

August 2010

SHINGI

Newsletter of the Tendai Buddhist Institute



 Forward to a Friend

[Join Our Mailing List](#)

In This Issue

Events Calendar

Meanderings

The Third Jewel

Jushoku's Meanderings

*I'm late, I'm late for
A very important
date. No time to
say hello, good-
bye, I'm late, I'm
late, I'm late. I'm
late and when I
wave, I lose the
time I save.[1]*

This is a familiar refrain from the Disney film, Alice in Wonderland. Most people I know repeat a variation of the theme. We seem to be constantly in motion and we mistake being busy with being productive or important. If we have a moment to ourselves we check our e-mail, Facebook page or

August Events Calendar



Weekly Meditation Services (WMS) are on Wednesday evenings. They begin at 6pm with a discussion or talk (see below for this month's discussion topics). At about 7pm there is a meditation service followed at 8pm by a potluck supper. All of Wednesday evening's events are open to the public. There is no fee, and reservations are not required.

August Wednesday Meditations and Discussions

4th Nagarjuna: Meaning and Reality. A seminal figure in Mahayana Buddhism, his teachings are essential to an understanding of *sunyata*. We will be using excerpts from *Mula-madhyama-karika*, which concerns the Middle Way. (Interdependent reality - Verses from the Center)

11th Chapter 8 The Abhidharma: The Higher Teaching. This Chapter explores the scholastic commentary that is one of three parts of the Pali Tripitaka. From *Foundations of Buddhism* by Rupert Gethin (1998 - Oxford University Press). Please read this chapter for discussion on Wednesday. This is an ongoing series of monthly classes on essential Buddhism.

18th Dengyo Daishi - The Character of Saicho. The founder of Japanese Tendai, Saicho is one of the most important figures in Japanese Buddhism We will be examining the qualities of his character that lead to this extraordinary figure's contributions.

25th "A Buddhist Ethic Without Karmic Rebirth?" by Winston L. King. *Journal of Buddhist Ethics*. Vol. 1: 1994 Read this article [online](#). We will discuss the article and all its fascinating implications.

our smart phones. There is little time to reflect, contemplate or engage in face-to-face communication so important to being human. ([cont.](#))

[1] I'M LATE From the Walt Disney film "Alice In Wonderland" (1951) (Sammy Fain / Bob Hilliard)



Quicklinks

[About Us](#)

[Tendai
International](#)

[Glossary of Terms](#)

[Newsletter
Archives](#)

[Contact Jushoku
Monshin Naamon](#)

[Contact Editor](#)

Other Events

7th Morning Service and Sutra Class, 8:30 - 10:30 AM - We continue investigating the *Sutra of Brahma's Net*. This work has had a profound influence on East Asian Buddhist thought and practice. The ramifications of that effect influence the ways we look at and practice Buddhism in the West. This week we will examine the second volume of the translation, pages 84 - 124, of *The Very Mahayana Buddhist Ethics: Introduction and Translation of the Fan-wang-ching* by Shigeru Osuka.

September 24-26 - O-Higan Retreat. The main focus of this retreat will be forgiveness. O-Higan is a time for contemplating our life and death, our continued awakening, a time to rededicate our lives to a moment-by-moment unfolding of our minds to realize the nature of reality. The retreat begins on Friday, 24th at 7:30 PM finishing on Sunday, the 26th at 1 PM. We have a limited number of openings. Sign up early so you won't be disappointed.



Social scientists refer to this sense of time deprivation as the "time compression effect." This effect explains many of the complaints we have about our modern life. Many of our modern woes are part and parcel of this phenomenon. We get insufficient sleep, feel rushed all the time, work harder and longer for less money, as well as experience less satisfaction from doing a good job.

There is no weekly period of rest, similar to the Sabbath in the Abrahamic traditions, in Buddhism. I sometimes wonder if this would be a welcome addition to the Buddhist Path in the West.

We could make every Saturday, for instance, the Buddhist day of observance or day of rest. But, then again, how many people who are Christian, Jewish or Muslim actually observe this wonderful feature of their religion? No, the kids have soccer practice; there is a big sale at Macy's; or 'That's the day I go to Tanglewood.'

Our time, like other aspects of our lives, is commodified. That is one of the reasons many of us seek meditation. We want some method or tool to provide us with a respite without reorganizing the priorities in our lives. But here's the paradox. If we take our Buddhist practice seriously we will still find it necessary to reorganize our life. That's not a bad thing. How else do we make time to carry out a Buddhist practice?

The very nature of the Buddhist Path is to be mindful of our body, speech, and mind, as well as our social and physical environments. Reigning in our tendencies to be in more than one place and do more than one thing at a time is a real challenge. In fact it becomes a Buddhist practice for many of us.

Let me suggest two forms of practice. First, we schedule one day a month for mindful observance of our practice, our families, and our inner journey. Avoid driving, pass up the movies or the concert, refuse to shop, and spend time with our families and ourselves in just being. This may take some discipline.

Second, every day you choose to do your practice, sitting or whatever, spend about 20 minutes before the practice to just breathe. Examine your thoughts of the day and get those out of the way before you devote the next 20 - 60 minutes to practice. For me I do this by performing the daily service. You

may do that or try to just reflect constructively on yesterday
and today.

In September I'll devote a Wednesday evening discussion to see if anyone has tried these two practices and get some feedback on the results. If you are not at the Wednesday evening meeting, send me an e-mail and let me know how it goes. Let's all try this together.

Gassho . . . [Monshin](#)

Photo credit Onyou Susan Bues

The Third Jewel--Where sangha members share ideas, poetry, and art to enrich everyone's Buddhist practice.

Our Meditation Spaces- A year or two ago, Monshin lead a Wednesday night discussion about creating spaces for meditation in our homes. Everyone shared a little about what his or her space was like, and I found myself wanting to visit each one. How interesting and enriching that would be! It only took me this long to realize that we can, in fact, "visit" each one . . . through the magic of modern photography and the Shingi.

A Sangha Member's Altar with Poem-



under the ficus tree
the Buddha meditates
in stillness.

under the Buddha

the kitty sleeps
in refuge.

she visits regularly.

Photography and Poetry by Onyou Susan Bues



Sometimes, Above it All

As if they were about to kiss,
the two drifted closer together,
in continual motion,
forming and re-forming;
but in the end one glided below the other,
its billowing cumulus elegance outshone
by its companion higher aloft.

Ah, to be so ephemeral,
in continual flux,
borne of the ever-changing winds.
No beginning, no end.
Evaporating into nothingness
or spiraling in a dizzying descent
to the earth in sparkling flakes or crystal droplets,
to be reborn in mist again.

Unable to hold on to any form even fleetingly
or become anything
other than what is this very moment:
ever changing,
both beautiful and terrifying,
and sometimes, above it all.

Another Wonderful Photo by Onyou Susan Bues, "Swallowtail
on Purple Coneflower"



Call for material: Please [send the Shingi](#) photographs, artwork, poems, book reviews, articles, etc. that you have created that you consider an outgrowth of your Buddhist practice or that you think reflect Buddhist themes, ideas, questions, etc. If submitting an image, you may wish to include a short statement sharing some of your thoughts to accompany it.

Questions? Comments? Suggestions? Contact . . .

Shingi Editor
Koho J. Daniel Beaudry
beaudryjd@mac.com