

# CHANTS FOR ZAZEN



# DEDICATION

This chant book is dedicated to the memory of our beloved Sister Stephanie Olek RSM. Founding member of FRS, chant leader, inspiration to all who knew her and dear friend.

Deep bows of gratitude.



Eihei Dogen in Genjo Koan:

To study the Buddha way is to study the self.

To study the self is to forget the self.

To forget the self is to be enlightened by the ten thousand dharmas.

To be enlightened by the ten thousand dharmas is to

Free one's body and mind and those of others.

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## OPENING CHANTS

### MORNING BELL CHANT

May the sound of this bell spread throughout the universe, making darkness bright, relieving the three realms of suffering, shattering swords. May it bring all beings to enlightenment.

### EVENING BELL CHANT

Hearing the sound of the bell,  
all thinking is cut off; wisdom grows;  
enlightenment appears; confusion is left behind.  
I vow to perceive true self and to save all beings

### GATHA OF REPENTANCE

All evil karma ever committed by me since of old,  
on account of my beginningless greed, anger and ignorance, born of my body,  
mouth and consciousness, now I atone for it all.

### GATHA ON OPENING THE SUTRA

The Dharma incomparably profound and infinitely subtle, is rarely encountered, even in millions of ages. Now you see it, hear it, receive and maintain it. May we completely realize the Tathagata's true meaning.

## CLOSING CHANTS

### EVENING GATHA

Life and death are of supreme importance.  
Time Swiftly passes by and opportunity is lost.  
Each of us should strive to awaken.  
Awaken. Take heed, do not squander your life.

### SHIGU SEIGAN: GREAT VOWS FOR ALL

SHU JO MU HEN SEI GAN DO  
BO NO MU JIN SEI GAN DAN  
HO MON MU RYO SEI GAN GAKU  
BUTSU DO MU JO SEI GAN JO

### THE FOUR VOWS

Creations are numberless I vow to free them.  
Delusions are inexhaustible I vow to put an end to them.  
Reality is boundless I vow to perceive it.  
The Enlightened Way is unsurpassable I vow to embody it.

### OFFERING AT THE END OF THE SITTING

May all beings everywhere  
with whom we are inseparably connected  
be awakened, liberated, healed, fulfilled, and free:  
may there be peace in this world,  
and an end to war, violence, injustice, and poverty: and may we all together  
complete the spiritual journey

# CHANTS

## MERIT OFFERING AFTER CHANTING

We dedicate the merit of chanting to the stream of ancestral teachers, to all the Women Ancestors whose names have been forgotten or left unsaid, to Taizan Maezumi, Roshi; Bernie Tetsugen Glassman Roshi; Father Robert Kennedy, Roshi; Sister Janet Richardson, Roshi and Sister Barabara Shoshin Craig, Sensei, our founding teacher, and to our family and friends.

You are invited to name those who are in your thoughts and hearts today either out loud or silently (Pause for names).

And together, may all beings be free from suffering and enjoy happiness, Realizing the Buddha Way.

## MAHA PRAJNA PARAMITA HEART SUTRA

(THE HEART OF THE PERFECTION OF GREAT WISDOM SUTRA)

Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva (The Awakened One of Compassion)

Doing deep Prajna Paramita,

Clearly saw emptiness of all the five conditions,

\*Thus completely relieving misfortune and pain,

O Shariputra, form is no other than emptiness,

Emptiness no other than form;

Form is exactly emptiness,

Emptiness exactly form;

Sensation, conception, discrimination, awareness are likewise like this.

O Shariputra, all dharmas are forms of emptiness,

Not born, not destroyed;

Not stained, not pure,

Without loss, without gain:

So in emptiness there is no form,

No sensation, conception, discrimination, awareness;

No eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, mind;

No color, sound, smell, taste, touch, phenomena;

No realm of sight,  
No realm of consciousness;  
No ignorance  
And no end to ignorance ...  
No old age and death  
And no end to old age and death;  
No suffering,  
No cause of suffering,  
No extinguishing,  
No path;  
No wisdom and no gain.

