



Compassionate Ocean Zen Center

A Center for Mindful Living

652 17th Avenue NE, Minneapolis, MN 55413 • Issue No. 65 • Summer 2024

What is Zen? What is Zen Practice? Genpo Michael O'Neal

*Zen is making our best effort
in each moment,
forever.*

—Shunryu Suzuki Roshi

In simple terms, Zen is the way things are, and Zen practice is to show up and take responsibility for the way things are.

Our life, and life itself—being-ness—is continually blooming. It is a never-ending miracle, “hiding” in plain sight.

Usually we miss this. We are more or less out to lunch as the miracle unfolds, and consequently, more or less asleep at the wheel.

Zen practice is to do something else—to wholeheartedly show up, and stand up, and do our best to take care of each moment, forever. This is our fundamental way as a human being.

***Zen practice has two parts—
sitting down and getting up.***

*When we sit down, we calm, clear,
and illuminate the mind.*

*When we get up, we live our life in this
world as an extension and expression
of the beauty of our sitting.*

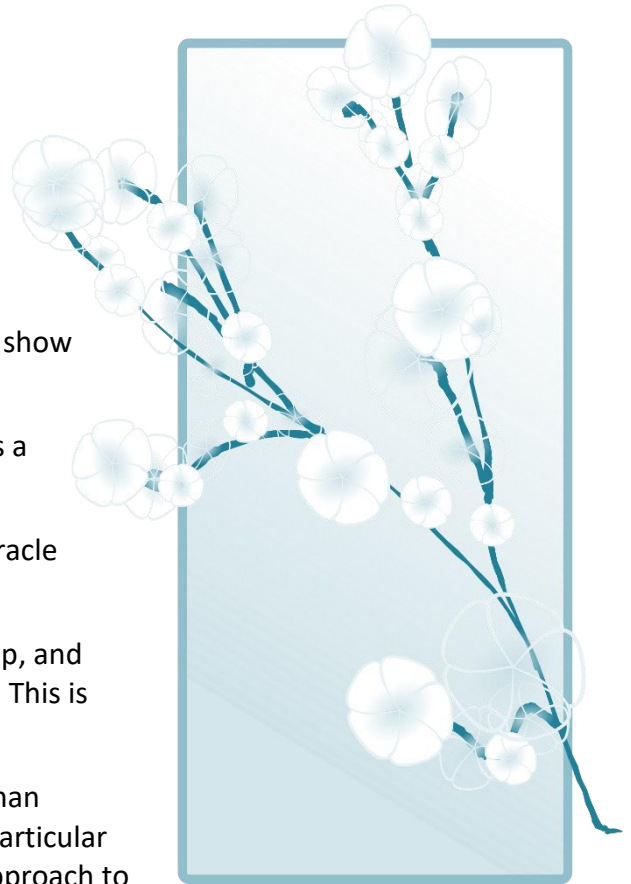
*Sitting down and getting up together
comprise a full and mature human
being, one who is receptive and open
but also responsible and committed.*

—Norman Fischer

In the history of human culture, “Zen” as a particular way—a particular approach to this existential challenge and opportunity—developed practices to support this project. These are a wonderful inheritance for us, but they become alive only to the extent that we bring our whole selves forward.

Someone once described this practice of truly waking up, truly coming alive, as our “inmost heart’s request.” Our way is to honor this by wholeheartedly responding to this request.

On a deep level, even if we’re not in touch with this, even if we’re confused about it, nonetheless, this is the deepest aspect of who and what we are. This is what Zen cares about: to truly come home.



2024 Spring Appeal

Dear Friend,

Spring finally has arrived! The trees are blossoming, cool mornings are giving way to warm afternoons, and the world feels fresh and vibrant after a mild but wearing winter. In the spirit of the season, we reflect on the growth and renewal that occurs within our own hearts and minds through the practice of Zen, and we reach out to you, our cherished community, seeking your support of Compassionate Ocean Zen Center.

Your continued support is the lifeblood of our small Zen Center. It allows us to maintain our tranquil meditation space, offer teachings and guidance from experienced practitioners, and create a welcoming environment for practitioners of all ages, ethnicities, genders, orientations, economic backgrounds, and abilities.

Every contribution, no matter the size, plays a vital role in sustaining our Center. The funds raised through this appeal will directly contribute to the support for our guiding teachers, administrative help, program expenses, and building costs.

How You Can Make a Difference:

- **Donate:** Your one-time or recurring donation helps us continue our vital work.
- **Spread the Word:** Share your love for Compassionate Ocean with friends, family and colleagues who may benefit from our offerings.
- **Monthly Pledge:** Consider becoming a sustaining member by pledging a monthly donation. Your ongoing support provides stability and ensures long-term success for our Center.
- **Volunteer:** Offer your time and skills to support our community events, maintenance tasks, or outreach efforts.

With your generous support, we will continue to work hard to make Compassionate Ocean a broad-minded and openhearted community, practicing in the Buddhist tradition, focused on the central activity of awakening and transforming suffering.

Thank you for being a part of the Compassionate Ocean community.

Deep bows of gratitude,



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 2024

Compassionate Ocean Zen Center

652 17th Avenue NE, Minneapolis, MN 55413

(612) 781-7640 • www.OceanZen.org

How the Mind Works

Taught by Genpo Michael O'Neal, with Joen O'Neal

To me, mindfulness is our first real chance for freedom, for free will. In a state of dispersion, our mind is not together with our body. Our body may be here, but our mind is in the past, in the future, caught up in our anger, in our anxiety, in our projects. Mind and body are not together. So with mindful breathing we bring mind back to body. In English, we call it pulling oneself together. Pulling oneself together means that you become your better self. You recover some sovereignty of yourself.

