



Self, d/b/a Hoko

Sometimes a corporation uses a provisional name for its daily business. In official documents, it might have to state both names—its legal name and the name under which it does business, for example, the Amalgamated Industrial Molding and Manufacturing Corporation, d/b/a WhizBang Widgets.

I think the relationship between the self and the Self is kind of like that. The Self is doing business as the self. The thing I provisionally call my self is providing the means for the Self to do its business. The Self is also doing business as you, the Japanese Alps, the wet umbrella in the hall, and anything else you could name. Through each of these impermanent aggregations of matter, the Self is living its life—so all things are living that life as well.

At Shogoji, it was frequently my job to ring the bonsho, a heavy bronze bell that's bigger than I am. It lives on a high concrete platform covered by an intricate roof, and the striker is a log suspended parallel to the ground by a series of ropes. The bonsho is struck at



four times of day: dawn, midday, dusk and the last thing at night. Fifty four times a day I rang the bell, bowed, and chanted “*Sanzu hannan sokku josan hokkai shujo monsho godo.*” (May living beings of the dharma realms, stifled and mired in bitterness in the three painful destinies and eight hardships, hear the sound and awaken to the

Way.) I was soon on intimate terms with that heavy, patina-covered bonsho. We were partners in the work. I began arriving a few minutes early so that I could sweep the fallen leaves off its platform. After the last strike, I would take hold of the rim of the bell with both hands to steady it and stop its swinging before I climbed back down the stairs. This bonsho was the voice of Self,

and Self was ringing it through me; in other words, Self was using me to do the business of making it possible for the bell to sound. Self was also using the bell to do the business of making it possible for me to drop my ego 54 times a day. The bonsho and I were both children of the Self; it became my dharma sibling.

I had a similar experience when I arrived here in Milwaukee and moved into the Zen Center. For the first two weeks, I was on my feet 8 or 10 hours a day moving furniture and other items, first in my apartment and then all over the building. I quickly got to know the facility and all its quirks. One day, as I organized the new sangha office on the third floor, I realized that the facility and I had become practice partners. The Self was using me to make it possible for the building to offer Zen practice. It was using the building to make it possible for me to further develop the skills necessary for practice leadership. We were actively working together on behalf of the sangha, all at the behest of the Self.

If “I” am a wholly-owned subsidiary of Self, then holding onto ego attachment doesn't make any sense. I once worked for an organization that merged with three others. Since I worked in communications, I was part of the discussions about the new organizational identity. Whose logo would we use? Whose corporate colors? Whose name?

The other three organizations wrestled mightily with these questions, unwilling to lose the individual corporate identities they had worked so hard to create. Ours, however, was completely willing to give up everything. The others were amazed—why would we do such a thing? Simple, replied my boss—our organization no longer exists. It's now part of a larger agency—why would it need its own logo?

Sure, the agency still had various departments and divisions, but it was simply using them all as a means of carrying out its mission. Sure, there are myriad dharma gates—and the Self is using each and every one to do the business of calling us home.

Coming up at MZC

Lots of new items have been added to the 4th quarter program schedule, We look forward to welcoming you to the following events.

Buddha and the Box Office

7:15 pm (Fridays)

Join us at MZC to enjoy a variety of movies, including anime classics from Studio Ghibli and live-action films from around the world. After the video, stay for refreshments and an informal discussion of the Buddhist ideas and themes portrayed in the movie.

November 11: *Nausicaa of the Valley of the Wind*

November 25: *The Book of the Dead*

Introduction to Zazen

6:30 pm, November 2, December 7 (Wednesdays)

The Vows of the Bodhisattva:

Two days of Zen practice

November 12-13

Join us for two days of zazen, kinhin, chanting services, meals using oryoki, work practice and dharma talks. Our focus will be the four Bodhisattva vows. How do we practice with their immensity? You are welcome to use these days in whatever way your schedule will permit, joining us and leaving us at any point in the schedule.

Memorial for Dogen and Keizan Zenjis

7:45 am, November 29 and December 29



New sangha spaces

MZC now has several new spaces in use for various kinds of practice. Previously, the third floor was the domain of resident practitioners, but since MZC discovered that it could not house people there because of code restrictions, the space has been largely unused. The public section of the second floor was a combination sleeping area, administrative workspace and lounge.

All of those functions have now been reorganized into easy-to-use spaces. Today, the second floor boasts a dormitory that sleeps five, with room for expansion. The third floor houses a sangha office and a meeting space, plus a linen closet and a memorial hall. All were created using furniture, equipment and other items already on the premises.

While the other functions were already a part of life at MZC, the memorial hall is a new addition to the practice. The hall honors MZC's founders and teachers, and offers space for sangha members to place photos of their ancestors. Hoko offers incense and prostrations for all the ancestors as part of her morning altar rounds. Practitioners are also welcome to visit the space on their ancestors' special days or any time they wish to be with those who have passed on.