\*No gain and thus  
the Bodhisattva lives Prajna Paramita  
With no hindrance in the mind,  
No hindrance, therefore no fear,  
Far beyond deluded thoughts,  
This is Nirvana.

All past, present and future Buddhas live Prajna Paramita,  
And therefore attain anuttara-samyak-sambodhi (*enlightenment*).

Therefore know Prajna Paramita is the great mantra,  
The vivid mantra,  
The best mantra,  
The unsurpassable mantra;  
It completely clears all pain –  
This is the truth, not a lie.

So set forth the Prajna Paramita mantra,

\*Set forth this mantra and say:

Gate! Gate! (*Gone Gone*)

\*Paragate! (*Gone beyond*)

Parasamgate! (*Fully beyond*)

Bodhi Svaha! (*Awake, Rejoice*)

Prajna Heart Sutra!

\* bell



SANDOKAI: IDENTITY OF RELATIVE AND ABSOLUTE

The mind of the great sage of India was intimately conveyed from west to east.

Among human beings are wise ones and fools,  
but in the Way there is no northern or southern Patriarch.

The subtle source is clear and bright;  
the tributary streams flow through the darkness.

To be attached to things is illusion;  
to encounter the absolute is not yet enlightenment.

Each and all, the subjective and objective spheres are related.  
And at the same time independent.

Related, yet working differently,  
though each keeps its own place.

Form makes the character and appearance different;  
sounds distinguish comfort and discomfort.

The dark makes all words one  
The brightness distinguishes good and bad phrases.

The four elements return to their nature  
As a child to its mother.

Fire is hot  
Wind moves  
Water is wet  
Earth hard.

Eyes see  
Ears hear  
Nose smells  
Tongue tastes the salt and sour.

Each is independent of the other

Cause and effect must return to the great reality.

The words high and low are used relatively.

Within light there is darkness  
But do not try to understand that darkness;  
Within darkness there is light  
But do not look for that light.

Light and darkness are a pair  
Like the foot before and the foot behind in walking.

Each thing has its own intrinsic value  
And is related to everything else in function and position.

Ordinary life fits the absolute as a box and its lid.

The absolute works together with the relative  
Like two arrows meeting in mid-air.

Reading words you should grasp the great reality.

Do not judge by any standards.

If you do not see the Way,  
You do not see it even as you walk on it.

When you walk the Way, it is not near, it is not far.

If you are deluded, you are mountains and rivers away from it.

I respectfully say to those who wish to be enlightened:  
Do not waste your time by night or day

## IDENTITY OF RELATIVE AND ABSOLUTE (VERSION 2)

BY SHITOU XIQIAN

(Words in **BOLD**\_one tone higher, words *italicized*\_one tone lower.)

The mind of the **Great**\_Sage of India \*  
Is intimately conveyed *west and east*.

Among human beings are **wise** ones and fools  
In the Way there is no teacher of *north and south*.

The subtle Source is **clear** and bright;  
The *branching streams flow in the dark*.

To be attached to things is **primordial** illusion;  
To encounter *the absolute is not yet enlightenment*.

All Spheres, every **sense** and field \*  
*Intermingle even as they shine alone,*  
Interacting **even** as they merge,  
Yet keeping their places in expressions of their own.

Forms differ **primally** in shape and character  
And *sounds in harsh or soothing tones*.

The dark makes **all** words one;  
The *brightness distinguishes good and bad* phrases.

The four elements **return** to their true nature  
As a *child to its mother*.

Fire is hot, **water** is wet,  
*Wind moves and the earth is dense*.

Eye and form, **ear** and sound, **nose** and smell,  
*Tongue and taste, the sweet and sour*  
Each independent of the other

Like *leaves that come from the same root*.  
And though leaves and root **must** go back to the Source  
Both *root and leaves have their own uses*.

Light is **also** darkness,  
But *do not move with it as darkness*  
**Darkness** is light;  
*Do not see it as light*.

Light and darkness are **not** one, **not** two  
Like the foot before and the *foot behind in walking*.

