

Chan 禪 Magazine

Spring 2007



Chan Meditation Center

Institute of Chung-Hwa Buddhist Culture

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“To cultivators of Chan, I give three guiding principles. First, relax your body and mind. Second, settle upon a practice method as soon as possible. Third, do not concern yourself with how well you are doing. If you follow these guidelines, your practice will be smooth and fruitful.”

**– Chan Master Sheng Yen,
from his new book *Attaining the Way: A Guide to the Practice of Chan Buddhism***

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Founder/Teacher

Chan Master Ven. Dr. Sheng Yen

Editor-in-chief

David Berman

Coordinator

Virginia Tan

Photography

John Feng, Jerry Roach

Contributing editors

Ernie Heau, Kevin Mathewson, Virginia Tan, Wei Tan, Sheila Sussman, Guogu

Contributors

Rikki Asher, Tina Kacandes, Jeffrey Kung, Rebecca Li, Mike Morical, Bruce Rickenbacker, Ayn Steele, Wei Tan, Tan Yee Wong (Chang Ji Fa Shi)

Administrator

Chang Wu Fa Shi

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From the Editor	4
“How Do We Achieve Peace?” <i>Opening and closing remarks to the Young Leaders Peacebuilding Retreat by Chan Master Sheng Yen</i>	6
Hongzhi’s Silent Illumination Chan <i>Excerpts from the Extensive Record of Chan Master Hongzhi translated by Guogu</i>	13
The Past <i>News from the Chan Meditation Center and DDMBA</i>	18
The Future <i>Retreats, classes, and other upcoming events</i>	32
Chan Center Affiliates	34

From The Editor

“Beep. This is Kip from DataRecovery. Your hard drive suffered a mechanical failure; the drums actually damaged the platter, causing some of the data to be corrupted. Fortunately, we believe we’ll be able to recover all of the data on the drive; unfortunately that’s 62 gigs, which is too much for dvd, so we’ll have to put it on another hard drive...please call and let us know whether you want to send us a drive or purchase one from us...”

And so ended another dramatic episode of the 21st century, a story of impermanence, the gradual arising of fear, the sudden realization of emptiness, miraculous rebirth, and most of all, limitless expense, the bills increasing in increments of four figures with every turn of the page.

I was not one of the many, by the way, who always put off until tomorrow the backup they should do today; no no, I am one of the few whose e-karma is evidently so bad that my carefully planned automatic weekly backups failed right along with my hard drive.

What is really striking to me about all this is how quickly, and how late in life, I managed to become someone entirely dependent on technologies I barely understand. Most of what I do with a computer I used to do (for more than 40 years) with a pencil; some things I used to do with a big, heavy book called a dictionary, or a big set of books called an encyclopedia, or in a pinch, with a big building full of books (we used to call it a library—there’s probably one being shut down right now near where you live). I didn’t even own a computer until the 20th century was nearly over; I remember

when touch-tone was introduced, and answering machines, when people got busy signals and called back later, when a sticky-note was a high-tech substitute for a string tied around your finger. And now here I am, in the same lifetime, devastated, emotionally wrung out by the crash of a hard drive and the consequent loss of 62 billion strings of stored 1’s and 0’s representing photographs I never look at and words I happened to arrange in a particular order on a particular day.

Well sure, I can be philosophical about it now, now that Kip has called, and my precious data is on its way back to me. And it’s not as if I really want to return to the good old days of pencil and paper—you can’t write *Samantabhadra* with your pencil and have your paper return 90,000 hits. But it does concern me that while using this marvelous technology to produce the last 20 issues of Chan Magazine, I was also evidently producing 62 billion or so strong and abiding attachments.

Kip did have a bit of advice to go with the good news—he reminded me that any hard drive can fail at any time, and so it was his strong recommendation that as soon as I download everything from my new external storage device to my new computer, I back up critical files to dvd, and store those dvd’s in another location. That way, if, for example, my Aeron chair should explode, taking the computer and the external hard drive with it, I could drift in and out of consciousness amid the rubble and wait for the paramedics comfortable in the knowledge that at least my data was safe.



Remarks to the Young Leaders Peacebuilding Retreat

by

Chan Master Sheng Yen

The following remarks by Chan Master Sheng Yen were given at the Young Leaders Peacebuilding Retreat at the Dharma Drum Retreat Center in Pine Bush, New York, held October 25-28, 2006. The occasion was a multi-faith retreat sponsored jointly by the Global Peace Initiative of Women and Dharma Drum Mountain. Attending the retreat were about 80 young leaders from Africa, America, Asia, and Europe; their religious affiliations included Buddhism, Christianity, Judaism and Islam. For three days the group held intensive discussions and reflected on what young people can do to enhance the environment for peace in the world. This gathering was actually a prelude to their attendance at the United Nations Global Youth Leadership Summit, which was held October 29-31st at the United Nations. In the words of the GYLS, the purpose of the summit was to “strengthen the worldwide movement to engage young people in decisions about the future of their communities, regions, and our emerging global society ... [and] to share ideas and action plans on ways to reduce poverty and accelerate the achievement of the other Millennium Development Goals and build peace...”

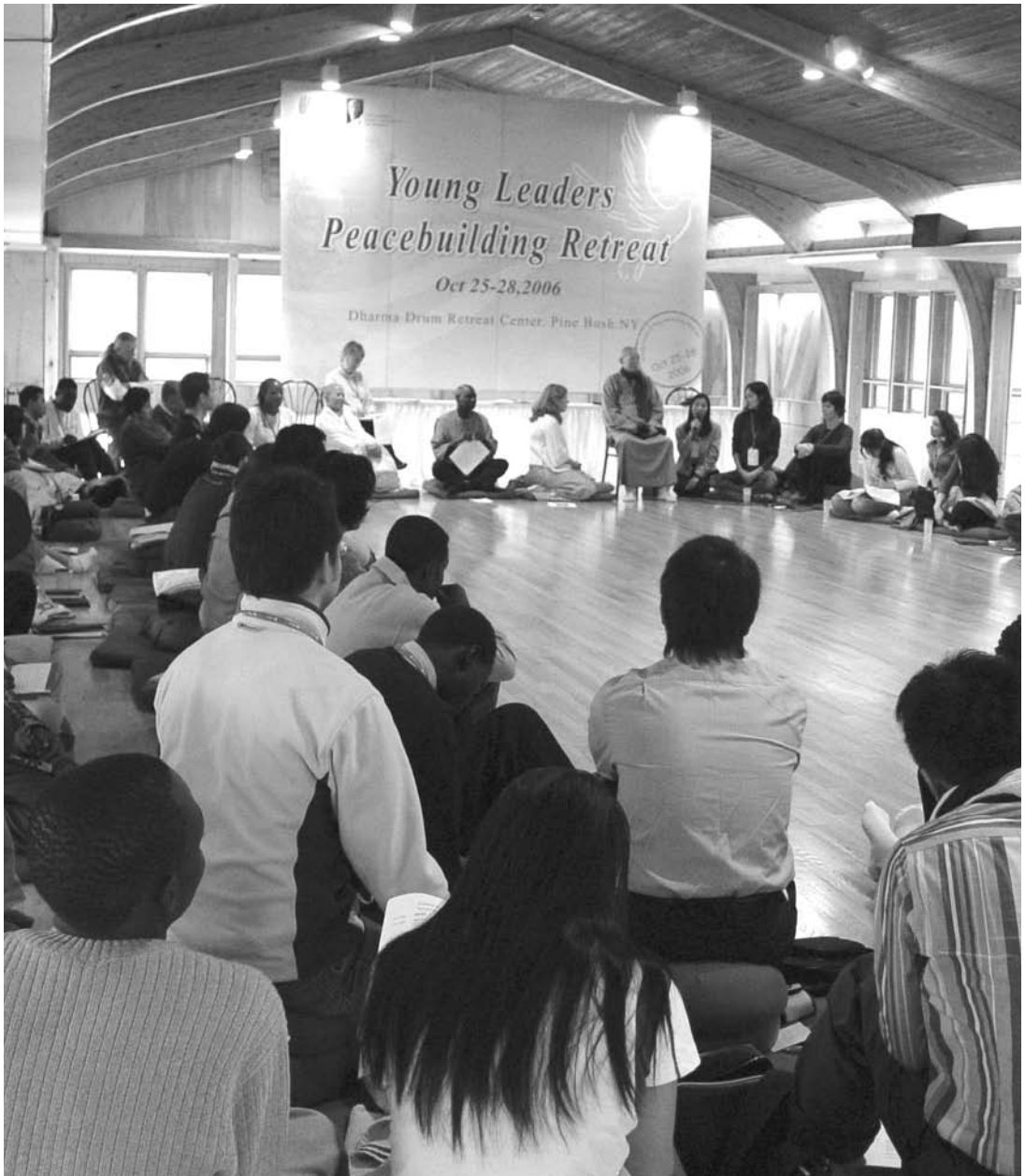
Master Sheng Yen's remarks were given at the opening and the closing of the retreat, and were orally translated by Dr. Rebecca Li.

Opening Remarks

On behalf of Dharma Drum Retreat Center, I welcome you all to this Young Leaders Peacebuilding retreat. I am very happy to see so many old friends here, and also happy to see a lot of new friends. I hope over the next few days of this retreat you will truly live a joyful and peaceful life here at the retreat center.

Now I'd like to begin by asking you this question: How do we achieve peace? What do we need to do in order to attain peace in this world? Do you have any specific ideas in mind already?

Based on my experience of having read many books and heard many lectures, some by famous people, the main point is often that to



attain peace we need to change something—either we need to change an existing situation, or we need to change how people, ethnic groups or religions, relate to each other. These methods advocate peace by changing something external to ourselves.

