

The SnowFlower Sun

May / June 2016

SEEDS FOR A BOUNDLESS LIFE – Concluded – By Blanche Hartman - Excerpts by Susan O’Leary

A boundless life is living in the open field of life. Zenkei (Inconceivable Joy) Hartman taught that this open field could be experienced every day through our practice of meditation. (Editor of Hartman’s book)

When I remember to smile, as Thich Nhat Hanh teaches, not only does it soften my face, it changes my mood. It has a definite effect on how I am feeling if I remember to have a slight smile. I don’t mean a big grin...just like a Mona Lisa smile, soften up a little bit.

Dogen says, “The sitting of even one person at one moment imperceptibly ...resonates through all time.” He is saying that our present practice will affect all time: past, present, and future...each moment is full of this realization.

[When] we practice not only by sitting, but also before and after we sit, this kind of practice fills the universe. It would be tragic if practice ended after forty-five minutes of sitting.

The spirit of our practice is to practice without trying to acquire anything, because we already have everything we need.

Without trying to be anything other than just this one, because just this one is a Buddha from the beginning. We practice to express and realize and settle on the suchness of this one, so that it can manifest in whatever activity we undertake, so that our oneness with all beings becomes evident.

Can we do it, can we make it happen? Be willing to be just this one. Can we just sit, not judging whether we’re doing it right or doing it wrong, just practice?

Suzuki Roshi said, “Wherever you are, you are one with the clouds and one with the sun and the stars that you see. You are still one with everything. That is more true than I can say and more true than you can hear.”

What is it that separates us, what is the boundary between this and not this? What do we imagine to be the boundary between this and not this? Where is the bridge, where is the opening?

The Buddha wasn’t pointing out our human condition in order to make us feel dismal about ourselves. He was saying, “Look, this is what is happening, so how can we live a joyful life in the midst of the fact that it doesn’t last forever?” Well, in the first place, since it doesn’t last forever, we might as well enjoy it while we have it, right? What is hindering us from living this life in the way we want to live it?



May/June Calendar

At SnowFlower, it has become a tradition to devote the May/June cycle of sangha meetings to the study and practice of the Five Mindfulness Trainings. These form the ethical component of our practice – the road map to a well-protected and happy life. With the Five Trainings as our guide, we make the effort to practice “all day long” by being as mindful as possible in the actions of daily life, not just at sangha. The Five Trainings help us cultivate responsibility in five basic areas: the 1st: respect and reverence for life; the 2nd: generosity and helping; the 3rd: our relationships; the 4th: our speech; the 5th: how we act as consumers.

May 2016

Sundays	Tuesdays	Wednesdays	Fridays
5/1 Host & Lead - Gerri Gurman	5/3 : Overview of the 5 Mindfulness Trainings and Three Refuges - Mary Michal	5/4 The Heart of the Buddha's Teaching	5/6 6:15pm Intro to Sangha – Linda Jordan Overview of the 5 Mindfulness Trainings and 3 Refuges --Mary Michal
5/8 Host & Lead - Tod Highsmith & Joan Braune	5/10 The 3 rd Training - Cheri Maples	5/11 The Heart of the Buddha's Teaching	5/13 The 2 nd Training - Don Katz
5/15 Host & Lead - Gerri Gurman	5/17 The 2 nd Training - Walt Keough	5/18 The Heart of the Buddha's Teaching	5/20 The 3 rd Training - Cheri Maples
5/22 Host & Lead - Pam Moran & Dave Zeman	5/24 The 4 th Training - Steven Spiro	5/25 The Heart of the Buddha's Teaching	5/27 The 4 th Training - Steven Spiro
5/29 Host & Lead – Tod Highsmith & Joan Braune	5/31 Metta Practice - Amy Krohn		

SnowFlower Sangha Cancellation Policy

In case of inclement weather, an email will be sent to the listserv by 3:00 pm the day of sangha and a notice will be posted on the door of the Friends Meetinghouse.

Join the SnowFlower email list by emailing Ann Varda at annvarda@gmail.com.

Kalyana Mitta Groups Anyone who has been attending SnowFlower for six months or longer is eligible to participate in a Kalyana Mitta (spiritual friends) group. These groups generally meet monthly and provide an opportunity to deepen one's practice within a smaller group setting. For more information, please contact Susan Pearsall, dmls313@sbcglobal.net.

Gathas for Everyday Living

Words are very close to most of us, for some as close as our breath. This makes gathas, which are intentional words, good reminders. The booklet, *Gathas for Daily Life* was, in Thay's words, 'a warrior's manual on strategy', the strategy of how to stay present with one's own mind throughout the ordinary actions of daily life, a job as difficult as 'trying to find a stray water buffalo by following its zigzagging tracks.' Incorporating gathas from the following listing in our daily practice will bring joy and benefits without limits.

Waking up in the morning, I smile. There are 24 brand new hours.

Today I am going to affect lives. May I do so with joy and compassion.

Climbing these steps, my feet show me the way, and I follow with care.

Sweeping this ground, A Bodhi tree springs from this earth of enlightenment.

Using a telephone, I know that words can travel thousands of miles. May my words create mutual love and understanding.

Joining the other cars waiting in line, I breathe mindfully and cultivate lovingkindness for all.

Standing in line, calming, smiling. Present moment, wonderful moment.

Feelings come and go like clouds in a windy sky. Conscious breathing is my anchor.

Preparing these vegetables, I see a green sun. All things join to make life possible.

This cup of tea held mindfully, mind and body dwell in the here and now.

Sitting with my back straight, I wish all beings may be seated on the platform of enlightenment, with hearts free of illusion and unskillful views.

I have arrived, I am home, in the here and in the now. I am solid, I am free, in the ultimate I dwell.

Breathing in, I calm my body. Breathing out, I smile. Dwelling in the present moment, I know this is a wonderful moment.

Time to stop and sleep. I vow with all beings to find peaceful retirement and a heart that is undisturbed.

The use of gathas encourages clarity and mindfulness, and makes even the most ordinary task sacred. Our objective is not to get our chores out of the way in order to do something more meaningful. We don't cook in order to have food to eat. We cook to cook. We don't wash dishes to have clean dishes. We wash dishes to wash dishes.

"Our practice is to infuse every act of body, speech, and mind with our awareness, to illuminate every leaf and pebble, every heap of garbage, every path that leads to our mind's return home...Only a person who has grasped this...can hope to descend the mountain as a...true warrior. He or she will traverse the waves of life and death without rising or sinking."