Each thing has its **own** being \*  
Which is not *different from its place and function*.

The relative **fits** the absolute  
As a *box and its lid*.  
The absolute **meets** the relative  
Like *two arrow points that meet in mid air*. \*

Hearing this, **simply** perceive the Source,  
Make no criterion.

If you do not **see** the Way,  
You *do not see it even as you walk* on it.  
When you walk the way you **draw** no nearer,  
*Progress* no farther.  
Who **fails** to see this  
Is *mountains and rivers* away.

Listen, those who would **pierce** this subtle matter:  
*Do not waste your time by night or day!*

\* bell

## DIAMOND SUTRA

(The Sutra of Perfection of Wisdom of the Diamond that Cuts through Illusion: excerpts from this teaching dialogue in which the Buddha questions his disciple, Subhuti).

Q1. Though all the sentient beings to be delivered by me are innumerable and without limit, / in reality, / there are no sentient beings to be delivered. / Why?

A1. Because should there exist in the minds of Bodhisattvas / arbitrary conceptions of phenomena / such as the existence of oneself / or the self of another / or selfness as divided into beings / or selfness as unified into one universal self-existing eternally, / they would be unworthy to be called Bodhisattvas.

Q2. When the Buddha speaks of great universes / does he have in mind any definite idea?

A2. No, When the Buddha uses the words *great universes* / he does not assert any definite idea. / He merely uses the words as words.

Q3. Is this true for the words Buddha and Dharma?

A3. There are no Buddhas and there are no Dharmas.

Q4. Should a disciple strive to attain Buddhahood?

A4. No, that would mean the disciple is striving to attain something limited. / as in *perfect-supreme-wisdom*; / but true Buddhahood, whose essence is identical with the essence of all things, / is inconceivable / and beyond all striving.

Q5. How is it possible to explain this sutra without ideas of things and dharmas?

A5. This sutra can only be explained / by keeping the mind in perfect oneness and tranquility.

Q6. Should a Bodhisattva make an assertion / such as “I have entered the stream?”

A6. No. Because / he has not entered anything / nor has his mind entered any idea / such as form sound, taste. odor or touch.

Q7. Because of his virtue / will Buddha be reborn either in this world or any other world?

A7. No. / There will be no rebirth / either in this world / or in any other world. / It is because he knows this / the Buddha is called a Buddha.

Q8. Is there anyone who is a fully enlightened one?

A8. No. Should a disciple cherish in his mind an idea such as / "I have become enlightened," / he would soon be grasping after things / such as his own selfhood, / or other selves, / or a universal self.

Q9. If there is no distinction between one's own self and the selfhood of others, / how do we practice kindness?

A9. We practice kindness / by giving not only objective gifts / but the selfless gifts of kindness and sympathy.

Q10. Is there any merit for acts of kindness?

A10. Bodhisattvas never seek merit / nor look upon kind acts as private possessions / but as the common possessions of all animate beings.

Q11. What does it mean to say there is no such thing as *supreme-perfect-wisdom* / and that the Buddha does not teach any fixed dharma?

A11. This means Bodhisattvas are not enlightened by an fixed teaching / but by an intuitive process / that is spontaneous and natural.

Q12. What does it mean to say the Buddha has come or has gone?

A12. This means the Buddha is never coming from anywhere / nor is he going anywhere. / The name Buddha is merely a word.

Q13. Why does the Buddha use words and ideas in his teachings?

A13. The Buddha uses words and ideas in his teaching / in resemblance to a raft, / of use only to cross a river. / As the raft is of no use after the river is crossed, / it should be discarded./ So too ideas about things should be given up as one attains enlightenment.

Q14. Has the Buddha given us any definite teaching in this sutra?

A14. No. The Buddha has not given us any definite teaching in this sutra.