In fact, there are a lot of people and institutions that are dedicated to attaining peace in this world. However, because they are so zealous in advocating peace, they often adopt extreme thinking in their approach. And because their solution is often to use force to attain peace on their terms, we have arrived at a state of perpetual conflict in the world. Now I'd like to ask you: those who advocate this kind of solution, are they the makers or the destroyers of peace?

[Voice from audience: They are destroyers of peace.]

The violent approach to making peace was the mentality up to and through the 19th century. We have gone through the 20th century in which we experienced two great world wars, and now we have entered the 21st century with open conflict in many parts of the world. Since violence and war have not in fact brought us peace, don't you think that we need a new paradigm, a new approach towards making peace? If you do, that would mean looking for methods of non-violence because if we continue to resort to force, all that will happen is that we will be stuck in violent conflicts around the world.

At the individual level we can think about peacemaking in the same way. If we treat people around us with an angry heart, if we interact with anger in our minds, people will inevitably respond with anger. We then have an environment of violence against violence. However, if we can treat people with kindness and compassion, they will not find it so easy to remain angry at us. So we need to start from within ourselves, from our within our own minds; we need to keep a mind of peace, of kindness, and compassion. Then we will have a standpoint from which to build peace from within ourselves instead of resorting to forceful change.

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So the important thing to attain peace in the world is to first cultivate an attitude of non-harming and non-violence. If we have peace in our minds, the world we experience will be at peace; even though the objective reality may be one of con-

flict, our inner experience will be one of peace. That is to say, at least we will not become the source of conflict and violence. When we are at peace in our minds and we do not generate conflict and violence, then we can truly begin to also help others attain peace and eliminate violence and conflict.

So in these few days of this Peacebuilding Retreat you have been preparing for the United Nations Global Youth Leadership Summit, one of whose themes is the problem of global poverty—how to solve and eliminate poverty. However, global poverty is not something

that, as very young leaders, you can easily and readily tackle by yourself. That is too large a problem for you.

However, what you can do as young leaders is to start the peacebuilding process from within yourselves. To begin, if you can at least keep yourself from falling into poverty then there is a chance that you will be able to help others out of poverty. What I mean is that if you are poverty-stricken yourself, how can you help others overcome their own poverty? By keeping yourself out of poverty, and I here mean not just material poverty, but also spiritual poverty, you can then cultivate a mind less motivated by greed and desire. You will be able to find contentment with what you already have. When we do not crave so much, when we don't constantly think that we need this and we want that, we are then ready to contribute and share with everyone else. At that time, we become the wealthiest people in the world.

On the other hand we cannot do that if we constantly feel that we need more for ourselves. Feeling such a lack, it would be difficult for us to share with others and contribute to their welfare. Even though we may be materially wealthy, so long as we feel that we cannot share with others, we are still in poverty, spiritual poverty.

So I'd like to make a suggestion. When, a few days from now, you attend the United Nations summit to discuss the problem of poverty, I urge you to raise the point to the assembly about how we should go about really solving poverty. The answer, as I see it, is to first recognize the main causes of poverty. Yes, there are serious natural disasters that can cause poverty, but among causes that we can learn

to control is violent conflict—war. Violent conflict throws a lot of people into enforced poverty out of which it is extremely difficult to climb [due to disruptions to the social fabric, loss of infrastructure, and economic chaos]. So in order to help solve the problem of poverty, we first need to solve the problem of perpetual war; we need to cease giving rise to violence as a solution to social problems, and conflict as a means of settling disputes between people and nations. When we do that we will truly be getting to one of the main sources of poverty.

When there is war, people are thrown into material poverty; when we succeed in stopping conflict we will help to alleviate poverty. Already today, in many parts of the world, there are people in poverty caused by conflict, and while we can bring them material aid, that is not enough. We also need to help people find spiritual contentment as well as alleviate material poverty. When one is no longer spiritually poor there is less greed and when there is less greed, there is more contentment. So we should try to eliminate violence, getting at the problem of conflict and war—which in itself is a kind of poverty—and we should also purify anger from our heart, we should cultivate contentment of the spirit. When we can do that we will be eliminating spiritual poverty and will be truly getting to the heart of the problem of material poverty.

Closing Remarks

Over the last few days we have been living together here in the quiet environment of the Dharma Drum Retreat Center with no distractions, so that we could all concentrate on the purpose of our being here, which is to share our life experiences as young leaders dedicat-

ed to building peace in the world. Especially under the help and guidance of the compassionate teachings of the Buddha, along with the several spiritual mentors here, you have all been able to very generously share your experiences to everyone's benefit.

There are some people in the world who through most of their lives never really have to undergo any great suffering, any great difficulty. However, when you look at the lives of the truly great leaders in history, had they not experienced great suffering themselves, it would have been very difficult for them to truly understand and empathize with the suffering of others.

I understand that among you here, not all have really needed to endure much difficulty or suffering so far in your young lives. Still, it is inspiring that you are willing to come to the United States, to this retreat center, to experience discomfort for several days, in order to share your life experiences with others like yourselves. After all, this is not a five-star hotel. Being a retreat center, it is not meant to be very comfortable with lots of amenities. So it is good that you've been willing to come and suffer a little bit.

In fact, in order to become a leader, one should be willing to undergo and experience difficulties. If one is unwilling to put oneself through some suffering in order to achieve a goal, then it is difficult to give rise to compassion. Without a mind and heart of compassion one would not be even able to perceive that there is anyone out there that needs to be helped. If one always puts oneself only through the most pleasant circumstances, then it becomes easy to think that everything in the world is so wonderful, everything is going smoothly,

and there is no one out there suffering, so no one needs our help. Only if we are willing to put ourselves through some difficulty and suffering are we able to truly empathize with the great need, with the great suffering out there, and give rise to compassion.

In the entire world today with 6.5 billion people, at least half are in dire circumstances, experiencing poverty, sickness, homelessness, and other forms of suffering. Therefore, we often are plagued with this erroneous understanding that suffering comes only from material poverty; we think that all suffering is the result of not having enough food, not having housing, healthcare, clothing or possessions, and so on. But I have known of many very wealthy people that have everything that they could possibly want materially, but they don't have happiness at all and even lack a sense of security. One could say that these people are suffering from spiritual poverty even while being materially wealthy. So from the total perspective of those who suffer materially and those who suffer spiritually, most of the 6.5 billion people on our Planet Earth are suffering in one way or the other. As young leaders, you can therefore recognize that there is a great deal of suffering out there that needs to be alleviated.

For example, I can see that all of you young leaders have adequate shelter, enough food, clothing, and you are all healthy and intelligent. And yet, although you seem to have everything you need, a lot of you have told and shared stories of pain and suffering. Over these past few days you have inspired and moved each other with your own stories. So, ask yourself, why is it that though you have all the material needs, you still have some experiences of suffering to share? If you do that,

you will understand that everyone, regardless of circumstances—fortunate or unfortunate—suffers one way or another; everyone has unhappy experiences to tell.

Now, in your upcoming meeting at the United Nations the theme is going to be the elimination of poverty. The promise of the theme is that if we can eliminate poverty most of the problems of the world will be solved. But my opinion is that this is not entirely the right idea because, while curing material poverty is difficult, compared to poverty of the mind and spirit material poverty is relatively solvable. It is the poverty of the mind and spirit that is going to take a lot more work to alleviate. As long as there is great spiritual poverty, even if we solve the problem of material poverty,

people will still continue to suffer and be unhappy. We should also help others to cultivate spiritual contentment, to eliminate the poverty of the spirit.

After today you will be leaving, and up to now, aside from the humble amenities here, probably the thing that was most difficult for some of you, that caused some suffering, was that for several days you have had to eat nothing but vegetarian food [prolonged laughter]. A lot of you have never had to be vegetarian over the course of several days and yet here, every meal was vegetarian, vegetarian. Well, to undergo for several days a diet you are not used to, that also entails a little bit of difficulty. So, you have tasted a little bit of suffering and that counts as putting yourself through



some difficulty in order to accomplish something. And after all, you survived eating only vegetarian food. Am I correct?

However, if you have fretted over eating vegetarian food up to this very moment, perhaps you can remind yourself that a lot of people in this world cannot even get their hands on anything close to the very basic and simple vegetarian fare that we have been eating here. So when we think that way, perhaps we will give rise to gratitude for what we already have. This is cultivating a mind of contentment. So, with this in mind, I want to ask you: in the last several days, was the food OK? Were you satisfied with eating only vegetarian meals? [prolonged applause]

That means we have failed [laughter].

I had instructed the kitchen crew to cook very bad vegetarian food for you, in order to put you through some suffering [laughter], but they did not follow my instructions. Instead they made very good but simple vegetarian food. However, we know they worked very hard to make you happy, so we will thank them anyway [cheers and applause].

While we are undergoing maybe less than satisfactory circumstances on this retreat, it is very important to give rise to the proper attitude. Instead of thinking of your own suffering, remind yourself that there are lots of people in even worse circumstances. It is very important to give rise to this attitude because if one can do so, then we can also give rise to a mind of compassion to help others in even worse circumstances.

Over the last few days you have been able to share your experiences and you have heard

the stories of other young leaders like yourselves. In the process you have experienced in a few days more than what you might experience in possibly two years otherwise. So I want to congratulate you on your patience.

And while you have heard other peoples' stories of suffering and difficulty, it is very important not to become disappointed with what you see around in the world. Probably most of the 6.5 billion people in the world have an erroneous, or upside-down view about things, thinking that happiness comes with material comforts. But when you think about it, throughout human history, bringing life and hope to this world has always been accomplished by a small handful of people who have the correct understanding. With this right understanding they have been able to lead the rest of us towards a more enlightened view.

