



# Ten Directions

Ten Directions Kwan Um Zen Community Newsletter, Vol. VIII, No. 2, Summer 2006

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*Zen Master Seong Hyang*

## Making a Complete Effort

*Excerpts from a talk given after the November 1979  
Yong Maeng Jong Jin retreat at the Providence Zen  
Center*

The first thing I want to say is how honored I am to sit next to Soen Sa Nim and give a talk. We don't see him as much as we used to, and every time he comes back, I respect him a little bit more than I did the last time he was here. That's been going on for a long time now. When I see him again, I'm always amazed at how hard he works and how strong and happy he is.

I was visiting some friends today. Like many people, these friends aren't so happy. I look at them, and I look at Soen Sa Nim: they have more money, more food, more wealth, more sex, and more sleep, but they're not so happy, and he's very happy. The reason is clear. Soen Sa Nim understands his job and his direction, and my friends don't. The whole purpose of this seven-day training period that we've just finished was for all of us to perceive our correct job and our direction. Spending ten hours a day for seven days on a cushion is an amazing experience and can really help you understand what your job is.

I did a hundred-day retreat a year ago last January. When I was doing this retreat, I kept trying to understand what my job was. I had taken three months out of my life to do this retreat, and I really wanted to learn something from it and make it important. I remember after about seventy-three days, I still hadn't had any special experiences, and I was starting to get nervous that I'd go home and wouldn't be able to give a Dharma Talk about my retreat; it wasn't exciting.

On the seventy-third day I was washing my white enamel rice pot at the sink. I had burned the bottom, so I was trying very hard to scrub the burnt rice off. I got about 95% of it off the bottom of the pot, and then I said to myself, "You can't get any more off; that's it. It's really stuck, and it's really burned, and it's just going to look like other pots that have black stuff on the bottom." Then this little voice said, "If you scrub a little bit harder, you're going to get the rest of it off."

The first mind said, "No, it won't come off. All pots look like that after they've been used every day for seventy-three days."

The little voice got just a little bit stronger and said, "Scrub a little harder and see if you can get it off." So I scrubbed a little bit harder. Actually I scrubbed a lot harder, because if I had scrubbed a little bit harder it still wouldn't have come off. I really scrubbed it hard, and it came off!

The lesson is clear. After doing really hard training for seventy-three days and having that happen to me, it was like the famous Zen story about Hyang Eom sweeping the floor; when he heard a rock hit against bamboo, KKKKKHHHHH! - his mind opened. It was a really strong experience for me to see that, all my life, I hadn't been making a complete effort.

After that happened I was incredibly elated and thought, "Well, this is it. I've really attained complete-effort mind, and I'm going to be a strong teacher and a really good Zen student for the rest of my life." I'd learned the lesson: if you try as hard as you can, then everything becomes clear. But, the next day, I wasn't trying as hard as I could again. I would try as hard as I could, and then I wouldn't try as hard as I could — you know, the same old thing that happens to all of us, up and down. What I keep learning over and over again is that if your effort is correct, and if you're trying as hard as you can to do your job, then everything becomes very clear. You understand that you can get the pot clean — very simple, but incredibly profound. You can experience it yourself.

*(Read the rest of this talk on the web: <http://www.kwanumzen.com>.  
Click on Teaching, then select the article archive and scroll down to  
"Making a Complete Effort")*

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## From the Director

In July the board had a retreat and did a visioning process for the next five years. At our annual meeting we will present a copy of a business plan that outlines where the board would like to go with the sangha in the next few years. We see our main focus on promoting activities that strengthen the Ten Directions sangha as a whole and developing structures that support our small practice groups. We want to encourage practice and create opportunities to help others. We want to increase our participation in the larger Buddhist community in the greater Chicago area.

This newsletter contains information about many different ways to practice. Retreats that are here in Chicago, around the Midwest and in Providence. One day practice opportunities, ceremonies, and opportunities to practice with the prison sanghas.

Some people will be able to do many of these activities, some people a few, maybe some people will not be able to practice with other sangha members at all. It doesn't matter. When a practice opportunity comes – just hit – is this your job right now? Maybe, maybe not, perhaps taking care of your baby is your job, maybe going to an activity with your partner. Do you need to help someone in your family or have to work over time at your job? All those things are your practice. But if you have the time, there will be many opportunities in the next few months to step out of your everyday life and do some intense practice with your community.

### Prison Practice

Consider becoming a volunteer at the Westville or Michigan City sangha. Consider joining with another sangha member from your geographic area and making a commitment together to practice at the prison twice a quarter (about 8 times a year).

If you can commit to visiting the prison you will give great support to the men of the sangha there and also to the volunteers who currently are going to the prison.

For volunteer training information at Michigan City contact DTT Scott Chambers at [southbeech@aol.com](mailto:southbeech@aol.com). For Westville, contact DT Jerry Ashmore at [dharmainc@aol.com](mailto:dharmainc@aol.com).

### Other Practice Opportunities

In addition to the September and November retreats featured in this newsletter, please note the other practice opportunities on the back panel.



**Midwest Sangha Weekend**



### Around the 10 Directions

SDT Bob Kemp is off on the next adventure of his life. Bob and his wife Jan have relocated to beautiful Charleston South Carolina. And won't we all be visiting them come next January!. Our heartfelt gratitude and appreciation to Bob who was one of the first members of our sangha more than 20 years ago. Bob served as Director in the 90's and more recently Head Dharma Teacher. The steadiness and clarity of his practice is an inspiration to us. We will miss him, but he promises to come back and visit; we wish him the very best.