**Like a meteor,**                    like darkness,  
**as a flickering lamp,**        an illusion,  
**like hoar frost,**                or a bubble,  
**like clouds,**                    a flash of lightning,  
**or a dream.**  
**So all conditioned existence is to be seen.**

### ENMEI JUKKU KANNON GYO

KAN ZE ON NA MU BUTSU YO BUTSU U IN  
YO BUTSU U EN BUP PO SO EN JO RAKU GA JO  
CHO NEN KAN ZE ON BO NEN KAN ZE ON  
NEN NEN JU SHIN KI NEN NEN FU RI SHIN

### ENMEI JUKKU KANNON GYO

#### (TEN PHRASE PROLONGING KANNON SUTRA)

Kanzeon! Salutation and devotion to Buddha!  
We are one with Buddha  
In cause and effect related to all Buddhas  
And to Buddha, Dharma and Sangha.  
Our True Nature is Eternal, Joyous, Selfless and Pure.  
So let us chant every morning Kanzeon, with Nen (attention)!  
Every evening Kanzeon, with Nen!  
Nen, Nen, arises from Mind.  
Nen, Nen, is not separate from Mind.

### SHO SAI MYO KISHIJO DHARANI

#### ("AUSPICIOUS DHARANI FOR AVERTING CALAMITY")

NO MO SAN MAN DA MOTO NAN OHA RA CHI KOTO SHA  
SONO NAN TO JI TO EN GYA GYA GYA KI GYA KI UN  
NUN SHIU RA SHIU RA HARA SHIU RA HARA SHIU RA  
CHISHU SA CHISHU SA CHISHU RI CHISHU RI  
SOWA JA SOWA JA SEN CHI GYA SHIRI EI SOMO KO

## HAKUIN ZENJI: SONG OF ZAZEN

### BY HAKUIN EKAKU

All beings by nature are Buddha,  
as ice by nature is water;  
Apart from water there is no ice,  
apart from beings no Buddha.

How sad that people ignore the near  
and search for truth afar,

Like someone in the midst of water  
crying out in thirst,

Like a child of a wealthy home wandering  
among the poor.

Lost on dark paths of ignorance  
we wander through the six worlds;

From dark path to dark path we wander,  
when shall we be freed from birth and death?

For this the zazen of the Mahayana  
deserves the highest praise:

Offerings, precepts, paramitas,  
nembutsu, atonement, practice  
the many other virtues  
all rise within zazen.

Those who try zazen even once  
wipe away immeasurable crimes  
where are all the dark paths then?  
The Pure Land itself is near.



Those who hear this truth even once  
and listen with a grateful heart,  
treasuring it, revering it,  
gain blessings without end.

Much more, if you turn yourself about,  
and confirm your own self-nature  
self-nature that is no nature  
you are far beyond mere argument.

The oneness of cause and effect is clear,  
not two, not three, the path is straight;  
with form that is no form,  
going and coming never astray;

With thought that is no thought  
singing and dancing is the voice of the law.

Boundless and free is the sky of Samadhi,  
bright the full moon of wisdom,

ALL:  
Truly is anything missing now? Nirvana is  
right here, before our eyes,  
this very place is the Lotus Land,  
this very body the Buddha

Hakuin Ekaku was a Japanese monk (1685-1768). "Zazen" is formal meditation practice; "paramitas" are ideals or virtues; "Nembutsu" is the practice of calling on the Amida Buddha; "samadhi" is meditative concentration. This poem, frequently recited during Zen sesshins, is reprinted with permission from Encouraging Words: Zen Buddhist Teachings for Western Students, © 1993 by Robert Aitken, Pantheon Books, N.Y

## AFFIRMING FAITH IN MIND

HSIN HSIN MING

The Great Way is not difficult  
for those who do not pick and  
choose.

When preferences are cast aside,  
the Way stands clear and  
undisguised.

But even slight distinctions made  
set earth and heaven far apart.

If you would clearly see the truth,  
discard opinions pro and con.

To founder in dislike and like  
is nothing but the mind's disease.

And not to see the Way's deep truth  
disturbs the mind's essential peace.

The Way is perfect like vast space,  
where there's no lack and no excess.

Our choice to choose and to reject  
prevents our seeing this simple truth.

Both striving for the outer world  
as well as for the inner void  
condemn us to entangled lives.

Just calmly see that all is One,  
and by themselves false views will go.

