



Compassionate Ocean Zen Center

A Center for Mindful Living

652 17th Avenue NE, Minneapolis, MN 55413 • Issue No. 61 • Summer 2023

The Threefold Training

Michael O'Neal

*The monk Zuigan used to start every day by saying to himself out loud: "Master, are you there?"
And he would answer himself, "Yes sir, I am!"
Then he would say, "Better sober up!"
Again he would answer, "Yes sir! I'll do that!"
Then he would say, "Look out now; don't let them fool you!"
And he would answer, "Oh no, sir, I won't! I won't!"*

One time toward the beginning of my formal Zen practice I asked my teacher, Dainin Katagiri Roshi, what was the basic Buddhist practice. He replied, "Shila, samadhi, prajna—the Threefold Training."

The Threefold Training is the underlying structure of the Noble Eightfold Path, which the Buddha taught in his very first sermon, when he was 35. When he was 80, at the end of his long teaching career, he is recorded as giving talks on the Threefold Training as he moved from town to town. So throughout his life the Buddha taught this model of training.

This model is called "threefold" because the elements of it are interdependent and inseparable. It is one integrated training, which can be seen provisionally in three aspects.

The first is *shila*. This term is translated in various ways—virtue, ethical conduct, or moral discipline. It focuses on the behavioral aspect of our life—how we act in the world. In a sense it is the most obvious, the most gross aspect of practice. The training is to avoid actions that are harmful to others or ourselves, and to perform actions that are helpful. All of our actions are consequential, and shila practice is to accept responsibility for our actions, learning to act in ways that are upright, wholesome, and engaged.

Shila also means precept or guideline, and shila practice includes bringing mindful attention to standards of behavior—both very broad, such as refraining from killing, and also quite detailed, such as how to use our bowls during *oryoki*-style eating meditation. Precepts are a kind of mirror to use to look at our life, reflecting on our actions in the light of helpful suggestions. They give us a stable point to use for orientation.

A Zen teacher wrote, "One way of practicing the precepts is to follow them. Another way is to produce a precept-keeping state of mind. Instead of saying, 'How do we keep the precepts?', we can ask, 'What state of mind keeps the precepts?'" This moves us into the second aspect of the Threefold Training: *samadhi*. This is often translated as concentration. More broadly it refers to the quality of our mind moving in the direction of being settled, focused, grounded, present. It is the state of being firmly established, either on an object of meditation, or more comprehensively, on fundamental reality itself. When we do formal meditation practice, we are directly working in the realm of samadhi. This aspect of practice recognizes the weakness of a scattered, restless mind. It takes responsibility for cultivating a quality of mind that is appropriate for the challenges of daily life and the essential profundity of each moment.

Finally, *prajna* refers to insight into deep truth. It is usually translated as wisdom; sometimes as wisdom beyond wisdom, meaning beyond the ordinary sense of wisdom. Prajna involves awakening to the interconnected nature of all things, to our non-separateness—not as a concept, but as direct experience.

The Threefold Training ultimately involves our whole being—body and mind. It is based on an understanding of the huge potential for development in a human being, and joyfully accepts practice as the basic lifestyle for us. Our challenge is to bring this alive in our lives, moment after moment.

Zuigan begins each day by renewing his intention. "Are you there?" is a kind of call to show up for his life here and now—*samadhi*. "Better sober up" is a reminder to take responsibility for his actions of body, speech, and mind—*shila*. And "don't let them fool you" is an admonition to be free from delusion—*prajna*. Zuigan has looked deeply at what is important for him to take care of each day, and he vigorously reaffirms his commitment to practice: "Yes sir! I'll do that!"

2023 Spring Appeal

Dear Friend,

We offer a heart-felt thank you to the participants, volunteers, sustaining members, and other benefactors who ensure the health and stability of Compassionate Ocean throughout the year. Your **generous, ongoing support** enables us to provide a home for our Zen practice community in Northeast Minneapolis—and beyond.

Our Center provides something special and unique: an open doorway to the depth and beauty of human life, dedicated to the benefit of all.

Our Spring Appeal is now under way. This is a key part of our annual budget, making possible continuing support for our Guiding Teachers, programming, building, and administrative expenses—in short, everything that is necessary for Compassionate Ocean to function.

This spring we are in the process of hiring a new Administrative Director. This essential part-time position strengthens our Center by providing skilled and dedicated energy in support of members of our community, our Guiding Teachers, and the general public as we carry forward our mission. The Spring Appeal is an important element in making this position possible.

Please consider making a contribution at this time. Donations of every amount are welcomed and greatly appreciated.