Therefore, we have nearly 80 of you young leaders here, and I encourage every single one of you to make a vow to give rise to compassion in order to help everyone. Everybody here should make this vow saying, "I will give rise to a mind of compassion to help everyone in this world."

How do we go about doing this? First, we should remember to use the method of non-violence, of not causing harm; second, we should cultivate inner peace, starting with ourselves, in order to bring peace to those around us and then throughout the world. If every one of us makes such a vow then the 21st century will be filled with hope, because you are our future. As young leaders you will bring about the change from erroneous thinking to right understanding in the 21st century.

Hongzhi Zhengjue on Silent Illumination Chan

Excerpts from Hongzhi chanshi guanglu
(Extensive Records of Chan Master Hongzhi)

© Translation and foreward by Guogu

Hongzhi Zhengjue (1091-1156) was one of the most illustrious Chan masters of the Song dynasty who revived the Caodong tradition. Even though his collected works include Dharma discourses and comments to hundreds of gong'an, modern Buddhists and scholars tend to focus on his eloquent presentation of mozhao chan or "silent illumination Chan."

The term "silent illumination" was not the creation of Hongzhi; the coinage can be traced back even before the founding of the Caodong tradition to the early Chinese Madhyamaka monk, Sengzhao (378-413), but it became prominent in the Caodong tradition as one of the central metaphors for the awakened mind.

Silence refers to the state of no-mind, the nature of emptiness; illumination points to the dynamic functioning of this unobstructed, enlightened mind. Inseparable, these two aspects are what is known as the buddha-nature, our true nature. This is the ground of our being, the basis of even our worst delusions. When delusions are eradicated, one realizes that even the concepts of delusion and awakening are unnecessary. For this reason, for a person who is truly enlightened, he or she will not "act" like he or she is enlightened or think of himself or herself as a great practitioner. He or she is in constant accord with non-abiding.

As a path, silent illumination refers to the simultaneous practice of stillness and insight (or Samatha and vipasyana). These two aspects point to the two dimensions of our ordinary mind: the ability to focus and the ability to be aware. In the process of developing these two dimensions of mind, one will naturally be unable to cultivate them simultaneously. Sometimes there will be too much stillness, which may lead to meditative absorption; sometimes there will be too much awareness, which may lead to discursive thinking. In daily life, the principle for practice is the same. One tries to keep a balance between stillness and awareness. This means being clear of what one is doing at all times while maintaining a stable and relaxed mind.

Even though this process of practice is absolutely necessary, enlightenment is not the result of practice. Practice simply reduces the manifestation of harmful vexations, which will benefit the practitioner, others, and the society at large. The nature of awakening is unproduced; it is not something that can be contrived; it is not something that is the result of stopping vexations; it is not something that can be realized by letting vexations reign free; and it is certainly not something to seek after. For a person who is awakened, there is no problem whatsoever with what he or she sees, hears, feels, and perceives. Practice is just for the sake of practice. He or she sits with peace of mind; works with peace of mind; and interacts with others with peace of mind. Such is the realization of silent illumination. With these words, I hope the reader will come to appreciate the teachings of Hongzhi.

Guogu is one of Master Sheng Yen's main translators and is a senior lay teacher at the Chan Meditation Center and Dharma Drum Mountain. He was the personal monastic attendant and assistant to master Sheng Yen for close to nine years. In May 1995 he received the seal of approval from Master Sheng Yen. Guogu is now the guiding teacher for future Western Dharma and meditation teachers at the Chan Meditation Center. He is currently finishing his Ph.D. in the Department of Religion at Princeton University.

Admonition on Chan Practice, Part 1

(Part 2 will appear in the next issue of Chan Magazine.)

The essential point of all the Buddhas, the critical essence of each and every patriarch: Without encountering things, it knows; not opposing conditions, it illumines. Without encountering things, it knows—its knowing is inherently subtle. Not opposing conditions, it illumines—its luminosity is naturally wondrous. Its knowing is inherently subtle—it does not involve discriminating thoughts. Its illumining is naturally wondrous—there are no signs whatsoever. Without discriminating thoughts—it knows without pairs; yet, it is solitary. Without any signs of haste—it illumines without any grasping, yet it still goes on knowing:

The water so clear—transparent to the bottom.

Late, late, fishes have yet to appear.

The sky so vast—without boundaries.

Distant, out of sight, the birds have left no trace.

I.

The field is vacant and wide open. It is something intrinsic from the very beginning. You must purify and correct it; clean it off, and get rid of various deluded conditioning and illusory habits. Naturally, you arrive at a place that is clear and pure, perfect and bright; to-

tally empty, without any image; solitary and independent, not relying on anything. Only in this vastness one can illumine intrinsic reality and relinquish external objects. Therefore, it is said, “With perfect and pervasive clarity, there is not a single thing to be perceived.” This field is where birth and death do not reach; it is the deep source of pure luminosity; it is able to emit light and function responsively. Permeating through all [worlds as many as] motes of dust, transparent, without forming semblance, the wondrous [activity] of seeing and hearing leaps far beyond those everyday sounds and forms. Reaching everywhere, its function is without traces, its mirroring without obstruction. Naturally and spontaneously it impartially issues forth—flowing in response with thought after thought, object after object. An ancient said, “Having no-mind one attains in himself the Dao of no-mind. Attaining no-mind in himself, the Dao as well ceases to be.” With clear awareness, one takes up the responsibility of helping other sentient beings as if one were sitting in perfect silence. As for the subtle wondrous activity of leisurely entering the world, it is something you must dig into and investigate in this fashion!

II.

The correct way of practice is to simply sit in stillness, and silently investigate; deep down there is a state one reaches where externally one is no longer swirled about by causes and conditions. The mind being empty, it is all-embracing; its luminosity being wondrous, it is precisely apt and impartial. Internally there are no thoughts of grasping after things; vast and removed, being just as it is—free from confusion. Alive and potent, all dependency and opposition are severed; one remains self-

contained. This contentment has nothing to do with emotional feelings; one must not rely on anything at all. Being quite outstanding, [this state of suchness] is full of life and spirit, and does not fall into defiled appearance; one finds a resting-place. Pure and immaculate, it is bright; being bright, it is penetrating. It is able to respond smoothly in accordance with phenomena, where phenomena do not obstruct each other. Floating effortlessly, clouds appear on mountain peaks; shining boldly, the reflections of the moon flow along mountain streams. Everywhere—there are radiant luminosity and spiritual transformations; clearly, appearances are unobstructed! Mutually responding, like a cover to a container or the tip of a sword meeting a shooting arrow’s point. With further training and nourishing, it ripens. Its essence becomes firm and stable; it penetrates every place freely. Cut off sharp corners; don’t speak of theories [of right and wrong]. Like a white ox or a tamed ferret that naturally [and willingly] responds to any command—one can then be called a true person. Therefore it is said, “Having the Dao of no-mind, one can be like this; having not yet gained no-mind, it is extremely difficult!”

III.

Wide and far-reaching without limit; pure and clean, it emits light. Its spiritual potency is unobscured. Although it is bright, there are no objects of illumination. It can be said to be empty, yet this emptiness is [full of] luminosity. It illumines in self-purity, beyond the working of causes and conditions, apart from subject and object. Its wondrousness and subtleties are ever present; its luminosity is also vast and open. Moreover, this is not something that can be conceived of as existence or nonexistence. Nor can it be deliberated about

with words and analogies. Right here—at this pivotal axle, opening the swinging gate and clearing the way, it is able to respond effortlessly to circumstances—the great function is free from hindrances. At all places, turning and turning about, it does not follow conditions nor can it be trapped in models. In the midst of everything, it settles securely. With “that,” it is identical to what “that” is; with “this,” it is identical to what “this” is. “This and that” inter-fuse and merge without distinction. Therefore it is said, “Like the earth that holds up a mountain, unaware of its steepness and loftiness; like the stone that contains jade, unaware of the flawlessness of the jade.” If one can be thus, this is truly leaving home. People who have left home must get hold of the essence in this way.

IV.

Patch-robed monks should wither away and freeze the [deluded] thoughts of the mind, and rest from remnant conditioning. Single-mindedly restore and cultivate this field. Directly cut down all the overgrown grass throughout the boundary of the four directions. Do not allow a single speck of dust to defile [this field]. Spiritually potent, it is bright; vast and removed, it is transparent. Thoroughly illumine that which comes before the [principle] essence, until you reach a state where the light becomes naked and pure—where not a single speck of dust can be attached to. When you tug and pull back this ox[-mind] by the nose, it will naturally come alive and be imposing. Being quite unusual and outstanding, it mingles with others along the pathway without damaging people’s sprout and grain. Thriving and dynamic, [the ox] effortlessly responds to circumstances; responding to circumstances without artificiality, it thrives



and is free flowing. Not fixed to any set place, it is free from fetters—this is the place where the ox plows through the field of the empty kalpa. Proceeding in such a way, all things appear vividly without obscurity; everywhere, all things manifest as they are, [maintaining] one thought for ten thousand years. Fundamentally, this is non-abiding in appearances. It is said, “The mind-ground contains every seed. The rain will universally cause them to sprout. When the meaning of the blossoming flower of enlightenment is understood, the fruit of Bodhi will ripen of its own accord.”

V.

It cannot be practiced nor actualized because it is something intrinsically full and replete. No other things can defile it; it is thoroughly pure to its depth. Precisely at the place where purity is full and complete is where you recognize the Eye. When illumination is thorough, [self] is relinquished completely; when the experience is bright, your steps are then solid and grounded. Birth and death originally have no root or stem; coming forth, sinking away fundamentally are without trace of the self. Intrinsic light illumines its peak thoroughly—empty in spiritual potency. Likewise, intrinsic wisdom responds to conditions—though quiescent, it is resplendent. Truly arriving at this place where there is no middle or extremes, before or after—it begins to become one pervasive totality. Sense faculties or sense objects, on each and every occasion, preach the Dharma through the broad and long tongue. The inexhaustible lamp is thus transmitted; everything emits great radiance—performing the great work of accomplishing Buddhahood. Originally one does not need a hair's breadth of an external object. Clearly, this is a matter to be found within one's own home.