—Thich Nhat Hanh, *Buddha Mind, Buddha Body*



This course will explore the nature of consciousness and of mind states, using Thich Nhat Hanh's presentation of classic Buddhist psychology as our guide. Topics will include perception and reality, habit energy, free will, and the cultivation of happiness. It will also include a study of the 51 mental formations, as developed in Yogacara Buddhism.

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

Course Text: *Buddha Mind, Buddha Body* by Thich Nhat Hanh

(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 12–July 31 (8 sessions) (#B110)
7:00–9:00 p.m.

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

\$185 • members \$165 (fee includes course text*)

**Deduct \$15 if you obtain your own copy of the course text.*

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

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 11–July 30
6:30–9:00 P.M.
(#617)**

**Instructor:
Michael O'Neal**



This course will be offered in-person.

**Day of Mindfulness Retreat
Saturday, July 27, 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. 24–Nov. 12, 2024**

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 2, 9:00–11:15 A.M.

In-person and via Zoom

Weekday 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 7, 7:00 P.M.–Sunday, June 9, 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 19, 5:30 P.M.–Sunday, July 21, 1:00 P.M.

Led by Rev. Shoken Winecoff

Location: Northeastern Iowa

Suggested Donation: \$175



August Seven-day Practice Period at Hokyoji

Monday, Aug. 26, 5:00 P.M.–Monday, Sept. 2, 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 held its Annual Meeting on Sunday, April 21, 2024. The gathering began with a short sitting, followed by election of new board members, a review of 2023 activities, a financial report, statements by the Guiding Teachers, and community discussion. Following the meeting, in-person attendees enjoyed brunch provided by the board.

2023 highlights included community support for Genpo's trip to Japan and a generous anonymous donation that paid off the balance of our building bank loan. The board has been engaged in strategic planning with a focus on leadership succession, growing our membership, and further securing our finances.

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

Board of Directors

Thank you, retiring board members

Richard Sutton, Alan Rodgers, and Joshua Rice completed their three-year term and are stepping down from the board. Richard has served multiple terms, including as board chair; Alan has diligently served as bookkeeper and treasurer; Josh has focused on promotions. The board expresses their gratitude to these members for their many contributions to the well-being of Compassionate Ocean.



Joshua Rice



Alan Rodgers



Richard Sutton



Ramona Advani



Alex Murkve



Libby Donahue



Mark Ostrander

Board members Ramona Advani, Libby Donahue, Alex Murkve, and Mark Ostrander are continuing in their three-year terms. Michael and Joen O'Neal also serve on the board in their capacity as Guiding Teachers.

Meet our new board members

Ben Durant: *My family and I have lived in the neighborhood for many years and I was always curious about the Center. Since taking my first "Intro to Zen mini course" I have continued the practice because of the Guiding Teachers, Center and Community.*



Vince Grundman *I was introduced to Compassionate Ocean by Joen at Unity Unitarian Church in the 1990s and I've been a regular member for the last ten or so years.*

Lisa Boesen: *I started attending classes at Compassionate Ocean in Fall of 2017 and was immediately drawn to both the teachings and the Sangha members. Since then, I've served a previous term on the board and I've also helped in the office. I enjoy reading, gardening, and travelling, and I find joy walking my neighbors' dogs.*



Art-A-Whirl Weekend: Open House and Doors Open Minneapolis

Art-a-Whirl Weekend in NE Minneapolis is one of the largest open art events in the country. Add a visit to Compassionate Ocean, located across the street from the Casket Arts building, to your Art-a-Whirl weekend!

This year, Compassionate Ocean will also participate in Doors Open Minneapolis during Art-a-Whirl Weekend. *Doors Open Minneapolis* is an annual event produced by the historic preservation nonprofit, Rethos. This event enables the public to explore dozens of buildings that tell our city's story. We are looking forward to this opportunity to share Compassionate Ocean's serene and carefully designed space with the greater community.

You are invited to:

- Tour the Zen Center
- Learn about our programs
- Meet our Guiding Teachers
- Enjoy refreshments

Friday, May 17, 5:00–10:00 P.M.
Saturday, May 18, 12:00–8:00 P.M.
Sunday, May 19, 12:00–5:00 P.M.



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.



Above: Guiding teachers Joel and Genpo O'Neal.

At left: In April, guiding teacher Genpo O'Neal (second from right) attended a meeting of the Dharma heirs of Rev. Shoken Winecoff at Ryumonji Zen Monastery in northern Iowa.

*The Guiding Teachers are **available for individual meetings** regarding life and practice. To set up an appointment, please email admin@OceanZen.org.*





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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 2024 Course begins June 11

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!

Summer and Fall Activities Calendar

	Introduction to Zen Practice	Introduction to Mindfulness	Buddhist Studies	Sesshin
Summer	June 10 & 17	June 11–July 30 (Retreat: July 27)	June 12–July 31	June 7 – 9 July 19–21 (Ryumonji) Aug. 26–Sep. 2 (Hokyoji)
Fall	Sep. 16 & 23	Sep. 24–Nov. 12 (Retreat: Nov. 9)	Sep. 25–Nov. 13	Sep. 27–29 Oct. 25–27 Dec. 1–8 (Rohatsu)

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 Event

- Art-a-Whirl and Doors Open Minneapolis Open House—Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, May 17–19