With deep appreciation,



Ramona Advani
Co-Chairs
Board of Directors



Mark Ostrander

*Compassionate Ocean Dharma Center is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.
Donations are tax deductible as allowed by law.*





Summer Programs 2023

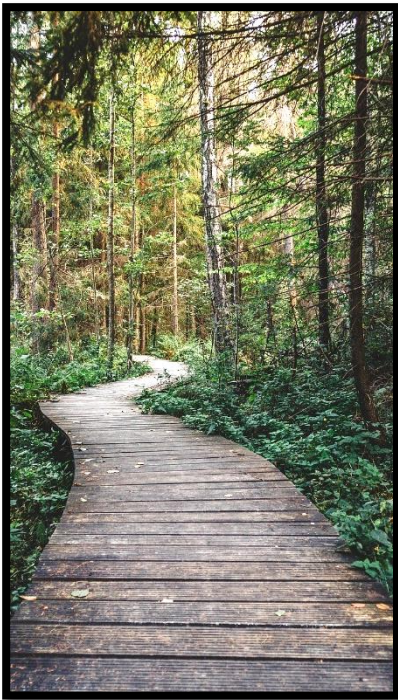
Compassionate Ocean Zen Center

652 17th Avenue NE, Minneapolis, MN 55413

(612) 781-7640 • www.OceanZen.org

The Way of Transforming Suffering

Taught by Genpo Michael O'Neal and Joen O'Neal



This course is part of a series exploring presentations by Thich Nhat Hanh, and others, of core Buddhist teachings.

The Noble Eightfold Path, the practice of transforming suffering, was presented by the Buddha at the beginning and throughout his teaching career, and is considered to have “set in motion the wheel of the Dharma.”

This course will give special attention to right effort, right mindfulness, and right concentration: three elements of the Noble Eightfold Path.

Each class will include zazen (sitting practice), presentations by the instructors, and discussion.

Course Texts

- *The Noble Eightfold Path* by Bhikkhu Bodhi
- *The Eightfold Path* edited by Jikyo Cheryl Wolfer.

We will also be studying Thich Nhat Hanh's book, *The Heart of the Buddha's Teaching*, which is available from the Center.

Wednesdays, June 7–July 26 (eight sessions) (#B106)

7:00–9:00 p.m.

*This course will be held in-person at the Center,
with an option for remote participation via Zoom as requested.*

\$190 • members \$170 (fee includes course texts*)

**Deduct \$25 if you obtain your own copies of the course texts.*

Member rates apply to members of all local Buddhist centers.

Reduced fees are offered as needed; please contact the Center at (612) 781-7640.

www.oceanzen.org/buddhist-studies

The fall Buddhist Studies course will take place Wednesday evenings, Sept. 20—Nov. 8.

Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR)

A Thorough Introduction to Mindfulness Practice

This program is a comprehensive, well-structured introduction to mindfulness practice in everyday life. It follows the nationally-acclaimed MBSR model developed by Jon Kabat-Zinn, presenting mindfulness as a universal practice for people of any (or no) religious background.

Skills are introduced in class, practiced at home, and integrated to form new habits. The program enables participants to develop their own base in mindfulness integrated into everyday life, using the practices of:

- sitting meditation
- gentle yoga
- body awareness meditation
- daily-life applications of mindfulness
- stress and relaxation practice

What's included:

- an individual interview with the instructor
- eight two-and-a-half hour classes
- a six-hour Saturday retreat
- a copy of the book *Full Catastrophe Living* by Jon Kabat-Zinn
- four mp3 guided meditations
- weekly handouts

27 CEUs are available for nurses, social workers, educators, and psychologists. Contact the Center for details.



The course fee is \$350, which includes the above materials. Payment plans and limited need-based support are available. Please contact the Center to discuss.

Enrollment is limited, and pre-registration is required.

www.oceanzen.org/mindfulness

**Tuesdays,
June 6–August 1
6:30–9:00 P.M.**

(8 sessions—no class July 4)
(#613)



**Instructor:
Michael O'Neal**

This course will be offered in-person.

**Day of Mindfulness Retreat
Saturday, July 29, 9:00 A.M.–3:00 P.M.**

This retreat is part of the MBSR program and is included for all current participants in the MBSR course. It is also open to graduates of past Compassionate Ocean MBSR courses on a donation basis. People not enrolled in the current course should visit www.oceanzen.org/retreats to register.

What past participants have said about this course

"This course helped me find tools and balance in a time in my life when I'm doing a lot of hard emotional work."

