



Compassionate Ocean Zen Center

A Center for Mindful Living

652 17th Avenue NE, Minneapolis, MN 55413 • Issue No. 52 • Summer 2019

The Naked Nature of Sound

Michael O'Neal

Some years ago we renovated the building that is now the home of Compassionate Ocean. One of our challenges was having the zendo (meditation hall) share a wall with the kitchen and two bathrooms. We wanted to get as much sound privacy as possible for people sitting in silence in the zendo. A typical interior wall provides very little sound insulation.

I had noticed in the newspaper that a local sound engineering firm was consulting with the airport to plan sound abatement for houses under the flight path of airplanes, so I figured they might be a good resource. I called up the firm, described our situation, and asked if we could arrange for an hour's consultation. The person I talked to said, "Well, that's not usually how we work, but OK."

When we met for our appointment the young sound engineer gave me a tour of their facilities, and then we sat down to talk. It wasn't going to take him a whole hour to tell me his recommendations, so he began by explaining the science.

I listened carefully to him, and after a little bit I said, "sobs the sound." He said, "No, it doesn't absorb the time I rephrased what I thought he was saying, and happened a third time, and at that point, something him and he continued to explain the science to me, but I was no longer trying to understand. I was actually experiencing explosions of insight—epiphanies—one after another.



"Right, so in other words, the insulating material absorbs the sound," and then he explained some more. A second again, very patiently, he said, "No, that's not it." This exceptional happened in me. I continued to look at

The first realization was that I knew nothing whatsoever about sound. All my life I had been intimate with sound; it is a hugely important part of my life and the world I live in, and yet my understanding of it was close to zero. I was familiar with the diagram of the radio tower with curved lines coming out on both sides; this was about one-third of my total knowledge. I knew there was something about vibration and the eardrum, and there was something about how the pitch of a train horn changes when it passes by. This was pretty much it. If I had been asked to write an essay including everything I knew about sound, I might have been able to write a page if I wrote in script the size a first-grader uses.

The second astonishing realization was that in my whole lifetime I had been taught virtually nothing about sound, I had learned virtually nothing on my own, and I had had no real intellectual curiosity about such an amazing and consequential phenomenon as sound.

The third realization was that somehow I had been completely unaware of my complete lack of understanding about sound, and in fact, without really thinking about it, I had been carrying around the intellectual conceit that well, sure, I understood sound. There was a kind of deep intellectual vanity about how smart I was about sound that was nothing but complete self-delusion.

The fourth realization was that sound in its actual "soundness" was a complete mystery. It was certainly beyond my feeble understanding, but in fact any understanding, even that of the sound engineer, was only a kind of overlay on the naked nature of sound. Sound itself was utterly different from any knowledge about sound, and it was completely untouched by any ideas about it.

And the fifth realization was the very strong inferential sense that everything was like this.

Eventually the sound engineer finished his explanations, I nodded, and we went on to talk about what he thought we should do in our building. I took careful notes, and now we have very good sound insulation in our zendo. Please come for a visit!

2019 Summer Appeal

Generosity is the most natural expression of an inner attitude of compassion and loving-kindness.

—H.H. the Dalai Lama XIV

Dear Friend of Compassionate Ocean,

I am deeply grateful to everyone who has practiced and studied with Compassionate Ocean, and to those of you who have so generously supported our Center. As a community we are dedicated to the practice of kindness, mindful awareness, and engagement in every aspect of life for the benefit of others. By supporting each other, we all grow.

Our intention for the coming year is to build on the solid practice we have established, including warmly inviting others to share in it. We continue to increase membership and are attracting a younger and more local demographic. In the past year we have implemented a quarterly Zendo Music Night, performed a lay ordination for three of our members, and celebrated the ordination of Michael as a Zen priest, besides hosting guest teachers and sharing practice with other Zen communities. This is in addition to our full schedule of classes (both MBSR and Buddhist Studies), daily meditation sessions, twice-weekly Dharma talks, retreats and sesshins, and introductory activities. **We offer many gateways into practice at our Center.**

Almost everyone connected with Compassionate Ocean has experienced the life-changing effect of the practice of mindfulness. As a friend of Compassionate Ocean, and most likely a graduate of one or more programs, you know the value of this practice.