VI.

Silent and still, abiding in itself; just like this—in suchness, it is apart from conditioning, where luminosity is vast and spacious, without any [emotional] dust—directly [the self] is thoroughly relinquished. Arriving at this fundamental place, one realizes that it is not something newly acquired today. From the ancient home before the great kalpa, there has been utter clarity without any obscurations; in its liveliness and readiness, it shines alone. Though it is like this, without enacting it there is no attainment. Precisely

at the time of enacting it, simply keep it so that not a single thing arises; do not allow a speck of dust to cover it. In this Great Rest where [one's vexations are] dried up and frozen, there's vast and thorough, penetrating understanding. If this Rest cannot thoroughly exhaust [the self] and you wish to reach the realm beyond birth and death, there can be no such realm! Just directly penetrate through. You will then resolve [this matter] thoroughly without the dust of conceptual thinking and be purified, without conditioned speculations. Take a backward step and open your grasping hands. Thoroughly resolve this matter. Then, your ability to put forth light and respond to the world will be appropriate—merging with myriad objects—just right, on all occasions. It is said, "The Dharma within dharmas has never been concealed; from ancient times to the present—it is always manifest and exposed."

VII.

All Buddhas and patriarchs do not actualize something different; they all arrive at this resting place. The three times [of past, present, and future] are severed. The myriad conditions are silenced. Directly there is not a single hair's breadth of opposition, the spirited buddha illuminates itself. It's miraculous [illumination] thoroughly penetrates to the source. When realization is far-reaching and exhaustive, one's body diversifies to respond to situations. All [sense] doors issue forth light; every object manifests with silhouettes. Then one will realize that exhaustively [all things] flow out from oneself. The hundreds of tips of weeds everywhere are posed as causes or conditions in relation to oneself. Thorough and penetrating right through one's whole being—this is how one should proceed!

The Past

News from the Chan Meditation Center and the DDMBA Worldwide

Shifu Introduces New Abbot-President

By Tina Kacandes

Sunday, November 5, 2006 was a day of celebration and community at the Chan Meditation Center. Master Sheng Yen introduced the new Abbot-President, Ven. Guo Dong, to the congregation after they jointly presided over the ceremony of taking Buddhist vows. Chanting, feasting and socializing filled out the rest of the hours from early morning until well after dark.

Much earlier than usual on a Sunday morning the Center was packed with people of all ages and from many different backgrounds. The first event in the full day program was for people taking refuge. The ceremony was led by Master Sheng Yen and the newly appointed Abbot-President, who said that his role was to help guide the congregation: "I am sharing the responsibilities that have been a burden on Master Sheng Yen so he will have more time and energy to help the sentient beings in this world." Afterwards, children mobbed Shifu gleefully offering a profusion of red envelopes, the traditional gifts to the teacher.

While the preparation for the lunch meal reached a fevered pitch downstairs, the main event began in the shrine room. Guo Ming Fa Shi and Guo Jun Fa Shi led the audience in chanting to settle the rising buzz of excite-

ment to an energetic, steady hum. The aisles and doorways were packed. With some sternness, Shifu suggested that many in the crowd might be clinging to a superstitious idea that his physical presence was a source of magical qualities. He began by reminding us that practicing the Dharma is all that matters. He proceeded to grin and spread gentle ripples of laughter throughout the crowd at regular intervals, even as he expounded on serious matters.

Master Sheng Yen addressed the community at some length, telling us all about what had happened since he left New York more than a year ago. The new headquarters of Dharma Drum Mountain in Taiwan had been inaugurated and that news had been widely disseminated by the media. He emphasized the changes that had been made in the past year to enable him to hand over the running of the organization and focus on spiritual concerns, culminating in the election of the new Abbot-President over the summer.

Shifu also gave us some context for understanding the current geographical scope and structure of his organization internationally and within the United States. He carefully delineated the differences between the two main branches of the organization here in America—the Chan Meditation Center (CMC) and the Dharma Drum Retreat Center (DDRC)—and the unique gifts of the leaders

appointed to run them—Guo Ming Fa Shi and Guo Jun Fa Shi respectively. The role of the CMC is to attract new people by hosting short events and to take care of its members in America. The role of DDRC is to provide facilities for larger, longer gatherings and to spread Chan to mainstream society, nationally and internationally, under the leadership of Guo Jun Fa Shi, one of Shifu's Dharma heirs.

Formally introduced, the new Abbott-President elaborated on how eager he is to serve the organization to the best of his abilities. He stated that his role is to serve all followers and practitioners in all centers globally so the organization runs smoothly and all can devote themselves fully to practice and cultivating virtue.

After the Abbot-President concluded his remarks, Shifu surprised us all by continuing to address the crowd. It was such an auspicious occasion, he said, that he wanted to make additional remarks. The audience was jubilant at the promise of an "encore" from their beloved leader of more than 30 years. He challenged us all to reconsider our level of financial support to the organization, to abandon the quest after privileges of membership and to reflect upon the benefits of practice instead. Responsive as always to the sober mood that prevailed in the room, he asked us to tell him how we felt about his candor. Quietly, the members of the congregation thanked him for showing them what was yet to be done.

Guo Jun Fa Shi Speaks at Taiwan Center

On July 29th, 2006, Guo Jun Fa Shi, one of Master Sheng Yen's twelve Dharma heirs and the new abbot of Dharma Drum Retreat Center

(DDRC), spoke to an audience of about 300 at the Taiwan Center, Flushing, Queens.

Ven. Guo Jun was born in Singapore, where he completed a degree in DNA engineering, but science failed to satisfy his search for meaning. He finally found the light at the end of his tunnel in Buddhism, was ordained by Master Soong Nien in Singapore in 1996, and went on to Taiwan and Korea for Buddhist studies. He is currently pursuing a PhD. in psychology and sociology in Melbourne, Australia, even while assuming his new duties at DDRC. Fluent in both Chinese and English, Ven. Guo Jun is able to preach the Dharma eloquently to the entire congregation at DDRC.

The event at the Taiwan Center was organized by the Friends of DDRC, who worked together with the Chinese Cultural Salon of NY to sponsor a dialogue between Guo Jun Fa Shi and the renowned Chinese author Mr. Ding Jun Wang. Despite the searing heat of over 98°, the crowd was well over the normal capacity of 250, and an additional 60 folding chairs were set up to accommodate the overflow.

The topic of the dialogue was "Religion in Modern Life", and Guo Jun Fa Shi opened by saying that modern life is full of misunderstandings toward religion, that people think religion is needed only when disaster happens or when supernatural power is involved. Mr. Wang noted that religion had been dubbed "the opiate of the people" by communism, but that in reality, the world without religion wouldn't know the real meaning of sacrifice—Jesus and Buddha had both sacrificed themselves to liberate people from suffering. The dialogue concluded that the role of religion in modern life is to understand,

tolerate and love all people regardless of their races, beliefs and educations, and the audience left with great satisfaction and warmth in their hearts.

Chair in Chinese Buddhist Studies Inaugurated at Columbia

It is not uncommon nowadays to encounter Buddhist studies programs at institutions of higher learning. But an endowed chair in Chinese Buddhist studies at a major American university is a significant development.

A co-operation agreement has recently been signed by the Sheng Yen Education Foundation and Columbia University for the establishment of a Sheng Yen Chair in Chinese Buddhist Studies. It is anticipated that the joint endeavors of these two institutions can foster academic research into the past, present and future of Chinese Buddhism.

The idea for this collaboration was first broached at the First International Conference on Contemporary Society and Sheng Yen's Thought last October in Taipei when Professor Chunfan Yu from Columbia's Department of Religion raised the matter with Master Sheng Yen.

Last December, University Vice Provost Paul J. Anderer and Professor Robert Hymes, Chairman of the Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures, together with Professor Yu, visited Master Sheng Yen at the Chan Meditation Center in New York for further discussions.

At the meeting, all present lamented the long-standing failure on the part of Buddhist institutions to study Chinese Buddhism after the 12th century. Beyond this, a consensus emerged that study should also include the development of Humanistic Buddhism in Tai-



Mrs. Maya Anderer, Prof. Robert Hymes, Ven. Master Sheng Yen, Prof. Chunfang Yu, Vice Provost Paul Anderer

wan, with its profound impact on Buddhism in mainland China. Master Sheng Yen noted, moreover, that academic research on Chinese Buddhism should not be confined to mainland China and Taiwan, but should also include Japan, Korea and Vietnam, since these countries had also been strongly influenced by Chinese Buddhism.

Master Sheng Yen proposed three main directions for the program: First, recent developments of Buddhism in mainland China; second, the Chinese religious tradition and the modernization of Buddhism; third, the development of contemporary Chinese Buddhism, especially since the latter half of the 20th century with the advent of the Humanistic Buddhism cultivated in Taiwan.

Professor Anderer visited Dharma Drum Mountain in Taiwan last November, and is well acquainted with its educational programs. He said that it was an honor to take part in the establishment of the new program of Buddhist studies, noting that he was very

pleased at the collaboration between the two institutions.

Initially, Buddhist studies at Columbia focused on Japanese Buddhism. Since the establishment of a chair in Tibetan Buddhism over a decade ago, the study of Tibetan Buddhism has also become current in the United States. With the endowment of a chair in Chinese Buddhist studies, the first of its kinds anywhere, Chinese Buddhism may soon attain similar currency in the academic world and beyond.