"The eight-week mindfulness class helped lower my stress and alleviate some pain issues. My mother was so impressed by the changes in me that she signed up too!"

"This course made me feel more comfortable maintaining a meditation practice, especially within a community setting. I in general feel calmer and am able to show up more fully throughout my life."

"Very, very meaningful and wonderful instructors and classmates. Life-changing experience."

~ Gift certificates are available. ~

**Fall MBSR Course Dates
Sept. 19–Nov. 7, 2023**

Meditation & Dharma Talks

Sunday Meditation & Dharma Talk

Most Sunday mornings throughout the year, Compassionate Ocean offers meditation practice (sitting and walking) followed by a Dharma talk and discussion. The talks focus on aspects of Buddhist teaching and their application to everyday life. Our practice is in the tradition of Soto Zen, with inspiration from the mindfulness practices of Thich Nhat Hahn. Everyone is invited to participate. There are no prerequisites or fees; donations are welcome. The Sunday gathering is co-led by Michael Genpo O’Neal and Joen O’Neal.

Sundays, 9:00-11:15 A.M.

In-person and via Zoom

Schedule: 9:00 sitting, 9:25 walking, 9:35 sitting, 10:00 dharma talk and discussion, 11:15 ending.
Note: Sunday gatherings will not take place in August.

Welcome Sessions for New People

Guided meditation instruction and a Dharma talk oriented to those newer to Compassionate Ocean or Zen will be presented. Welcome sessions provide extra orientation and are a great time to bring a friend to attend the Sunday morning program for the first time.

Sunday, June 11, 9:00–11:15 A.M.

Sunday, July 2, 9:00—11:15 A.M.

In-person and via Zoom

Weekday Morning Meditation

Five mornings a week, Compassionate Ocean hosts a forty-minute zazen (sitting meditation) period followed by a short chanting service. Everyone is invited to participate.

Monday–Fridays, 7:00–8:00 A.M. (*In-person and via Zoom*)

Schedule: 7:00 sitting, 7:40 chanting service, 8:00 closing.

New: Thursday Evening Meditation (*during June & July*)

Schedule: Thursdays, 7:30 sitting, 8:10 walking, 8:20 sitting, 9:00 ending.

Sesshins (*Retreats*)

A *sesshin* (literally, “to gather the mind”) is a time when formal Zen practice is the primary focus of what we do. Sometimes these are informally called “retreats,” but in actuality they involve going forward into the heart of our lives. Participation in sesshin is open to community members and others who have some experience with Buddhist practice and meditation.

Weekend Sesshin

Friday, June 23, 7:00 P.M.–Sunday, June 25, Noon

Led by Michael O’Neal and Joen O’Neal

Weekend sesshins include sitting and walking meditation, a Dharma talk, a work period, and an opportunity to meet with a teacher. Each weekend sesshin also includes three vegetarian meals on Saturday.

Location: Compassionate Ocean

Fee: by donation.

July Sesshin at Ryumonji

Friday, July 21, 5:30 P.M.–Sunday, July 23, 1:00 P.M.

Led by Rev. Shoken Winecuff

Location: Northeastern Iowa

Fee: \$175 (members \$150)



August Seven-day Practice Period at Hokyoji

Monday, Aug. 28, 5:00 P.M.–Monday, Sept. 4, 2:00 P.M.

Weekend-only participation and other options are possible.

Led by Michael O’Neal, Joen O’Neal, and resident priest Dokai Georges

Location: Southeastern Minnesota, near New Albin, Iowa

Fee: \$80/night (members \$70/night)

To learn more and register
for a sesshin, go to
www.oceanzen.org/retreats

Sangha News



Annual Meeting

Compassionate Ocean had its Annual Meeting on Sunday, May 7, 2023. Board Co-Chairs Ramona Advani and Mark Ostrander presided over the meeting.

The gathering began with a short sitting, followed by election of new board members, a financial report, committee reports, statements by the Guiding Teachers, and community discussion. In-person attendees enjoyed brunch and convivial conversation following the meeting.

If you would like a copy of reports from the meeting, please email admin@oceanzen.org.

Board of Directors

A Message from our Newest Board Member, Libby Donahue

A friend introduced me to Compassionate Ocean in 2021. I find the peaceful community a way to connect, to evolve in life, and to keep learning about deeper, more beneficial ways of being. I enjoy the Sunday gatherings, morning meditations, and the courses in Buddhist Studies and Mindfulness. Other interests in my life include spending time at my local library, taking long walks outside, and finding behind-the-scenes, sleeves-rolled-up ways to ease life for people. — Libby



Ramona Advani was elected to a new term. The other board members pictured below are continuing in their three-year terms. Michael and Joen O’Neal also serve on the board in their capacity as Guiding Teachers.