Attempts to stop activity  
will fill you with activity.  
Remaining in duality,  
you'll never know of unity.

And not to know this unity  
lets conflict lead you far astray.

When you assert that things are real,  
you miss their true reality.

But to assert that things are void  
also misses reality.

The more you talk and think on this  
the further from the truth you'll be.

Cut off all useless thoughts and  
words,  
and there's nowhere you cannot go.

Returning to the root itself,  
you'll find the meaning of all things.

If you pursue appearances,  
you overlook the primal source.

Awakening is to go beyond  
both emptiness as well as form.

All changes in this empty world  
seem real because of ignorance.

Do not go searching for the truth,  
just let those fond opinions go.

Abide not in duality;  
refrain from all pursuit of it.

Just let go now of clinging mind,  
and all things are just as they are.  
In essence nothing goes or stays.

See into the true self of things,  
and you're in step with the Great  
Way  
thus walking freely, undisturbed.

But live in bondage to your thoughts,  
and you will be confused, unclear

This heavy burden weighs you down-  
so why keep judging good and bad?

If you would walk the highest Way,  
do not reject the sense domain.

For as it is, whole and complete,  
the sense world is enlightenment.

The wise do not strive after goals,  
but fools themselves in bondage put.

The One Way knows no differences,  
the foolish cling to this and that

To seek Great Mind with thinking

mind is certainly a grave mistake.

From small mind come rest and  
unrest but mind awakened  
transcends both

Delusion spawns dualities—  
these dreams are merely flow'rs of  
air- why work so hard at grasping  
them?

If there's a trace of right and wrong,  
True-mind is lost, confused,  
distraught

From One-mind comes duality,  
but cling not even to this One.

When this One-minded rests  
undisturbed  
then nothing in the world offends.

And when no thing can give offense  
then all obstructions cease to be.

If all thought-objects disappear  
the thinking subject drops away.

For things are things because of mind  
as mind is mind because of things.

These two are merely relative  
and both at source are Emptiness.  
In Emptiness these are not two  
yet in each are contained all forms.

Once coarse and fine are seen no  
more  
then-how can there be taking sides?  
The Great Way is without limit  
beyond the easy and the hard

But those who hold to narrow views  
are fearful and irresolute;  
their fanatic haste just slows them  
down.

If they're attached to anything,  
You surely will go far astray

Both gain and loss, and right and  
wrong-  
once and for all get rid of them.

When you no longer are asleep,  
all dreams will vanish by themselves

If mind does not discriminate,  
all things are as they are, as One.

To go to this mysterious Source frees  
us  
from all entanglements.

When all is seen with "equal mind,"  
to our Self-nature we return.

This single mind goes right beyond  
all reasons and comparison.

Seek movement and there's no-  
movement,  
seek rest and no-rest comes instead.

When rest and no-rest cease to be,  
then even oneness disappears.

This ultimate finality's  
beyond all laws, can't be described.

With single mind one with the Way,  
all ego-centered strivings cease;

Doubts and confusion disappear,  
and so true faith pervades our life

There is no thing that clings to us,  
and nothing that is left behind.

All's self-revealing, void and clear  
without exerting power of mind.

Thought cannot reach this state of  
truth  
here feelings are of no avail.

In this true world if Emptiness  
both self and other are no more.

To enter this true empty world,  
immediately affirm "not-two."

In this "not-two" all is the same,  
with nothing separate or outside.

The wise in all times and places  
awaken to this primal truth.

The Way's beyond all space and time  
one instant is ten thousand years.

Not only here, not only there,  
truth's right before your very eyes.  
Distinctions such as large & small  
have relevance for you no more.

The largest is the smallest too –  
here limitations have no place.

What is is not, what is not is –  
if this is not yet clear to you,  
you're still far from the inner truth.

One this is all, all things are one –  
know this and all's whole and complete  
When faith and Mind are not separate,  
and not separate are Mind and faith  
this is beyond all words, all thought  
For here there is no yesterday,  
no tomorrow, no today.