Transmission of Bodhisattva Precepts at DDRC by Ayn Steele

One hundred and thirty-four lay practitioners from the United States, France, Canada and Great Britain received the bodhisattva precepts at Dharma Drum Retreat Center in New York on November 19, 2006. The transmission ceremony was presided over person-





ally by Ven. Master Sheng Yen and the Ven. Guo Dong, Abbot of Dharma Drum Mountain. Many local practitioners and DDM Fa Shi (Dharma teachers) including Ven. Guo Ming, Ven. Guo Jun, Ven. Guo Qian and Ven. Guo Kai also attended the ceremony.

The transmission was conducted over the course of three days in ceremonies in both English and Chinese. Although the majority of participants were Chinese from the New York metropolitan area, 29 Westerners also received the precepts. Sutra chanting was conducted in Chinese and the vows to uphold the bodhisattva precepts were read in both languages. All present demonstrated a sense of unity and commitment over and above any differences of language.

At the outset, Master Sheng Yen explained that in the Mahayana tradition, one begins to learn the Dharma upon accepting the Buddhist teachings, and a Buddhist practitioner must start by walking the bodhisattva path. “A bodhisattva is a person who aspires to buddhahood while seeking to enlighten all sentient beings on the path,” he said, encouraging all participants to emulate the bodhisattva spirit, practice the precepts and always treat others with a bodhisattva’s compassion.

This was the fourth transmission ceremony of the bodhisattva precepts held at the Pine Bush, NY retreat center. In addition to a record-breaking 134 participants, there were also twelve DDM Fa Shi in attendance, prompting Master Sheng Yen to characterize the ceremony as unprecedented.

Lebanon Interfaith Meeting

In Mid-November, three of our Dharma Teachers currently residing at DDM Taiwan, Venerables Guo Yuan, Chang Du, and Chang Wen, joined by a Tibetan monk studying at the Institute, together travelled to Beirut, Lebanon, to attend “A Re-Commitment to Spirituality for Building Mutual Understanding & Peace,” hosted by His Holiness Aram I, Catholicos of the Armenian Apostolic Church. This three-day interfaith meeting welcomed religious leaders from Middle Eastern and Far East Asian countries to gather together on a rare occasion of dialogue, focusing on how different aspects of religion relate to the actual practice of spirituality. Through this interaction, the meeting hoped to initiate a mutual acceptance, understanding, and trust among the participants, that would serve as a starting point for further interaction and cooperation towards resolving the world’s current conflicts.

The meeting took place in Antelias, a short distance outside of the city of Beirut, only a few weeks after the bombing of the city and the most severe fighting in the south of Lebanon had ceased. Despite the country’s atmosphere of tension and uncertainty, the Armenian Church along with co-coordinators Dena Merriam and Teny Simonian were determined to hold the meeting. It turned out to be a wonderful event, as participants had opportunities to share their views formally during the meeting, as well as share informally while taking sightseeing trips together and visiting various key religious leaders of the Beirut vicinity.

Due to Shifu’s inability to attend the meeting personally, he appointed Venerable Guo Yuan



His Holiness Aram I

to serve as the main representative of DDM, with Venerables Chang Du and Chang Wen to help support him. The three together worked as a team to bring the spirit of Chinese Buddhism to the Middle East, sharing tasks and coming up with ideas of how to share DDM’s vision of world peace with the new friends. As Shifu was invited to give opening remarks, a short video presentation of his speech was shown, translated by Rebecca Li, which emphasized the importance of the participants’ focusing on the shared needs of humankind and the need to develop a non-denominational global ethic that can be a guideline for all peoples’ behavior.

According to the hosts of the event, this occasion was the first time in recent history that Buddhist monks had visited Lebanon. Nonetheless, when walking in the old city of Byblos, the Buddhist contingent was greeted warmly by people on the streets, and in cafes and restaurants. In turn, the Venerables shared the gift of smiling with all those that they met, opening the door to communication

between seemingly distant strangers, and leaving a positive impression of Buddhism in the consciousness of the Lebanese. Venerable Chang Du admitted to first feeling a bit intimidated by the armed soldiers in the city streets, with their grim faces and imposing demeanours, but after sharing a smile and joining palms, the soldier's faces softened and they smiled in return. This represented something very significant to the three monks, who found that no matter whom they met, a simple smile could open the door to friendship and peaceful communication.

However, healing the wounds of hundreds of years of misunderstanding, hatred, and war

among the various groups of people in the Middle East will take more than mere smiles. It will require concrete action to facilitate peaceful relations, and real solutions to the many very complicated issues. This meeting was merely an initial step in opening the door to communication among religious leaders, who can in turn influence their followers to have an attitude of acceptance, understanding, and trust towards people of different religions and cultures. As our world seems to be getting smaller each day, it is essential that we continue to share with our neighbours in all corners of the globe, establishing peaceful relations and continuing to work on common problems together.



Venerables Chang Du, Guo Yuan and Chang Wen with officials of the Armenian Apostolic Church in Lebanon

Winter Philanthropic Relief at DDM

Last December, the DDM Social Welfare and Charity Foundation hosted the 2006 Winter Philanthropic Relief gathering at the World Center for Buddhist Education in Taiwan. Scholarships were awarded and goods such as rice, cooking oil and winter clothes were distributed to low-income households. In addition, students from local elementary and high schools, as well as from Dharma Drum Social University, performed skits on the theme of loving kindness.

Guests included Jingyi Wang, President of the DDM Social Welfare and Charity Foundation, and local municipal and school officials.

The tradition of the Winter Philanthropic Relief gathering was inaugurated by the compassion of The Most Ven. Master Dongchu half a century ago. In 1956, he organized seven-day retreats for reciting the Buddha's name and soliciting donations to buy rice, cooking oil, clothes, and other things to be distributed to low-income households and orphanages in the vicinity. This allowed the poor to celebrate the Chinese Lunar New Year with food and warmth. Since then, it has become a tradition to hold a winter relief gathering as the New Year approaches, which is now sponsored by the DDM Social Welfare and Charity Foundation. Help now extends beyond local low-income households to the elderly who live alone, victims of recent earthquakes in central Taiwan, the unemployed and people in need of emergency relief.

In the Blessing Ceremony the Ven. Chang Zong noted that Dharma Drum Mountain is a place of Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva (Guanyin) who always comes to the aid of people suffering

whenever and wherever they ask for help. At the Center there are three statues: the Primordial, the Wish-Granting and the Welcoming Guanyin. Ven. Chang Zong encouraged all present to spread Guanyin's compassion to others, sowing its seeds inside their hearts.

After the the Blessing Ceremony at the Grand Buddha Hall children performed a number of skits for the assembly. A short drama entitled "The New Snow White" focused on the notion of "Cherishing Life" recently emphasized by Master Sheng Yen in conjunction with suicide prevention efforts in Taiwan.

Dharma Drum Mountain is actively promoting the idea of "Spiritual Environment" in society as volunteers of the DDM Social Welfare and Charity Foundation engage in philanthropic works following the compassionate ways of Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva. They aim to provide material relief to the disadvantaged, and answer their spiritual needs with loving kindness.

Medical Relief in Sri Lanka

In late November, Dharma Drum Mountain's medical relief undertook a fifth expedition to Sri Lanka to provide twelve days of medical service in areas affected by the tsunami.

An estimated 3,000 residents were slated to receive medical relief: 1,200 in the Taiwan Village and vicinity, and another 1,800 living in impoverished areas of Weligama.

Led by Dr. Wenzhong Pan, the team has received on each occasion a warm welcome from the local community. In addition to providing screening tests for chronic ailments such as diabetes and hypertension, volunteers also

provide instruction in hygiene, with a view to disease prevention.

DDM sent its first volunteer team to Sri Lanka in February 2005 to provide long-term, front-line humanitarian assistance at the DDM Peace of Mind Relief Station. Experience has shown that the appearance of symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder occurs not only at the time of the disaster itself, but also in response to mounting stress accompanying long-term reconstruction efforts, exacerbated by deep feelings of helplessness and despair. To help victims respond to such stress, the team also includes psychologists and nurses for psychiatric evaluation and relief. The underlying emphasis has been on healing the mind, in harmony with a vision of “uplifting the character of humanity and building a pure land on earth.”

Melbourne Interfaith Activities

Mrs. Laura Chan of the Buddhist Council of Victoria, Australia, offers this account of recent DDM participation in interfaith activities:

Following a 2004 interfaith dialogue chaired by Shifu during a visit to Melbourne to deliver a keynote speech to the Australian Psychological Society, DDM Melbourne has been actively participating and promoting the concepts of peaceful coexistence and harmony amongst the various religious faiths in Australia.

Upon my election as Chair of the Buddhist Council of Victoria, our commitment to this worthwhile cause has become more prominent.

In April, I was invited by the Victorian Government to witness the inauguration of the 28th Governor of Victoria in Government House. In his inaugural address the Governor, Professor David de Kretser, AC, promised to approach his task with humility and integrity.

In October, I was invited by the Interfaith Centre of Melbourne to attend the second Annual Interfaith Prayer Ceremony for the work of the United Nations. Religious and spiritual leaders assembled to offer blessings and prayers for the UN community, which shares the high principles of the Preamble to the Charter of the UN with the world’s religious and spiritual communities. The newly elected President of the 61st Session of the General Assembly who spoke at the ceremony is the third woman and the first Muslim in UN history to be elected to this post. Speaking on behalf of the Buddhist communities of Victoria, I delivered a prayer and a message of peace and compassion.