Thank you so much to Ruby Ruan who put together our new web site. Check it out at: [tendirectionszen.org](http://tendirectionszen.org).

Our thoughts are with DTT John Wren as he recovers from major surgery and relocates in Wheeling.

Congratulations to Jhon Sanabria and his wife on the arrival of their daughter this summer.

Thank you to DT Jerry Ashmore who is now heading up the Empty Circle Zen Group in Hobart and also coordinating the prison practice at Westville Prison.

## September YMJJ



**Andrzej Stec JDPSN**

### Dates and schedule:

Friday evening, September 15, through  
Sunday, September 17, 2006  
Registration begins at 6:00 on Friday evening  
Dharma talk at 7:45 Friday evening  
Retreat ends about 2:00 on Sunday afternoon

Our weekend YMJJ retreats provide an opportunity to step out of our every day life and briefly immerse ourselves in our practice. Please join us. This will be a weekend retreat beginning Friday evening with a dharma talk and concluding with a circle talk on Sunday afternoon.

You may register arrive Friday evening after 6:00, on Saturday or Sunday morning during work practice (8:30 – 9:30) or Saturday evening after dinner.

### Fees:

Entire retreat:  
Non-member \$125.00  
Member 110.00  
DT/DTT 100.00  
One day/no night 50.00

Please register online at [tendirectionszen.org](http://tendirectionszen.org).  
Alternatively, you may register with Ruby Ruan at [mrsruan@yahoo.com](mailto:mrsruan@yahoo.com) or 312-731-1595. You are not registered until you receive a return email or phone call from Ruby. Please register by September 15.

## November YMJJ and Precepts Ceremony



**Zen Master Soeng Hyang  
(Barbara Rhodes)**

### Dates and schedule:

Friday, November 3, through Sunday, November 5  
Retreat begins at noon on Friday and ends about 1:30 on Sunday afternoon  
Dharma talk Friday night at 7:45  
Precepts ceremony at 2:00 on Sunday, following the retreat

Please join us for our November retreat with Zen Master Soeng Hyang. This retreat is an opportunity to do sustained practice with our teacher and the sangha. This will be a three-day retreat with practice on Friday afternoon beginning after lunch and concluding with a circle talk about 1:30 on Sunday. A precepts ceremony will follow the retreat at 2:00.

Registration for afternoon practice begins about noon on Friday. You may also register after 6:00 on Friday night. You are encouraged to plan to participate for the whole weekend however, other entry times are Saturday morning during work practice (8:30- 9:30), Saturday after dinner (5:30) or Sunday morning during work practice.

<b>Fees:</b>	<b>Friday afternoon &amp; weekend</b>	<b>Weekend only</b>
Non-member	\$150	\$120
Member	140	110
DT/DTT	130	100

One day/ no night: \$50

Please register with Jean Barr at 630-681-0563 or [Jgblink@msn.com](mailto:Jgblink@msn.com) You are not registered until you get an e-mail or return phone call from Jean. Please register by November 1st.

Both retreats will be held at the Theosophical Society, 1926 North Main, Wheaton, Illinois 60187. If you need directions to the Theosophical Society, please check on line at [www.theosophical.org](http://www.theosophical.org).

Wear loose comfortable clothes. If you have your own mat and cushion, please bring them with you. Linens and bedding are provided; an alarm clock is useful.

Many hands make light work, please plan to stay a little while after the retreat and help clean up.

Scholarship Policy. Ten Directions as partial scholarships available for those who would not be able to attend the retreat without this support. This funding is available to members and to first-time participants. If you belong to a small group, please check with your dharma teacher regarding a local group scholarship first. If you still need help, contact Margaret McKenzie at 630-244-0543. In most circumstances, participants are expected to pay the room fee of \$50.00 for the weekend.

Ten Directions  
Zen Community of Chicago  
P.O. Box 2261  
Glen Ellyn, Illinois 60138



### ***Practice Opportunities***

- Sep 15-17** YMJJ retreat with Andrzej Stec JDPSN
- Nov 3-5** YMJJ and Precepts Ceremony with Zen Master Soeng Hyang (Barbara Rhodes)

#### **Other practice opportunities:**

- October 7-8:** YMJJ at Great Lake Zen Center, Milwaukee, ZM Dae Kwang
- October 21** at the Theosophical Society from 10:00 until 4:00. *Together Action Sangha Day.* A day of practice, consulting interviews, work practice, chanting and food.
- November 17-18,** YMJJ at Isthmus Zen Community Madison Thom Pastor, JDPSN
- December 2,** *Buddha's Enlightenment Day* Place & time TBA
- December 4-10,** Providence Zen Center, a 7-day YMJJ with our guiding teacher Zen Master Soeng Hyang



## About Ten Directions

The Ten Directions practice groups across the Greater Chicagoland area are open to everyone. Our groups exist to offer people an open and supportive atmosphere in which to learn and practice, and people are free to attend or not attend as their schedules permit.

Group locations include:

DePaul University  
Empty Circle Zen Group, Hobart, IN  
Indiana State Prison  
Ji Hak Sunim's, Island Lake  
Westville Correctional Center  
Woodstock, IL

For more information, contact these teachers:

Margaret McKenzie, 630-415-0289 (All)  
Ron Kidd, 773-334-1668 (Chicago)  
Jerry Ashmore, 219-962-7020 (Indiana)  
Harold Rail, 815-337-0550 (Woodstock)

Please visit our website at  
<http://www.tendirectionszen.org>