METTA KARUNA MUDITA UPEKKHA (Repeat two times)

\* 1.(METTA)

MAY WE EXTEND UNLIMITED, UNIVERSAL LOVE AND GOOD-WILL TO ALL LIVING BEINGS WITHOUT ANY KIND OF DISCRIMINATION.

\*2.(KARUNA)

MAY THERE BE COMPASSION FOR ALL LIVING BEINGS WHO ARE SUFFERING.

*METTA KARUNA MUDITA UPEKKHA (Repeat two times)*

\* 3 .(MUDITA)

MAY THERE BE SYMPATHETIC JOY IN OTHERS' SUCCESS, WELFARE AND HAPPINESS.

\*4. (UPEKKHA)

MAY THERE BE EQUANIMITY IN ALL VICISSITUDES OF LIFE.

\* bell

## PRACTICE OF GRATITUDE

I offer my gratitude for the people, animals, plants, insects, creatures of the sky and sea, air and water, fire and earth, and for all whose joyful exertion blesses my life every day.

I offer my gratitude for the care and labor of a thousand generations of elders and ancestors who came before me.

I offer my gratitude for the safety and well-being I have been given  
I offer my gratitude for the blessings of this earth I have been given  
I offer my gratitude for the family and friends I have been given  
I offer my gratitude for the community I have been given  
I offer my gratitude for the teachings and lessons I have been given  
I offer my gratitude for the life I have been given  
I offer my gratitude for the Sangha and for all sentient beings

## LIBERATION FROM ALL OBSTRUCTIONS

In the presence of Sangha, in the light of Dharma, in oneness with Buddha  
– may my path to complete enlightenment benefit everyone!

In this passing moment karma ripens and all things come to be.  
I vow to affirm what is:

If there's cost, I choose to pay.  
If there's need, I choose to give.  
If there's pain, I choose to feel.  
If there's sorrow, I choose to grieve.  
When burning, I choose heat.  
When calm, I choose peace.  
When starving, I choose hunger.  
When happy, I choose joy.  
Whom I encounter, I choose to meet.  
What I shoulder, I choose to bear.  
When it's my birth, I choose to live.  
When it's my death, I choose to die.  
Where this takes me, I choose to go.  
Being with what is, I respond to what is.

This life is as real as a dream; the one who knows it cannot be found;  
and truth is not a thing, therefore I vow to choose THIS Dharma entrance gate!

May all Buddhas and Wise Ones help me live this vow.



## MACHIG'S LAST INSTRUCTION

BY MACHIG LABDRON (1055 – 1149)

Once discursive thoughts are totally abandoned  
Dharmakaya is no other than that.  
Once the five poisons are totally abandoned  
The five wisdoms are no other than that.  
Once the three poisons are totally abandoned  
The three kayas are no other than that.  
Once conventional mind is totally abandoned  
Buddhahood is no other than that.  
Once samsara is totally abandoned.  
Nirvana is no other than that.  
Once mental agitation is totally abandoned  
Skilled means are no other than that.  
Once emptiness is totally abandoned  
Discriminating wisdom is no other than that.  
Once mind is totally abandoned  
Fearsome places are no other than that.  
Once virtue and non-virtue are totally abandoned  
Gods and demons are no other than that.  
Once the six consciousnesses are totally abandoned  
The six classes of being are no other than that.  
Once the eight consciousnesses are totally abandoned  
The eight armies of demons are no other than that.  
Once wandering thoughts are totally abandoned  
Magical displays are no other than that.  
Once discursive thoughts are totally abandoned  
The practice of Zen is no other than that.  
Once mindfulness is achieved  
The level of final accomplishment is no other than that.  
Once the ultimate nature of the mind is realized  
The definitive sign of realization is no other than that.  
*This mind of ours is empty and clear  
Like the depth of space  
Like the passing of a bird in the sky  
Right now you have the opportunity...*

## GATE OF SWEET NECTAR

BY KRISHNA DAS FOR BERNIE GLASSMAN AND THE ZEN PEACEMAKING ORDER

Calling out to hungry hearts  
Everywhere through endless time  
You who wander, you who thirst  
I offer you this Bodhi Mind  
Calling out to hungry spirits  
Everywhere through endless time  
Calling out to hungry hearts  
All the lost and the left behind  
Gather round and share this meal  
Your joy and your sorrow, I make it mine.