We need your financial support to carry on the work of our Center. Despite operating on a very lean budget, we have had an annual loss for several years which has used up most of our limited cash reserves. The revenue from classes covers only about 40 percent of what we need to continue to operate. The rest must come from contributions by people like us, who value what the Center does and want it to grow and thrive. In 2018, 52 people donated a total of \$8,300 to our spring/summer appeal. **Our goal for 2019 is to raise at least \$10,000. Would you help make this a reality?**

Every donation makes a difference. Your tax deductible donation may be mailed in the enclosed return envelope. Please include any ideas you might have for the future development of our Center. You can also contribute online at www.OceanDharma.org (see the “Giving” tab, Donations and Appeals).

Yours in gratitude,

Richard Sutton

Richard Sutton
Chair, Board of Directors

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





Summer Programs 2019

Compassionate Ocean Zen Center

652 17th Avenue NE., Minneapolis, MN 55413
(612) 781-7640 • www.OceanDharma.org

Basic Teachings of the Buddha

Taught by Ryushin Jan Freier & Kikan Mike Howard

Before there was Buddhism, there was an historical figure from northern India who dedicated his life to investigating the human condition. After great focused effort he realized a way of life liberated from unease. At first he struggled with how to present his insights, but soon he devised a framework of teaching and training. This course explores the early discourses, discussions and dialogues that outline this framework.

We will uncover the personality of the Buddha as he presents teachings and develops and encourages his vision of training. The course will include meditation, lecture, discussion, and reading from *Basic Teachings of the Buddha* by Glenn Wallis.



Ryushin Jan Freier began his Zen practice at the Minnesota Zen Center in 1985 where he often ran the tape recorder for Katagiri Roshi's lectures. He also served as tenzo (head of cooking practice) for six years. He was lay ordained by Katagiri Roshi in 1989. Currently he practices at Compassionate Ocean and at Hokyoji Zen Practice Community during their summer and winter practice periods.

Kikan Mike Howard is the Youth Practice Leader and a priest-in-training at Clouds in Water Zen Center, and also active at Compassionate Ocean. He has been studying Zen Buddhism since the late 1990s. In his spare time, Kikan is an independent app developer, ukulele player and cat wrangler.



Wednesdays, June 12—July 31 (eight sessions) (#B90)

7:00—9:00 p.m.

\$185 (members \$165) (includes course text)

Member rates apply to members of all local dharma centers.

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

To register, use the registration form on page 6, go to OceanDharma.org, or call (612) 781-7640.

Total Dynamic Living - An Eight Week Program in Mindfulness

Total Dynamic Living is a thorough, well-structured introduction to mindfulness practice in everyday life. It follows the nationally acclaimed mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR) model developed by Jon Kabat-Zinn, presenting mindfulness as a universal practice for people of any (or no) religious background.

The program includes instruction and practice in sitting meditation, gentle yoga, body awareness meditation, and daily-life applications of mindfulness. It also includes information about stress and relaxation. The program enables participants to develop their own base in mindfulness practice integrated into everyday life.

The course includes eight weekly classes, an individual interview with the instructor, a Saturday retreat, the book *Full Catastrophe Living* by Jon Kabat-Zinn, four CDs, and handouts. 27 CEUs are available for all courses.

The course fee is \$295 plus a \$35 materials fee. Payment plans and some scholarship aid are available. Please contact the Center to discuss.

Enrollment is limited, and pre-registration is required. Please let your friends and colleagues know about this program.

#600 Minneapolis: Tuesdays

June 11–July 30 • 6:30-9:00 P.M.

Instructor: Joen O'Neal

Location: Compassionate Ocean Zen Center

652 17th Ave. NE, Minneapolis (in the Northeast Arts District)

#281 St. Paul: Thursdays

June 6–August 1 • 6:30-9:00 P.M. (no class July 4)

Instructor: Joen O'Neal

Location: Clouds in Water Zen Center

445 Farrington St., St. Paul (near University Ave. and Western Ave.)

Total Dynamic Living: One-Day Retreat

This retreat is open to all current participants in Total Dynamic Living courses. It is also open to graduates of past Total Dynamic Living courses on a donation basis. People not enrolled in a current course should call the Center in advance to reserve a space.

Saturday, July 27 • 9:00 A.M.-3:00 P.M.

