

Milwaukee Zen Group

3935 N. Downer Ave.
Milwaukee, WI 53211

May 18, 1983

Dear Friends:

This letter is to let you know about the sesshin we are planning and to fill you in on our group's activities for the past year.

SESSHIN

This sesshin - a two-day retreat that includes traditional orioki-style meals - will take place on June 11 and 12 at our Milwaukee zendo, 3935 N. Downer Avenue. Dainin Katigiri, Roshi, Abbott of the Minnesota Zen Meditation Center, will come down from Minneapolis to lead the sesshin. He will give lectures each day and conduct dokusan - private interviews - with students. The charge for the sesshin will be \$25 for dues-paid members of the Milwaukee Zen Group and \$35 for all others. Our zendo is quite small, so space is limited. Please call soon if you want to reserve a space, or if you want more information.

The group has been small but active for the last year. Here is a summary of our activities.

REGULAR MEDITATION

We now sit together in zazen four times each week: Tuesday and Thursday evenings at 7:30, Wednesday mornings at 6:00, and Saturday mornings at 6:15. Everyone is welcome to join us at these times. If you have not sat in zazen before, though, it would be a good idea to call ahead and arrange to take instruction. A member of the group will be happy to teach you.

SCRIPTURE CLASS

Our Saturday morning meditation period is followed at 8:00 a.m. by a short Buddhist service, and then by breakfast and a 90-minute class in which we discuss Buddhist scriptures. We have just finished discussion of the Threefold Lotus Sutra, a central scripture in the Mahayana Buddhist tradition. We plan to take up our next writing, the Vimilakirti Sutra, starting June 18. Everyone is welcome to join us in this, too.

However, it might be helpful for those without a background in Buddhist studies to do some preliminary reading before beginning these sutras. To this end we are discussing the possibility of offering an introductory class in Zen Buddhism. Please let us know if you would be interested in such a class, whether or not you intend to go on to sutra study. If there is enough interest, we will organize a class and inform everyone on our mailing list of the time, place, and subject.

FULL MOON CEREMONY

In addition to these meetings, we also celebrate the full moon every month with a forty-minute zazen period, a short Buddhist service and, usually, a brief talk by one of our members. The next full moon ceremony will be Thursday, May 26, at 7:30 p.m.

MILWAUKEE ZENDO

All the activities mentioned above take place at our zendo, which is also the business office of one of our members, so please come for Zen group activities only around the times listed here. A group member will generally be at the zendo about ten minutes before the activity is scheduled to begin.

LAY INITIATION

In March Katigiri Roshi, his wife, Tomoe, and two priests from the Minneapolis Zen Center, Steve Hagen and Pam Coniff-Hagen, came to Milwaukee to conduct a Buddhist lay initiation of nine members of our group. Also joining us in initiation was Steve Heywood, a student of Roshi's from Iowa. The meaning of the initiation depends to a great extent on the individual initiate, but all of us seem to feel more settled as Zen Buddhists and more established as a group since the ceremony.

PUBLIC LECTURES

We have discussed the possibility of bringing speakers on various Buddhist topics to Milwaukee. Please let us know if there is anyone you would particularly like to hear.

If you have any other suggestions or questions, please give us a call. Here are some phone numbers:

Diane Nelson	961-8870
Mike Posnanski	342-3495
Julie Redding	332-1727
Tom Tolan	263-3021