



o n e n e s s



## AFFIRMATION OF VOWS

By Rev. Koyo Kubose

Individuals from Southeast Asian countries who were born into a Buddhist family usually felt no need for any kind of formal service or confirmation to identify themselves as being Buddhist. As Buddhism spread to Europe and the United States, it was “convert” Buddhists who wanted some kind of Buddhist Confirmation Ceremony. Perhaps this was because of their familiarity with the ritual of baptism.

One way to describe the TiSarana Buddhist Confirmation Ceremony we offer, is that it involves making a vow to take refuge in the Three Treasures, the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. Over the years, various individuals asked if such items as the Eightfold Path, the Paramitas, or the Bodhisavatta vows could be included. One person even wrote his own vows. Since all of these expressions had their value, I collected them as a handout called “Affirmation of Vows” which I would send to persons requesting a TiSarana Ceremony. I would explain that all these vows were ideals that persons wanted to live their lives by and should not be considered as a standard which if not met, meant they were failures as Buddhists.

As part of the TiSarana, a Dharma Name is given. In Japanese Buddhism, a Dharma name consists

of two Chinese written characters (called kanji in Jpn).

At our Bright Dawn Center, the second kanji character of all Dharma Names given is always “YO” which refers to the sun. Thus, we have started what can be called the “YO” tradition. In Buddhism the sun stands for light (wisdom) and life (compassion). The physical sun is a universal symbol for light and life because the earth would be a cold, lifeless place if not for the sun.

The second kanji character of Dharma Names is especially chosen for different individuals. For example, my Dharma Name is KOYO where “KO” means “to face towards.” So, KOYO means to face towards the sun (teachings). This meaning of my Dharma Name is a source of inspiration for me whenever I see the sunrise.

Some years ago, I saw a handout from a local Buddhist Center that was titled, “Five Daily Life Guidelines.” I like it so much that I contacted them for permission to use it. Ever since then, I have included it in our Affirmation of Vows handout. Recently one of our lay ministers remembered this **Five Daily Life Guidelines** handout and asked for a copy of it. When I found and read it, I thought our newsletter readers would also enjoy it.

## FIVE DAILY LIFE GUIDELINES

### Consume Mindfully

Eat sensibly and don’t be wasteful.  
Pause before buying; see if breathing is enough.  
Pay attention to the effects of media you consume.

### Share Loving Kindness

Consider other people’s views deeply.  
Work for peace at many levels.  
Spread joy, not negativity.

### Practice Gratitude

Respect the people you encounter; they are your teachers.  
Be equally grateful for opportunities and challenges.  
Notice where help is needed and be quick to act.

### Discover Wisdom

Find connections between teachings and your life.  
Do not become attached to your conclusions.  
Mute your judgmental tongue.

### Accept Constant Change

Accept what arises in every moment.  
Cultivate the “Beginner’s Mind.”  
Keep going, keep going...

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## WHAT A MENAGERIE!

By Dharma Dan

In the last newsletter I wrote an article titled “Animal Puppet Antics” and described some of the many animal hand puppets who reside in our SPOT (Special Place of Tranquility). Well, we received a letter from one of our newsletter readers:

Dear Rev. Kubose,

After many years as a children’s librarian using animal hand puppets in my story hours, my old friends are looking for a home where they would be useful again. After reading Dharma Dan’s article in the newsletter, I wondered if you would like and be able to use some more. They’ve been well loved by many children and are very well behaved and would like to be active again instead of being in a storage box. I hope you will consider giving them a home.

I wish you a good summer,

D.H.



Rev. Koyo asked me (Dharma Dan) if we could reply in the affirmative to this offered gift. I consulted with our animal puppet collection and we all yelled, “Yes! We’d love to have more Dharma friends!” A week or so later, a large box was delivered to us. Lo and behold... there were animal hand puppets galore!

Rev Koyo lined them up on the dining room table and took a photo of them. The collection included an alligator, lion, skunk, hippo, fox, pig, pony, raccoon, rooster, duck, rabbit, lamb, cow (with bell), and four little mice (finger puppets). We put them in the SPOT.

They joined the rest of our collection who are perched on a ledge that goes around all four walls and is just below the inside roof rafters.