To add your ancestors to the memorial hall, just bring their photos in freestanding frames (up to 5x7) and place them on the table with Kannon. Please label your photos with your name as well as the names of the ancestors pictured.

Altar-ed State: Creating Your Home Altar

November 16, 7:15-8:15 pm

Investigate the elements of a traditional Soto Zen altar, and consider how your home altar can support your practice.

World Peace Ceremony

7:45 am, December 1 and 15 (Thursdays).

Getting to Know Nyoho

December 21, 7:15-8:15 pm

The ideas of nyoho, “the dharma of thusness,” guide us in our choices about food, clothing and shelter. Find out how to reflect your practice in the things you eat, the clothes you wear, and the place you live.

Peace Shawl Circle

Sundays, 1-3 pm

Make your knitting or crocheting a bodhisattva practice by creating peace shawls to be given to others in the community who need our care and support in difficult times.

Dharma Discussion

Saturdays, 9:30-10:30 am

Current book: *Elegant Failure: A Guide to Zen Koans* by Richard Strobe

Up next: *Dream Conversations on Buddhism and Zen* by Muso Kokushi

Happenings

Hoko was one of eight local clergy who took part in the city's 911 ceremonies, offering a reading from Eihei



Dogen's *Shobogenzo Shishoho*. The program was carried live on Milwaukee Public television. (See it for yourself at

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MZd-LmJHqZs>)

MZC-affiliated priests Tonen O'Connor and Tomon Marr and Cedar Rapids Zen Center's Zuiko Redding spent time in late September-early October at Saikouji, a Soto Zen temple in Kameoka, not far from Kyoto, Japan. During their stay in Japan, Tonen and Zuiko also attended a Sotoshu-sponsor international symposium in Tokyo.

On October 13, Tonen spoke to a World Religions class at University High School and on October 23 gave the Sunday morning lecture at a Unitarian-Universalist congregation in Fond du Lac. Hoko visited both Marian University and Ripon College in October, serving as a panelist for a discussion of religion and peacemaking and visiting with a comparative religion class.

Tonen continues to meet with the sangha at Racine Correctional Institution and beginning in late November hopes to start meeting weekly, rather than monthly.

Hoko made a brief trip to Sanshin Zen Community in Bloomington, IN, to meet with her teacher, Shohaku Okumura. On November 2 through 7, Tonen and sangha member Jim Bowker will attend a genzo-e there, the topic of which will be the *Komyo* fascicle of Dogen's *Shobogenzo*.

On the afternoon of October 23, sangha members and friends gathered at the Marian Center for Nonprofits to celebrate Tonen's move to private life and welcome Hoko as the interim practice director.



Tomon and Zuiko clean incense burners at Saikouji



Photo: Tomon Marr

Tonen and Zuiko with the monks of Saikouji.

milwaukee zen center

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Wed., Thurs., Fri.

6:15 am Zazen
(Zen sitting)
6:55 am Kinhin
(Zen walking)
7:05 am Zazen
7:45 am Service
8:00 end of practice

6:30 pm Zazen
7:10 pm Kinhin
7:20 pm Zazen

Saturday

6:15 am Zazen
6:55 am Kinhin
7:05 am Zazen
7:45 am Service
8:00 breakfast, oryoki
8:25 work period
9:15 break, coffee & tea
9:30 study class*
10:30 end of practice
**except on all-day sitting days*

Introduction to Zen

An informal presentation on Buddhism and Zen, followed by instruction in zen sitting, tea and discussion. 6:30-8:30 p.m.—first Wednesday of each month.

Zen sitting instruction and private interview available by appointment. Call 963-0526.

MZC Contact Information

For messages: Phone: (414) 963-0526
Fax: (414) 963-0517 **E-mail:** kokyo-an@earthlink.net
For information and schedules:
www.milwaukeezencenter.org

Useful Web Sites:

Soto Zen Buddhism: <http://global.sotozen-net.or.jp/>
Soto Zen in America: <http://www.szba.org>

Membership Information / Order Form

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- Out-of-town – \$10/month
- Participating - any amount you can afford \$ _____

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- Please add me to your mailing list
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- Please change my mailing address

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Eiheiji Incense — Short 5.5"		\$ 8.00	.45	\$
Long 10"		\$ 8.00	.45	\$

Shipping - \$4.00 first two boxes of incense and 50¢ per item thereafter. \$

**Only Wis. residents need include applicable sales tax.*

TOTAL \$ _____

Please make checks payable to Milwaukee Zen Center

**MILWAUKEE ZEN CENTER 2825 N. STOWELL AVE
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