Ramona Advani



Alex Murkve



Mark Ostrander



Joshua Rice



Alan Rodgers



Richard Sutton



Thank you, Rebecca Kraker

Rebecca Kraker’s three-year term on the board has ended. Rebecca served on the Promotions Committee and took responsibility for keeping our social media accounts interesting and ever-changing. The board will miss Rebecca’s open-hearted energy and many contributions to Compassionate Ocean as a Board member.

In Remembrance



Patricia Guerrero (1939-2023)

Patty’s children prepared a remembrance of her that began, “After 85 years of a courageously led life, the world lost a beautiful and well-loved person.” Patty was an active and enthusiastic member of Compassionate Ocean, including in our climate change group, which reflected her deep commitment to working for peace and social justice. She recruited two of her sons to take our mindfulness course and was working on a third when she died. Patty had a delightful sense of humor along with a readiness to express appreciation. One time, after she had asked Michael a question in class and he had ended his reply with “That’s my two cents’ worth,” Patty mailed him a thank-you note, with two pennies taped inside. We miss Patty and her joy and caring.

2023 Summer and Fall Activities Calendar

	Buddhist Studies Courses	Sesshin	Introduction to Zen Practice Mini-Course	Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) Courses
Summer	June 7-July 26	June 23-25	July 10 & 17	June 6- August 1 (no class July 4) Retreat on July 29
		July 21-23 (Ryumonji)		
		August 28-Sept. 4 (Hokyoji)		
Fall	Sept. 20-Nov. 8	Dec. 1-8 (Rohatsu)	Sept. 11 & 18	Sept 19-Nov. 7 (Retreat on Nov. 4)

Ongoing Activities *(These activities are offered both in person and on Zoom.)*

- Sunday morning Meditation and Dharma Talk (every Sunday except during the month of August)
- Weekday morning Meditation (Monday through Friday mornings)
- Thursday evening Meditation (during June and July)

Special Events

- NE Farmers' Market Table—Saturday, May 27
- Guest talk by Myo-O Habermas-Sher—Sunday, June 4
- Guest talk by Ejo McMullen—Sunday, June 18
- Open House—Saturday, Sept. 9

Community Members in Service

We offer deep gratitude to the many volunteers who help our Center to function. In addition to serving on the Board, volunteers fulfill essential functions, including:

- Serving as Sunday morning doans (hall managers) who greet people, assist the speaker, time-keep, and lead chants.
- Greeting visitors at our periodic open houses
- Helping paint, repair, and maintain our building.
- Assisting at classes by taking attendance and sending class recordings to those who have missed class.

We offer a special thank you to Jeff Kraker, who has served as our groundskeeper through this past, very snowy Minnesota winter.



Guiding Teachers



Joel O'Neal and Michael Genpo O'Neal are the Guiding Teachers of Compassionate Ocean Zen Center. They practiced and taught for many years at the Minnesota Zen Meditation Center and Hokyoji Zen Monastery under the guidance of Dainin Katagiri Roshi. They have also practiced with Thich Nhat Hanh in France and the United States, and have completed a training for professionals with Jon Kabat-Zinn. Both Joel and Michael are Zen priests.

The Guiding Teachers are available for individual meetings regarding life and practice. To set up an appointment, please contact the Center.



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Open House During Art-A-Whirl

Art-a-Whirl Weekend in NE Minneapolis is one of the largest open art events in the country. Add a visit to Compassionate Ocean to your Art-a-Whirl weekend!

- *Friday, May 19 (5:00–10:00 P.M.)*
- *Saturday, May 20 (Noon–8:00 P.M.)*
- *Sunday, May 21 (Noon–5:00 P.M.)*

Introduction to Zen Practice Mini-Course

This two-class introduction will consist of a combination of discussion about Zen and its relevance to daily life, some information about Compassionate Ocean Zen Center, and instruction in sitting meditation. No fee.

- *Mondays, July 10 & 17 (7:00–9:00 P.M.)*

www.oceanzen.org/intro-to-zen

Mindfulness

Refer a friend to our Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) program.

Many long-time community members discovered Compassionate Ocean through our MBSR program. Referrals are a major way people hear about this exceptional course.

**The Summer 2023 Course will be held in person at our Center,
beginning June 6!**

If you know someone who might benefit from this course, please encourage them to visit:

www.oceanzen.org/mindfulness

(See page 4 for more information.)

Thank you!