Location: 652 17th Ave. NE, Minneapolis



27 CEUs are available for nurses, social workers, educators, and psychologists.

Guiding Teachers



Michael O'Neal and Joen O'Neal

Joen Snyder O'Neal and Michael 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. Joen was ordained as a Zen priest by Katagiri Roshi in 1980 and received Dharma transmission from him in 1989. Michael was ordained as a Zen priest in 2018.

The guiding teachers are available for individual meetings regarding life and practice. To set up an appointment, call the Center.

Volunteers are welcomed and needed to help sustain and grow Compassionate Ocean. Special areas for volunteer help are the Finance Committee, Publicity and Promotion Committee, and Fundraising Committee. People are also needed to help take care of our building and to provide tech support. Please contact the Center for more information.

Meditation and Dharma Talks

Most Sunday and Friday mornings throughout the year Compassionate Ocean offers meditation practice (sitting and walking) followed by a Dharma talk and discussion, focusing on aspects of Buddhist teaching and their application to everyday life. Our practice is in the mindfulness traditions of Soto Zen and Thich Nhat Hahn. Everyone is invited to participate. There are no prerequisites; people are welcome to come when they wish. There is no fee; donations are welcome. The Sunday gathering is co-led by Joen O'Neal and Michael O'Neal. Joen leads the Friday group.

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

Schedule: 9:00 sitting, 9:25 walking, 9:35 sitting, 10:00 dharma talk and discussion, 11:15 ending.

Fridays, 9:30-11:00 A.M.

Schedule: 9:30 sitting, 10:00 walking, 10:10 dharma talk and discussion, 11:00 ending.

Note: the Sunday and Friday gatherings will not take place in August.

Welcome Sessions

New people are always welcome at our Sunday and Friday morning gatherings. To provide a special welcome, welcome sessions that include an orientation to our practice are offered periodically. These are excellent opportunities to find out more if you are curious but haven't got around to coming.

Friday, June 7, 9:30-11:00 A.M.

Sunday, June 9, 9:00-11:15 A.M.

Orientation to Zen Meditation

Sunday mornings at 8:15 A.M., through July 28

Introduction to Zen Practice with Michael

A one-session introduction to Zen meditation and related practices. No fee; pre-registration required.

Monday, June 10, 7:00-8:30 P.M.

Weekday Meditation Sessions

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday mornings

7:00 zazen (sitting), 7:40 chanting service, 8:00 temple cleaning (to 8:15)

Note: the 6:30 A.M. Friday morning zazen period will end after May 31.

Thursday evenings

7:30 zazen (sitting), 8:00 kinhin (walking), 8:10 zazen, 8:40 ending.

People are welcome to come for any part of the schedule.

Sesshin/Days of Zen Practice

June at Compassionate Ocean

Friday, June 14, 7:00 P.M.-Saturday, June 15, 9:00 P.M.

Led by Joen and Michael

This weekend sesshin ("collecting the mind") will include sitting and walking meditation, a Dharma talk, a work period, and an opportunity to meet with a teacher. Includes three vegetarian meals on Saturday. Fee: \$50 (members \$45).

July at Ryumonji Zen Monastery

Friday, July 19, 5:30 P.M.-Sunday, July 21, 1:00 P.M.

Led by Shoken Winecoff

Location is in northeastern Iowa.

Fee (due in advance): \$175 (members \$150)

This sesshin will include a "Shuso" (head monk) ceremony,

which is an important stage in traditional Zen training, and a "Shuso tea" the evening before.

To register for this sesshin, contact Michael at Compassionate Ocean well in advance.



August at Hokyoji Zen Practice Community

Seven-day practice period:

Monday, Aug. 26, 5:00 P.M.-Monday, Sept. 3, 2:00 P.M.

Sesshin only:

Friday, Aug. 30, 5:00 P.M.-Monday, Sept. 3, 2:00 P.M.

Led by Joen O'Neal, Michael O'Neal, and resident priest Dokai Georgesen.

Location is in southeastern Minnesota.

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

This practice period offers participants an opportunity to practice mindfulness in community for an extended period. It will include sitting and walking meditation, Dharma talks, study time, yoga and mindful movement, deep relaxation, vegetarian meals, work practice, and Dharma discussion. There will be opportunities for individual meetings with teachers. We will be using the new dormitory and the new practice hall, which have been built since last fall. To register, or if you have any questions, contact Michael well in advance.



Summer 2019 Registration Form

Name _____

Address _____

Zip _____ Email _____

Phone _____

H: () _____

C or W: () _____

To register, please check the appropriate activities.