## TOREI ZENJI: BODHISATTVA'S VOW

(ROBERT AITKEN. ENCOURAGING WORDS. P176-177)

When I regard the true nature of the many dharmas,  
I find them all to be sacred forms  
Of the Tathagata's never-failing essence.

Each particle of matter, each moment,  
Is no other than the Tathagata's inexpressible radiance.

With this realization, our virtuous ancestors, with  
Compassionate minds and hearts,  
Gave tender care to beasts and birds.

Among us, in our own daily lives,  
Who is not reverently grateful for the protections of life:  
Food, drink and clothing!

Though they are inanimate things,  
They are nonetheless the warm flesh and blood,  
The merciful incarnations of Buddha.

All the more, we can be especially sympathetic  
And affectionate with foolish people,  
Particularly with someone who becomes a sworn  
Enemy and persecutes us with abusive language.

That very abuse conveys the Buddha's boundless  
Loving-kindness.

It is a compassionate device to liberate us entirely  
From the mean-spirited delusions we have built up  
With our wrongful conduct from the beginningless past.

With our response to such abuse  
We completely relinquish ourselves  
And the most profound and pure faith arises  
At the peak of each thought a lotus flower opens,  
And on each flower there is revealed a Buddha.

Everywhere is the Pure Land in its beauty.

We see fully the Tathagata's radiant light  
Right where we are.

May we retain this mind  
And extend it throughout the world  
So that we and all beings  
Become mature in Buddha's wisdom.

### WHAT IS OUR LIFE ABOUT?

Our Aspiration, our calling, our desire for a genuine life,  
Is to see the truth of who we really are—  
That the nature of our Being is connectedness and love,  
Not the illusion of a separate self to which our suffering clings.  
It is from this awareness that Life can flow through us'  
The Unconditioned manifesting freely as our conditioned body.  
And what is the Path?  
To learn to reside in whatever life presents.  
To learn to attend to all those things  
That block the flow of a more open life;  
And to see them as the very path to awakening—  
All the constructs, the identities, the holding back, the protections,  
All the fears, the self-judgements, the blame—  
All the separates us from letting life be.  
And what is the path?  
To turn away from constantly seeking comfort  
And from trying to avoid pain.  
To open to the willingness to just be.

## BEING ZEN

In this very moment, exactly as it is.  
No longer so ready to be caught  
In the relentlessly spinning mind.  
Practice is about awakening to the true Self.  
No one special to be,  
Nowhere to go, just Being.  
We are so much more than just this body,  
Just this personal drama.  
As we cling to our fear,  
And our shame, and our suffering,  
We forsake the gratitude of living from our natural being.  
So where, *in this very moment*, do we cling to our views?  
Softening around the mind's incessant judgment,  
We can awaken the heart that seeks to be awakened.  
And when the veil of separation rises,  
Life simply unfolds as it will.  
No longer caught in the self-centered dream,  
We can give ourselves to others,  
Like a white bird in the snow.  
Time is fleeting.  
Don't hold back.  
Appreciate this precious life.

## BREATHE: YOU ARE ALIVE BY SR. ANNABEL LAITY

Breathe and you know that you are alive.  
Breathe and you know that all is helping you.  
Breathe and you know that you are the world.  
Breathe and you know that the flower is breathing too  
Breathe for yourself and you breathe for the world  
Breathe in compassion and breathe out joy. Breathe and be one with the air that  
you breathe.

Breathe and be one with the river that flows.  
Breathe and be one with the earth that you tread.  
Breathe and be one with the fire that glows.

Breathe and you break the thought of birth and death.  
Breathe and you see that impermanence is life.

Breathe for your joy to be steady and calm.  
Breathe for your sorrow to flow away.  
Breathe to renew every cell in your blood.  
Breathe to renew the depth of consciousness.  
Breathe and you dwell in the here and now.  
Breath and all you touch is new and real.