Later in December, the Secretary of the BCV and I were invited by the Anglican diocese to witness the installation at St. Paul’s Cathedral of Dr Philip Freier as 10th Archbishop of Melbourne. Members of Melbourne’s Chinese,



Sudanese and Tamil communities welcomed him on behalf of multicultural Melbourne along with representatives of 38 denominations and faiths, including the Most Reverend Denis Hart, Roman Catholic Archbishop of Melbourne, and the Primate of the Anglican Church of Australia, Dr Philip Aspinall. John Tye of the Yorta Yorta People greeted the Archbishop with dance and music on behalf of the Wurunjeri and the ancient peoples of this land.

It is a privilege and an honor to bring to fruition Shifu's spiritual inspiration to create a peaceful world through dialogue and acts of compassion.

Amitofuo!

Mrs. Laura Chan
Chair, Buddhist Council of Victoria

Retreat roundup

Intensive Retreats at DDRC

This fall's 10-day huatou retreat at DDRC (Nov. 24- Dec.3, 2006) was attended by over sixty participants. Because previous experience in a seven-day retreat is now required for participating in 10-day intensive retreats, most participants of this retreat were relatively experienced practitioners. Chan Master Sheng Yen gave at least one talk each day. He gave instructions on the huatou method using the recorded sayings of Master Dahui, an enthusiastic promoter of the huatou method, translated by Guogu. Noting that most participants were experienced practitioners, Master Sheng Yen asked everyone to delve directly into the investigation of the huatou "wu." He also copied a four-line verse from the Sutra of

Complete Enlightenment in Chinese calligraphy to be kept at the retreat center for future inspiration to retreat participants, pointing out that the words are applicable for both the practice of huatou and silent illumination.

At the end of the 10-day huatou retreat, Master Sheng Yen shared with everyone the important lessons he has learned in life—giving rise to the Bodhi mind to share the benefits of the Dharma with as many people as possible, and not giving up despite difficulties and obstacles, but instead using them as opportunities to strengthen and propel one's cultivation of the Path. Master Sheng Yen pointed out that if it were not for the arising of great compassion that motivated his work and his perseverance in the process, there would not be the second generation of Dharma teachers in Dharma Drum Mountain who can now carry on the work of spreading Chan Buddhism across the globe. He urged everyone to emulate this giving rise to great compassion and perseverance and invited everyone to work together to support DDRC in whatever way they can in order to share the benefits of Chan practice with all people.

Master Sheng Yen also announced the wonderful news that he would be leading the ten-day silent illumination retreat in late May of 2007. Furthermore, a 49-day retreat will be conducted at Dharma Drum Mountain in Taiwan in the spring of 2007.

Finally, a 10-day silent illumination retreat at DDRC was led by Ven. Guo Jun from December 26, 2006 to January 4, 2007. Retreat lectures were given by Chan Master Sheng Yen through DVD. Approximately thirty five participants attended the retreat.

Sydney

Sydney DDM held its first 7-Day Chan Retreat at Grose Vale from November 29 to December 6 under the guidance of Guo Yuan Fa Shi and Chang Wen Fa Shi. It was attended by eighteen people, including three youth volunteers.

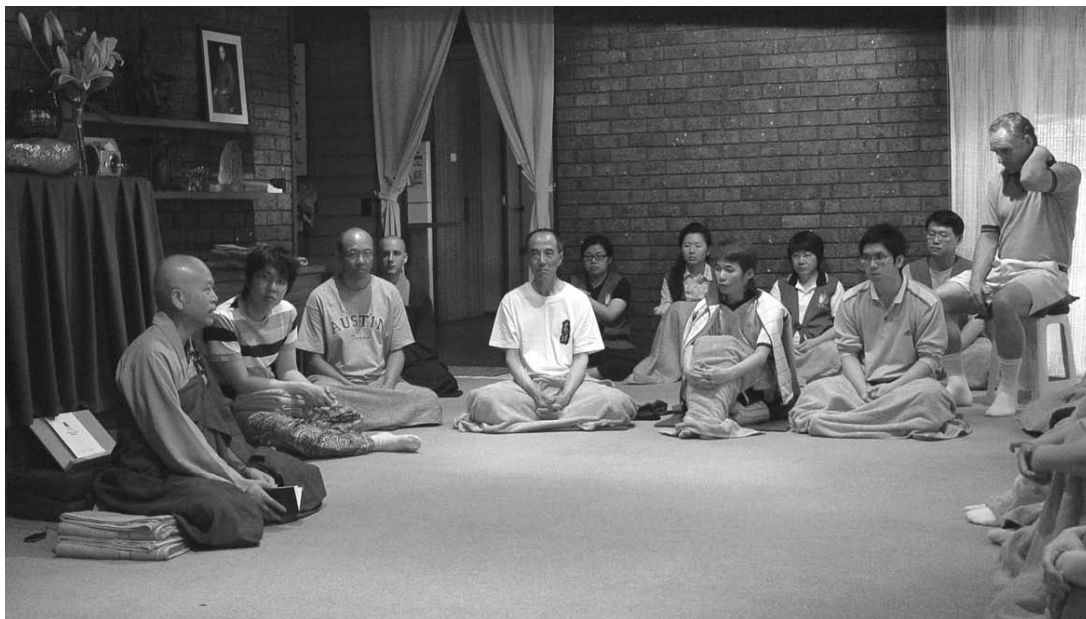
Throughout the retreat, we had to maintain noble silence. Despite harrowing pain in the legs, rushing torrents of wandering thoughts and extreme fatigue and drowsiness, all participants expressed gratitude for the teaching and felt they benefited a great deal from Dharma talks, sitting mediation, walking meditation, repentance prostrations, gratitude prostrations and interviews.

During the outdoor walking meditation, we had to practice mindfulness and not let ourselves be distracted by the external environment. With much difficulty we eventually dis-

covered the generosity of offering ourselves to the mosquitoes and co-existing with the flies for which Australia's scorching summers are infamous. They were buzzing around and landing on our faces, noses, ears, mouths, and eyes. One participant offered this interpretation: "While the flies are enjoying their breakfast and lunch on my face, I get to enjoy a free facial massage, so it's not such a bad deal!"

On the last day of the retreat, participants gathered to share their impressions. Some found the retreat to be a truly transformative experience. Others said they had come to understand themselves better, had become less arrogant and more at peace with themselves. In short, we learned to bring our mind and body together and swim against the current. With a Chan mind, anything is possible.

(by Agnes Chow in Sydney)



Malaysia

(A participant from Malaysia shares this account)

I joined up as a DDM volunteer to help out at the seven-day Chan retreat held at the Tri-ratna Monastery in the last week of October. In the beginning I was simply interested in relaxing, but afterwards felt that I had become reacquainted with the Dharma, having experienced various Chan practices such as Sitting Meditation and Moving Meditation for the first time. I also learned Buddhist terms like “Chupo,” which refers to doing chores such as mopping floors, cleaning toilets and washing windows.

The two Dharma teachers leading the retreat were an inspiration: Ven. Guo Zhou was good at story-telling and Ven. Guo Hao loved to laugh. Both were not only amiable but also very patient. In order to avoid distractions caused by tourists and rainy weather, they had us practice Outdoor Chan in the corridor of the Chan Hall.

I learned that the process of worshipping the Buddha is not superstitious behavior, but rather a way of pacifying the mind, and found inspiration in the proverb, “Cessation of vexations will give rise to a peaceful mind”.

On the last day of the retreat, we all went mountain climbing. I was in awe of one handicapped participant’s perseverance in walking the entire distance with the rest of us.

All in all the retreat was a wonderful and precious experience.

DDM’s Fifth Anniversary in Seattle

In early November the Ven. Guo Shu, Prior of DDM in Vancouver, led a series of activities inviting people to cleanse their hearts and purify their minds in celebration of the fifth anniversary of Dharma Drum Mountain in Seattle.

30 practitioners took part in a One-Day Chan Meditation, with all required to observe noble silence. They began with the practice of the Eight-Form Moving Meditation to relax their bodies and bring their mind into the present moment. Ven. Guo Shu reminded participants to be aware of every movement and relax. He explained that the practice is not only physical exercise but also a means for becoming aware of the basic technique and spirit of Chan meditation: “Wherever the body is, the mind is there.”

On this day, he observed, we had a date with ourselves to let go of everything going on in the external environment, and refrain from speaking both to others and to ourselves. This day of meditation, he added, was made possible by the dedication and support of Seattle’s DDM community.

The next morning Ven. Guo Shu led the Great Compassion Chanting and Blessing Ceremony attended by about fifty members. During the Dharma talk, he explained that the Great Compassion Mantra is only effective if one chants with a compassionate heart, and he urged members to practice diligently.