Total Dynamic Living—Introductory Program in Mindfulness (\$25 deposit)

- Minneapolis, Tuesday evenings (#600)
- St. Paul, Thursday evenings (#281)

Total Dynamic Living: One-Day Retreat

- Saturday, July 27, 9:00 A.M.– 3:00 P.M.
(by donation for program alumni)

“Basic Teachings of the Buddha” Course

- Minneapolis, Wednesday evenings (#B90)
June 12-July 31 (\$25 deposit)

Introduction to Zen Practice Mini-Course

- June 10 (no fee)

Sesshin/Days of Zen Practice

- Friday-Saturday, June 14-15
(\$45 members, \$50 non-members)
July at Ryumonji—contact the Center
August at Hokyoji—contact the Center

Facing Climate Change (no fee)

- Friday, May 31
- Friday, June 7
- Friday, July 12
- Friday, August 9

Enrollment for these activities is limited, and early registration is encouraged.

To register, send this form along with the non-refundable deposit listed (payable to CODC) to: Compassionate Ocean Dharma Center
652 17th Ave. NE, Minneapolis, MN 55413
(612) 781-7640 • www.OceanDharma.org
Or register online on our website in the Classes & Retreats section.

New Communications Coordinator

We are in the process of a change in our Communications Coordinator position.

Jennifer Ashwill is ending her long tenure. She began as Communications Coordinator in the fall of 2014, and if you have received emails, class recordings, newsletters, and other communications from Compassionate Ocean since then, it is because of Jennifer’s work. She began her connection with our Center in 2003 when she took the Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction Program, then continued her involvement as a community member after that. She served on the Board for three years and was chair of the Membership Committee for over six years. She is now working with the Wayzata Public Schools as Clerical Special Services and Health Paraprofessional. We are deeply appreciative of Jennifer’s longtime skilled, conscientious, and warm-hearted work in the Communications Coordinator position. Thank you Jennifer!



Our new Communications Coordinator is Maiwenn Kussian.

Maiwenn (rhymes with “my when”) is from France and lives next door to the Center with her husband and young daughter. Maiwenn runs a French language school, Coucou Minneapolis (coucoufrenchclasses.com/minneapolis/). She is rapidly getting up to speed in her new position with Compassionate Ocean and you have probably already received communications that she has sent. Welcome Maiwenn!



Wish List

- Video Projector
- Video Projector
- Video Projector
- (We just need one!)



Joen and Jan distributing flowers to our neighbors

You are invited...

...to become a Sustaining Member of Compassionate Ocean, joining others to make possible the continued life of our Center. For further information, please go to our website or contact us to request a Membership Brochure.



Spring mindfulness class participants enjoying a mindful lunch at our May retreat.



Walking meditation at our May retreat.



Jarelle Barton playing the guzheng at our April Zendo Music Night.



Kelly Reynolds giving a talk to the Friday sangha in March.



Joel (and Michael, not pictured) having tea in May with Rev. Shoken Winecoff and Rev. Bunsu Ono, visiting from Hokoji temple in Saitama prefecture, Japan.



Community members enjoying brunch after our annual meeting in March.



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admin@OceanDharma.org
www.OceanDharma.org

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Summer Program Highlights

- **Buddhist Studies course:**
Basic Teachings of the Buddha
- **Introductory Programs in Mindfulness (MBSR)** offered in Minneapolis and St. Paul
- **Introduction to Zen Practice mini-course**
- **Sesshin/Days of Zen Practice**
at Compassionate Ocean, Ryumonji, and Hokyoji
- **Climate Change Gatherings**
- **Summer Zendo Music Night**
- **Ongoing Meditation and Dharma Talks**

Facing Climate Change: For a Future to Be Possible

These ongoing monthly gatherings are an opportunity to learn more about the unfolding crisis of atmospheric disruption and climate change, and to consider what we can do. Each evening begins with an optional vegetarian potluck at 6:00 P.M., followed by a program from 7:00-9:00 P.M. Anyone with an interest is invited to come to any of the gatherings.

There are no fees, but please sign up in advance by emailing the Center at admin@OceanDharma.org, indicating whether you will be attending the potluck.

Summer Schedule

Friday evenings:

May 31, June 7, July 12, August 9



Summer Zendo Music Night

Save the date: Friday evening, August 16
Performers for this event will be announced in July.