Why do we consider our animal puppets Dharma friends? Each and any animal puppet has some life lessons for us. What we have to do is listen to them as they “talk” to us. Rev. Koyo knows how to focus on any particular animal and open up to any free associations that occur. Since Dharma teachings are central to his karmic background, he has learned to work with whatever associations bubble up from his subconscious. To get a feel for this, chose any particular animal and freely use your imagination on what ways such an animal theme can relate to any life teachings. It is through practice that you can get better and better at doing this.

It has been said that everyday Dharma is all around us; this is true because all things have Buddha Nature. What this means is not that we have to look around to find these teachings as though they are “out there.” Instead, look within and allow your unfolding karmic background to express itself. Spiritual practice is learning how to use anything that is in front of us to help us dig within ourselves for a teaching that is meaningful and relevant to ourselves.

Such spiritual practice is a unique combination of paying attention to external things and using them as a point of focus that has the potential for all kinds of Dharma teachings. It helps to know that this process

Menagerie continues on page 3



Menagerie continued from page 2

of spiritual practice is a combination of both external and internal factors. The outer factor means to pay attention to our physical environment and to be aware of the potential relevance of any external factor to our spirituality. The inner factor is one's creative imagination, which if not inhibited or interfered with, will allow one's internal karmic background to interact freely with the external physical environment. I use the verb "to discover" to refer to finding something that already exists "out there." In contrast, I use the verb "to create" to refer to using one's imagination to produce something that did not exist before. I think personal spirituality is a process that involves both of these factors. So, Buddhism in everyday life involves "discovering/creating" Dharma teachings for oneself by both paying attention to one's environment and using one's imagination.

The above process is why animal hand puppets can be such great Dharma teachers. Recently I found a quote that said "Imagination is knowledge having fun." The word "fun" suggests for me a creative, non-judgemental attitude. You can always improve on what you know by having a flexible, open and curious mind. This is the basis of creative problem solving and is also the basis of advances in any field.

One of my favorite Einstein quotes is "Imagination is more important than knowledge." His context is that a knowledge base is common but going beyond what is and seeing new associations is rare. This is a good discussion topic because such quotes evoke so many associations.

In any case, coming up with a creative idea is one thing; following up the idea with action, is the complete process. I mention all this because of another package we received in the mail the other day. I'll let our newsletter staff tell you about this in the following short announcement because I, Dharma Dan, am a little shy about becoming a new father.



## NEW FAMILY MEMBER!

Some background: As reported in our Spring 2018 newsletter, we anonymously received in the mail an animal hand puppet named Shirley Squirrel. An enclosed note said that she was a girlfriend for Dharma Dan. We took a photo of them together and included it in the article. Maybe it's a coincidence but Shirley Squirrel arrived during the winter holidays and it's a good thing that they were immediately married because nine months later...

If you ever wondered what would happen if Dharma Dan and Shirley Squirrel had a baby... what would it look like? Stop wondering. Here is a photo of our new family addition. The baby came in the mail; the return address just said "The Stork Delivery Service." You know what? The baby finger-puppet really does look like a cross between Dharma Dan and Shirley Squirrel. Nature reigns supreme!

We mentioned to a friend that this article was being prepared for the newsletter and he asked, "What is the baby's name?" Since the baby does not have a name yet, we're asking our creative newsletter readers for help. Please email us at [brightdawn@kubose.com](mailto:brightdawn@kubose.com) with any name suggestions. What fun!



## Oneness Newsletter Autumn 2018

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Live Dharma Sunday (347) 945-7953:  
Call 8AM Pacific for talks by Rev. Koyo  
and a guest Lay Minister

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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

# MANDALAS MANIFEST AT BRIGHT DAWN!

by Shaku Sayo Shenpän

This year's Induction of Lay Minister Class 10 included a special creation of the Chenrezig or Kuan Yin Sand Mandala. The Mandala contained the Mantra of Compassion, OM MANI PADME HUM as well as four auspicious symbols for prosperity, longevity, Dharma, and of course, the Bright Dawn Leaf! It took roughly five days to design and lay out the sand with a funnel like tool called a "chakpur" in Tibetan.

A Mandala is a form of sacred, circular art which symbolizes the universe or the "abode" or Pure Land of a Buddha or Bodhisattva. It can also be seen as the Sacred Mansion of the deity. During the creation one visualizes each aspect of the mandala and chants the mantra associated with that Buddha or Bodhisattva to consecrate the space as well as the mandala itself. This creates a suitable environment to invite the deity to reside in. In Tibetan Buddhism, any time a person is able to view a mandala is considered auspicious and a great blessing.

