining common Buddhist symbols. Quad-fold.

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, a bamboo grove, etc. 20 pages.

COFFINMAN by Shinmon Aoki. This diary of a mortician invites the reader into the fascinating world of Buddhist spirituality which sees the extraordinary in things ordinary, mundane, and even repugnant. 142 pages.

DISCOVERING BUDDHISM IN EVERYDAY LIFE by Marvin Harada 2011. In commemoration of his 25 years of ministry at the Orange County Buddhist Church, over 40 essays by Rev. Harada were selected from past monthly newsletters. 128 pages.

RIVER OF FIRE, RIVER OF WATER by Taitetsu Unno. Introduces the Pure Land tradition of Shin Buddhism using personal anecdotes, stories, and poetry. With spiritual insight and unparalleled scholarship, this book is an important step forward for Buddhism in America. 244 pages.

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JUN	<p>Theme: Sleeping with the Dharma Purpose: Going to Sleep Routine Method: While in bed, tighten stomach muscles; hold for ten count; then completely relax those muscles. Repeat with other muscles of the body; e.g. by curling toes; making hand fists, raising shoulders toward ears; scrunching face muscles; etc. Deeper relaxation is achieved by first doing the opposite; i.e. first tighten muscles, then loosen them. The opposites are not separate from each other but interact together. How Buddhistic!</p>
JUL	<p>Theme: Waking Up Purpose: Starting Your Day Method: While in bed, make it a habit to do a variety of whole body stretches. Exaggerate any yawning you do. Use body stretches as a reminder also to be mentally flexible during the coming day.</p>
AUG	<p>Theme: Body Awareness Purpose: Expanding Spiritual Rituals Method: When lying on your back in bed, do "Feet-Gassho" by putting soles of feet together. Consider "Feet-Gassho" as just one way to encourage the constant expanding of your spiritually in creative new ways. Smile and Keep Going!</p>

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