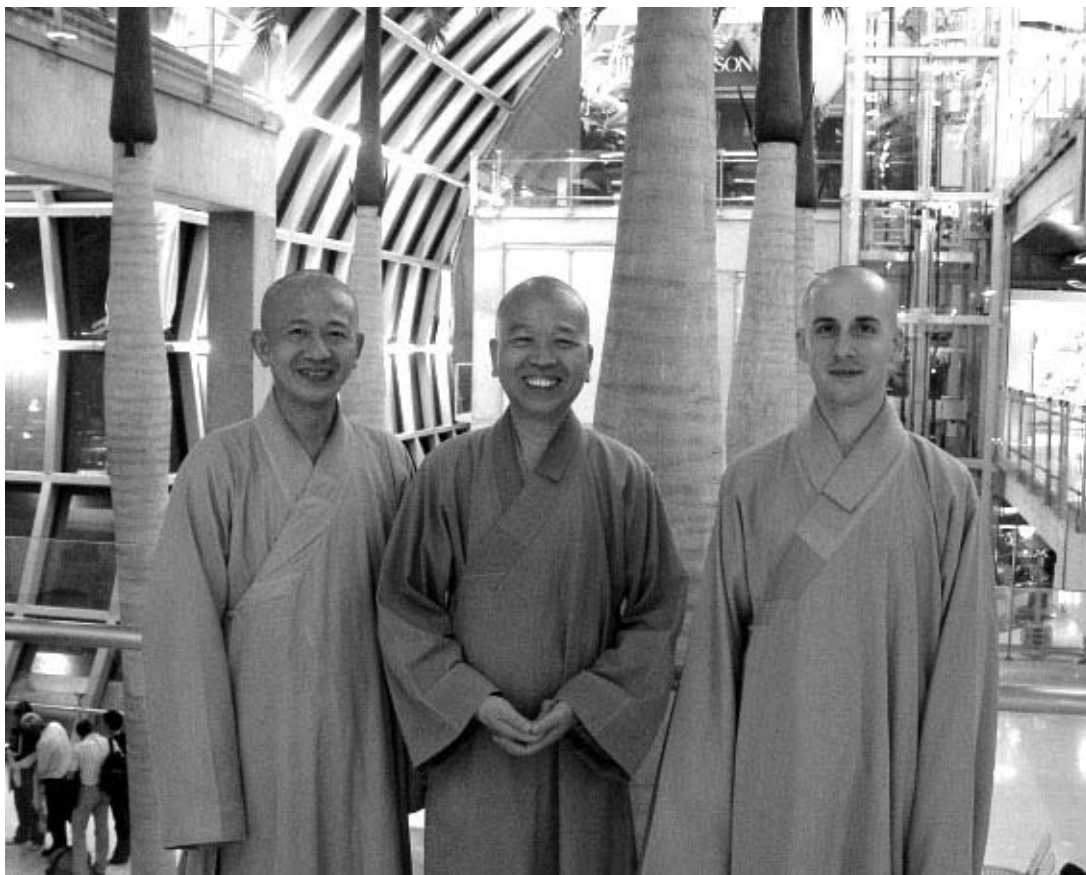
Expanding on the theme of “Protecting the Spiritual Environment,” he elucidated the

concepts of the Fivefold Spiritual Renaissance Campaign as advocated by the Most Ven. Master Sheng Yen, and encouraged participants to approach difficult situations in life with the following outlook: “Face it, Accept it, Deal with it and Let it go.”


In the afternoon a tea party was held in celebration of the anniversary, honored by the presence of the Director General of Taiwan’s Economic and Cultural Office in Seattle, Mr. Robert C. M. Chen, and Mr. Andrew Lin, Direc-

tor of the Taipei Cultural Center’s Economic and Cultural Office in Seattle.

Mr. Lin thanked the members of DDM for endeavoring to establish a Pure Land in Seattle where people can learn to ennoble their character. Mr. Chen expressed his appreciation to the Seattle DDM community for their efforts to develop inner peace, thereby fostering harmony in society. He noted that while many work for world peace, it can only be attained through inner peace.



Vens. Chang Du, Guo Yuan and Chang Wen at the Bangkok airport



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Thank you.

Metta,

The Editors, Chan Magazine

The Future

*Retreats, classes and
other upcoming events.*

Chan Retreats

Chan retreats are opportunities for serious practitioners to deepen their practice and receive guidance from resident teachers. Retreats are held at the Dharma Drum Retreat Center (DDRC) in Pine Ridge, New York, unless specified at the Chan Meditation Center (CMC) in Elmhurst, Queens.

April 21, 2007: **One-day Chan Retreat** with Ven. Guo Jun

April 21 to April 23, 2007: **Three-day Introductory Chan Retreat** with Ven. Guo Jun

April 21 to April 25, 2007: **Five-day Introductory Chan Retreat** with Ven. Guo Jun

April 21 to April 27, 2007: **Seven-day Introduction to Intensive Chan Retreat** with Ven. Guo Jun

April 28 to April 29, 2007: **Two-day Wellness Retreat** with Ven. Guo Jun

May 6, 2007: **One-Day Golf Retreat** with Ven. Guo Jun

May 25 to June 3, 2007: **Ten-day Silent Illumination Retreat** with Chan Master Sheng Yen

June 16 to June 17, 2007: **Two-Day Chan**

Meditation Golf/Hiking Fellowship with Ven. Guo Jun

June 23, 2007: **One-day Chan Retreat** with Ven. Guo Jun

June 23 to June 25, 2007: **Three-day Introductory Chan Retreat** with Ven. Guo Jun

June 23 to June 27, 2007: **Five-day Introductory Chan Retreat** with Ven. Guo Jun

June 23 to June 29, 2007: **Seven-day Introduction to Intensive Chan Retreat** with Ven. Guo Jun

July 8, 2007: **One-day Meditation and Tea Retreat** with Ven. Guo Jun

July 15, 2007: **One-day Meditation and Photography Retreat** with Ven. Guo Jun

July 25 to August 3, 2007: **Ten-Day Intensive Chan Retreat: Hua-tou Practice (Part 1)** with Ven. Chi Chern and Ven. Guo Jun

August 4 to August 13, 2007: **Ten-Day Intensive Chan Retreat: Hua-tou Practice (Part 2)** with Ven. Chi Chern and Ven. Guo Jun

Chan Practice

Monday Night Chanting (CMC)

Every Monday, 7:30 – 9 pm

Devotional chanting of Amitabha Buddha; 88 Buddhas Repentance on last Monday of each month.

Tuesday Night Sitting Group (CMC)

Every Tuesday, 7 – 9:30 pm

Periods of sitting meditation alternating with yoga, walking meditation, readings, discussion, and chanting the Heart Sutra.

Saturday Sitting Group (CMC)

Every Saturday, 9 am – 3 pm

Half-hour periods of sitting meditation alternating with yoga or walking meditation.

Sunday Open House (CMC)

Every Sunday (except May 15 for Buddha's Birthday Celebration)

10:00 am – 11:00 am Group Meditation

11:00 am – 12:30 pm Dharma Talk

12:30 - 1:00 pm: lunch offerings

1:00 - 2:00 pm: lunch

2:00 - 3:00 pm: chanting; Q & A for English-speaking practitioners

2:00 – 4:30 pm: July 10, August 21, September 11: Great Dharani chanting

Activities at DDRC

April 3 to April 30, 2007: **April Residential Cycle** with Ven. Guo Jun

May 6, 2007: **Free Introduction to Meditation Workshop** with Ven. Guo Jun

May 8 to June 4, 2007: **May Residential Cycle** with Ven. Guo Jun

May 17 to May 20, 2007: **Chan Camp organized by DDMBA**

June 3 to June 30, 2007: **June Residential Cycle** with Ven. Guo Jun

June to August, 2007: **3-month Summer Residential Cycle** with Ven. Guo Jun

June 29 to July 1, 2007: **Family Zen Camp organized by DDMBA**

July 8, 2007: **Free Introduction to Meditation Workshop** with Ven. Guo Jun

For regular weekly and monthly activities:

<http://www.dharmadrumretreat.org>

Email: ddrc@dharmadrumretreat.org

Phone: (845) 744-8114

Classes at CMC

New Meditation Class Series:

Beginners' Meditation

Two Saturdays, 9:30 am – 12 noon, \$40

Intermediate Meditation

Two Saturdays, 9:30 am – 12 noon, \$40

Please call for summer dates.

Pre-registration required.

Beginners' Dharma Class

Please call for summer dates.

Taijiquan Classes

Thursdays, 7:30 – 9:00 pm,

with instructor David Ngo, \$80 for a session of 16 classes, or \$25/month. First Thursday of every month free for newcomers.

Yoga

4 – 5:30 pm, with instructor Rikki Asher.

\$10/class; please call for dates.

Special Events

"Zen and Inner Peace"

Chan Master Sheng Yen on WNYE (25) every Saturday at midnight.

Chan Center Affiliates

Local organizations affiliated with the Chan Meditation Center and the Dharma Drum Mountain Buddhist Association provide a way to practice with and to learn from other Chan practitioners. Affiliates also provide information about Chan Center schedules and activities, and Dharma Drum publications. If you have questions about Chan, about practice, or about intensive Chan retreats, you may find useful information at an affiliate near you.

NORTH AMERICA

USA:

USA Headquarters

Dharma Drum Mountain Buddhist Association (DDMBA); Dharma Drum Publications; Chan Meditation Center:

90-56 Corona Avenue
Elmhurst, NY 11373
Tel: 718-592-6593
Fax: 718-592-0717
Email: ddmbaus@yahoo.com
<http://www.chancenter.org>

Dharma Drum Retreat Center

184 Quannacut Road
Pine Bush, NY 12566
Tel: 845-744-8114
Fax: 845-744-8483
Email: ddrncy@yahoo.com
<http://www.chancenter.org>

California

Davis:

Contact: Grace Wei
6600 Orchard Park Circle #6221
Davis, CA 95616
Tel/Fax: 530-297-1972
Email: ddmbasacra@yahoo.com

Los Angeles:

Contact: Stanley Kung, Sam Chin, Paul Lin.
1168 San Gabriel Blvd., #R
Rosemead, CA 91770
Tel/Fax: 818-248-1614
Email: smkung@sbcglobal.net or paull-inddm@aol.com
<http://members.aol.com/ddmchan>

Riverside:

Contact: Gilbert Gutierrez
Tel: 951-897-2286

San Francisco

Contact: H. C. Chang
102 South Camino Real
Millbrae, CA 94030
Tel: 650-692-3259
Fax: 650-692-2256
Email: ddmbsaf@yahoo.com

Florida

DDMBA Orlando Meditation Group:

Contact: Jin Bowden
6082 Red Stage Drive
Port Orange, FL 32128
Tel: 386-322-0524
Fax: 386-322-3639
Email: jin_bowden@yahoo.com

Georgia

Duluth:

Contact: Sophia Chen
4977 Dillard's Mill Way
Duluth, GA 30096
Tel: 770-416-0941
Fax: 770-417-5897
Email: sophialee046@hotmail.com

Illinois

Belvedere

Contact: John Chen
1632 South State Street
Belvedere, IL 61008
Tel: 815-978-7159
Fax: 815-547-5550
Email: chen0981@yahoo.com

Chicago

Contact: Isabel Huang
2299 Pflingsten Road
North Brook, IL 60062
Tel: 847-480-1583
Fax: 847-480-9064
Email: isabelhuang@comcast.net
<http://www.ddmbachicago.org>

Michigan

Contact: Li Hua Kong
1431 Stanlake Drive
E. Lansing, MI 48823
Tel/Fax: 517-332-0003
Email: kongl@sbcglobal.net

New Jersey

Contact: Paul Lee
1 Ireland Brook Drive
N. Brunswick, NJ 08902
Tel/Fax: 732-398-1569
Email: runnshenglee@yahoo.com

Piscataway:

Contact: Maggie Laffey
Tel: 732-253-7248
Email: wreturns@optonline.net

New York

Manhattan:

The Meditation Group
Marymount Manhattan College
221 E. 71st (2nd and 3rd Avenues)
Contact: Bruce Rickenbacker
Tel: 212-410-3897
Because of building security, please call
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Long Island:

Contact: Hai Dee Lee
P.O. Box 423
Upton, NY 11973
Tel: 631-689-8548 or 631-344-2062
Fax: 631-344-4057
Email: hdlee@bnl.gov

Rochester:

Contact: Min Wang
170 Maywood Drive
Rochester, NY 14618
Tel/Fax: 585-242-9096
Email: min_wang@xelus.com

North Carolina

Contact: Hannah Yuan
323 Whitney Lane
Durham, NC 27713
Tel: 919-450-2668
Fax: 919-991-1728
Email: hannahyuan0410@yahoo.com

Ohio

Northeast Ohio:

Contact: Jeff Larko
755 Savannah Trail
Medina, OH 44256
Tel: 330-241-5321
Email: DDMBA_Ohio@yahoo.com

Oregon

Contact: Sabrina Huang
12715 SW 158th Terrace
Beaverton, OR 97007
Tel/Fax: 503-579-8582
Email: sabhuang@yahoo.com

Pennsylvania

State College

Contact: Kun-Chang Yu
425 Waupelani Drive #515
State College, PA 16801
Tel: 814-867-9253
Fax: 814-867-5148
Email: ddmdba_pa01@yahoo.com

Texas

Arlington:

Contact: Patty Yi
2150 East Pioneer Pkwy
Arlington, TX 76010
Tel: 817-274-2288
Fax: 817-274-7067
Email: ddmdba_patty@yahoo.com

Vermont

Contact: Jui-chu Lee
16 Bower St.
S. Burlington, VT 05403
Tel/Fax: 802-658-3413
Email: juichulee@yahoo.com

Washington

Contact: Dephne Chen
411 13th Ave. W.
Kirkland, WA 98033
Tel: 425-889-9898
Fax: 425-828-2646
Email: dephne66@hotmail.com

Canada:

Richmond

Contact: Mei Hwei Lin
10800 No. 5 Road
Richmond, BC, Canada V7A 4E5
Tel: 604-277-1357
Fax: 604-277-1352
Email: ddmvan@infinet.net
www.ddmvan.ca

Toronto

Dharma Drum Mountain (Ontario)
1041 Avenue Road #1
Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5N 2C5
Email: ddmdba.toronto@gmail.com
Website: www.ddmdba-toronto.org
Contact:
www.ddmdba-toronto.org/contacts.html

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Luxemburg

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Zwiazek Buddystow Czan (Chan Buddhist Union):

Contact: Pawel Rosciszewski, Beata Kazimierska

Tel/Fax: (22) 7275663, GSM 0-601-205602

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Switzerland:

Zurich

Teacher: Max Kalin (Guo-yun)

Tel/fax: 411 382 1676

Mobile: 4179 416 8088

Email: MaxKailin@chan.ch

<http://www.chan.ch>

United Kingdom:

London

18 Huson Close

London NW3 3JW, England

Tel: 44-171-586-6923

Western Ch'an Fellowship:

24 Woodgate Ave. Bury
Lancashire, BL9 7RU, U.K.

Contact: Simon Child, secretary

Email:

secretary@westernchanfellowship.org,

www.westernchanfellowship.org

ASIA

Hong Kong:

Room 205, 2/F BLK B,
Alexandra Industrial Building, 23-27
Wing Hong St., Cheung Sha Wan, Kowloon, Hong Kong
Tel: 852-2865-3110
Fax: 852-2591-4810

Malaysia:

Dharma Drum Mountain Buddhism Information Centre in Malaysia:

30 Jalan 16/6, 46350 Petaling Jaya,
Selangor DE, Malaysia

Tel: 603-79600841, 603-7319245

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Singapore:

Dharma Drum Mountain (Singapore Liaison Office):

No. 10 Second Avenue,

Singapore 266660

Contact: Ms. Yeh Yin Shia

Tel & Fax

(65) 6469 6565

Cell 9745 6565.

Email: ysyehsg@yahoo.com.tw

Taiwan:

Nung Ch'an Monastery:

No. 89, Lane 65, Tayeh Road
Peitou, Taipei

Tel: 02-2893-3161

Fax: 02-2895-8969

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No.14-5, Lin 7, Sanchieh Village, Chinsan, Taipei

Tel: 02-2498-7171, 02-2498-7174

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Dharma Drum International Meditation Group:

Contact: Guo Yuan Fa Shi

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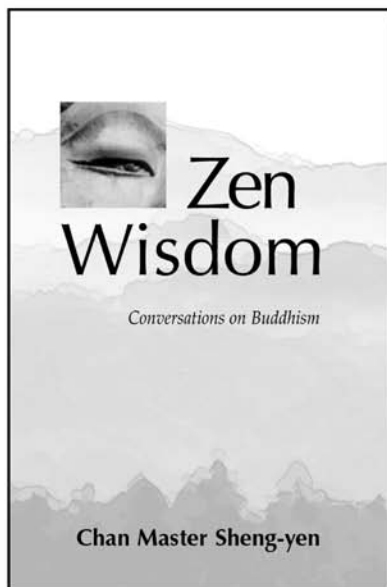
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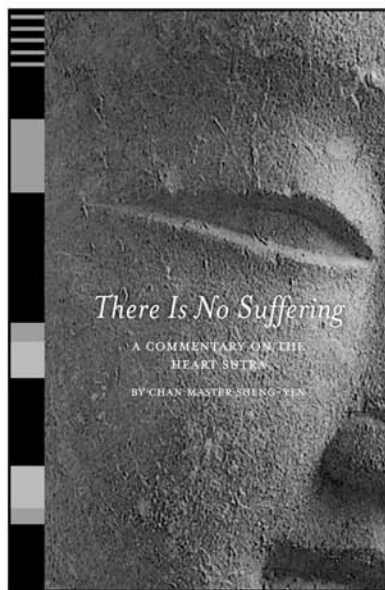


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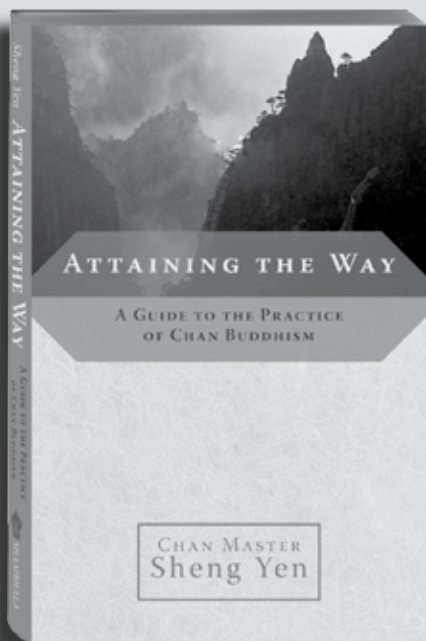
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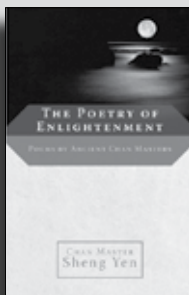


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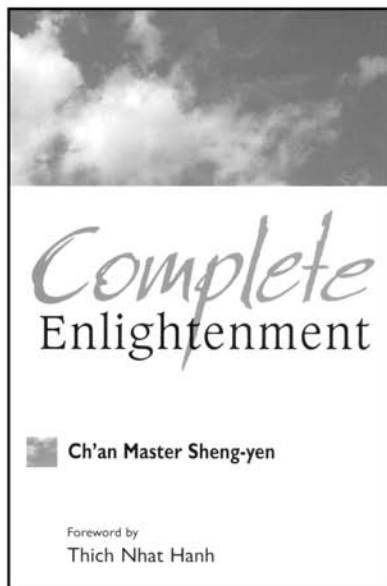
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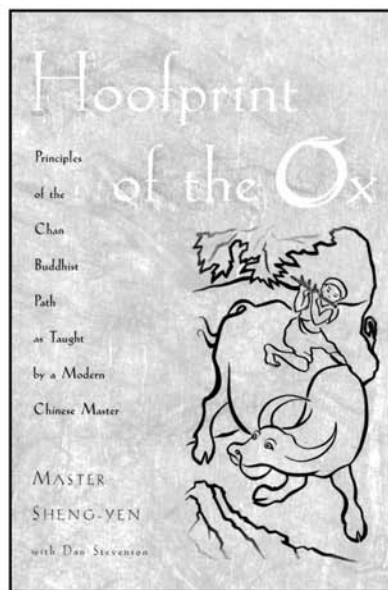
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