When the mandala is complete, through ritual, the deity is invited to become one with the mandala. During this time practitioners will meditate and become One with the mandala and the deity. Through this practice one can purify bad karma as well as allow for inner and outer healing. During meditation, one focuses on the mandala being in 3D form. Traditionally, sand mandalas are used to mark an auspicious occasion or a specific retreat.

The mandala is then ritualistically dismantled, symbolizing the transitory nature of life or impermanence. The sand is then accumulated and poured into a stream, river or body of water to share in the blessings and positive merit of the creation and consecration of the mandala.

The mandala is symbolically us. We build a life, a world which must inevitably come to an end and dissolve back into Universal Life. A mandala is also Nature itself. The landscape of a mandala includes bushes and trees along with various animals. Traditionally there is also charnel grounds. All these aspects represent our oneness with nature and all things in Life. When a mandala is dissolved, all things return to nature as represented by the pouring of the sand into a body of water.

I was trained by my Teacher, Drupon Thinley

Rinpoche, during my time as a Tibetan Buddhist monk and was able to complete four different tours during Peace Week celebrations in Florida.

Creating a mandala is one of the most peaceful and exciting forms of meditative art and I was thrilled to be able to create one at the Bright Dawn Center. For many years I had mentioned to Rev. Koyo my wish to create one for Bright Dawn and this year it just happened to be the right time! We even had a second mandala created by the class of LM 10 during their Induction Weekend activities, designed by Inductee Ginny Geiyo Parkum.

The dissolution of the Sand Mandala took place on May 20th, after the Induction of LM 10. Everyone in attendance received some of the sand to take home and the rest was poured into a nearby creek on the Bright Dawn Center property.

May the auspiciousness of this event, benefit all sentient beings and bring happiness to all!



## LM 10 SAND MANDALA

By Ginny Geiyo Parkum

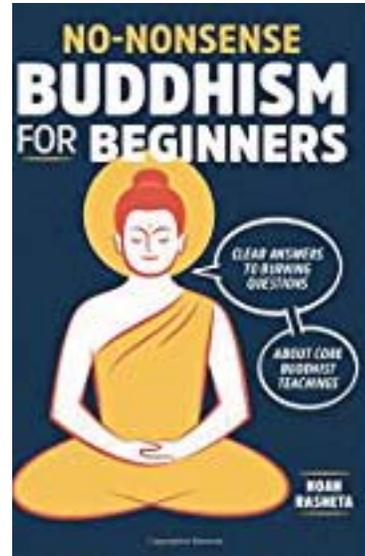
The Bright Dawn Sand Mandala reflects Suchness as touched by the life and Way of Oneness teachings of Gyomay Kubose Sensei and lived and developed by his son and Dharma heir Koyo Kubose Sensei. Its basic outline is presented on the base board. A crayoned color picture accompanies the outline as an orientation guide, not as a firm, set picture to be exactly reproduced. Like the Buddhist teachings, it is a guide, not a "given" set of rules.

Reverends Gyomay's and Koyo's words use plants, the sky, water, and rocks as teachers. The Buddha did likewise, as did Zen teacher Dogen. The Bright Dawn Mandala follows the seasons as they change. Snow covers the ground, spring brings bright flowers; earth turns from light green to deep, to yellow harvest and brown gleaned fields, and transforms to snow and next season's potential. Mountains in different colors move around the earth. The sky embraces it all. Vines connect the radiant Bright Dawn symbol in the center to the all-encompassing Sunyata of the sky and beyond...to you, as you make or view the mandala and create your own life. Life and contemplatively adding sand to the base are organic processes. Enjoy!

The idea for a Bright Dawn Sand Mandala came to me while finishing the LM 10 program and was offered as a gift for our class to complete in the Sanctuary during Orientation Weekend. It was swept up and offered to the welfare of all beings by the new, budding Sensei's after receiving their Bright Dawn ordination okesas. The pattern and sand await the next classes.



## BOOK REVIEW



Congratulations to our good Dharma friend Noah Mayo Rasheta (LM9) on his new book, No-Nonsense Buddhism for Beginners: Clear Answers to Burning Questions About Core Buddhist Teachings. The book provides a simple straightforward introduction to Buddhism, presented in an easy-to-understand Q&A format. It gives readers a fundamental understanding of Buddhism and how to apply the philosophies in their everyday lives.

To celebrate, we are giving away a copy. Write a short paragraph on your relationship to the Bright Dawn Center; that is, how you heard about us and/or how you know people connected to us. The winner will be the first envelope we open from our regular snail mail via USPS.

The book can be ordered from the Book List in this issue.

### Quote by Bruce Lee

A good teacher can never be fixed in a routine. Each moment requires a sensitive mind that is constantly changing and constantly adapting. A teacher must never impose this student to fit his favorite pattern. A good teacher protects his pupils from his own influence. A teacher is never a giver of truth; he is a guide, a pointer to the truth that each student must find for himself. I am not teaching you anything. I just help you to explore yourself.

# LIFE'S PRACTICUM

By Rev.Koyo Kubose

As part of our lay study program, participants write personal reports on weekly reading assignments of articles from books by Rev. Gyomay Kubose; such as, Everyday Suchness; The Center Within; Zen Koans; and translation and commentary on the Tan Butsu Ge and Heart of Wisdom sutras. The last section of the curriculum is a two-month Practicum which consists of weekly exercises designed to have the participants creatively apply previously learned teachings to their everyday lives. They write up and submit a weekly report to their study group. Then, every Sunday evening they discuss each others' reports in a small group tele-conference.

For example, one teaching is "X" is not the problem; how I deal with "X" is the problem. Another teaching can be expressed in various ways: "means equals end;" "practice is enlightenment;" or "it's the journey, not the destination." Other weekly Practicum assignments involve how to establish certain daily routines or personal rituals; such as, Toilet Gassho, Dharma Breathing, Thanking Your Shoes, and Dharma Driving.

Like the regular school year, we start a new term at the end of August. We just started our 12th term with three groups: LM12A, LM12B, and LM12C. Curriculum courses are taught by past Lay Ministers. As I was organizing things, I started

updating some of the Practicum exercises. The thought struck me that life is one big Practicum!

It is through life experiences that we learn valuable teachings. If we are aware, we can then apply what we learned to future situations. As part of the process, we get together with friends and family and talk about how we dealt with things that happened. It is a constant work-in-progress, full of ups and downs. Life is constantly moving, going forward, full of changes and challenges. Perhaps it may help if during the flow of life, we pause now and then (Tao and Zen) to remind ourselves that each moment provides an opportunity to practice the teachings. Life is a Practicum!

## *Acknowledgements with Gratitude* Supporters from Sales and Donations

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In Honor of the Bright Dawn Sanctuary

# 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.

**THE CENTER WITHIN.** Continues the approach of "Everyday Suchness." Collection of 58 essays of down-to-earth teachings for a richer, more meaningful life. 134 pages.

**AMERICAN BUDDHISM.** Covers a brief history of Buddhism in America, problems in terminology and misunderstandings common to Westerners. 29 pages.

**ZEN KOANS.** Commentary on over 200 classical and modern koans. Insights and life teachings applicable to all Buddhists. 274 pages.

## 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. A mortician's diary 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.

**THE ART OF TAKING ACTION** by Gregg Krech. Draws on Eastern philosophy, Buddhism, Japanese psychology, Zen, and martial arts to offer an approach to ACTION that goes beyond productivity and time management. 216 pages.

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**YES YES Your Everyday Spirituality YES YES**

<b>SEP</b>	<p><b>Theme:</b> Water  <b>Purpose:</b> Water for Health  <b>Method:</b> Honoring Water: Whenever drinking water, raise the glass and do a one-handed Gassho before taking a drink. Feel thankful that water is helping keep your body healthy.</p>
<b>OCT</b>	<p><b>Theme:</b> Water as Resource  <b>Purpose:</b> Not taking water use for granted  <b>Method:</b> Make a list of the ways you use water; e.g. brushing teeth, washing face, doing laundry, etc. Post copies of the list around the inside of your house. Before using water in any of those ways, be aware and thankful.</p>
<b>NOV</b>	<p><b>Theme:</b> Water for Rebirth  <b>Purpose:</b> Spiritual Renewal  <b>Method:</b> Shower Gassho: Whenever taking a shower, do Gassho when the water first hits your head. Remember water is necessary for life, that life on earth started in water, and that water is a symbol for purification and rebirth. So, imagine the shower water is washing away the dirt of ignorance that has accumulated on the surface of your life's body. Silently shout "YES" as a reaffirmation of your sincere desire to walk your spiritual path.</p>

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