### BY THE POWER AND TRUTH OF THIS PRACTICE...

FROM: SOGYAL RINPOCHE, THE TIBETAN BOOK OF LIVING AND DYING

By the power and the truth of this practice,  
may all beings have happiness, and the causes of happiness.  
May all be free from sorrow,  
and the causes of sorrow.  
May all never be separated  
from the sacred happiness which is sorrowless.  
And may all live in equanimity,  
without too much attachment  
and too much aversion,  
And live believing  
in the equality of all that lives.

May all beings be filled with joy and peace.  
May all beings everywhere,  
The strong and the weak,  
The great and the small,  
The mean and the powerful,  
The short and the long,  
the subtle and the gross:  
May all beings everywhere,  
Seen and unseen,  
Dwelling far off or nearby,  
Being or waiting to become:  
May all be filled with lasting joy.

Let no one deceive another,

Let no one anywhere despise another,  
Let no one out of anger or resentment  
Wish suffering on anyone at all.  
Just as a mother with her own life  
Protects her child, her only child, from harm,  
So within yourself let grow  
A boundless love for all creatures.

Let your love flow outward  
through the universe,  
To its height, its depth, its broad extent,  
A limitless love, without hatred or enmity.  
Then as you stand or walk,  
Sit or lie down,  
As long as you are awake,  
Strive for this with a one-pointed mind;  
Your life will bring heaven to earth.

### VAST ILLUMINATION

Buddha Nature Pervades the Whole Universe  
Buddha Nature Pervades the Whole Universe  
Existing Right Here Right now  
May Penetrating Light  
Dispel the Darkness of Ignorance  
And May the Mind Flower Bloom  
In Eternal Spring  
May Penetrating Light  
Dispel The Darkness of Ignorance  
And May The Mind Flower Bloom  
In Eternal Spring

## REFUGE PRAYER BY Thich Nhat Hahn

At the foot of the Bodhi Tree, beautifully seated and smiling,  
The living source of understanding and compassion, to the Buddha I go for refuge.

The path of mindful living, leading to healing, joy and enlightenment,  
The way of peace, to the Dharma I go for refuge.

The loving and supportive community of practice, realizing harmony, awareness  
and liberation, to the Sanha I go for refuge.

I am aware that the Three Gems are within my heart.  
I vow to realize them.

I vow to practice mindful breathing and smiling, looking deeply into things.

I vow to understand living beings and their suffering,  
To cultivate compassion and loving kindness,  
And to practice joy and equanimity.

I vow to offer joy to one person in the morning  
And to help relieve the grief of one person in the afternoon.

I vow to live simply and sanely, content with just a few possessions,  
And to keep my body healthy.

I vow to let go of all worry and anxiety in order to be light and free.

I am aware that I owe so much to my parents, teachers, friends and all beings.  
I vow to be worthy of their trust, to practice wholeheartedly,  
So that understanding and compassion will flower, and I can help living beings be  
free from their suffering.

May the Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha support my efforts.



## LOVING KINDNESS

May I be well, happy and peaceful.

May no harm come to me.

May I be free from hostility,

Free from affliction, free from distress.

May I have the patience, courage, understanding, and determination

To meet and overcome the difficulties of life.

May I live happily.

May my mind be filled with the thought of loving-kindness,

Compassion, joy and equanimity.

May I be generous.

May I be gentle.

May I be relaxed.

May I be happy and peaceful.

May I be healthy.

May my heart become tender.

May my words be pleasing to others.

May all that I see, hear, smell, taste, touch and think help me to cultivate loving-kindness, compassion, joy and equanimity.

May they help me cultivate the thought of generosity and gentleness.

May they help me be at ease and be friendly.

May they be a source of peace and happiness.

May they help me be healthy.

May they help me be free from fear, tension, anxiety, and worry.

Throughout body, speech and mind,

May I be happy,

May I be well,

May I be at peace,

May I be full of love and understanding.

*In like manner cultivate metta or lovingkindness, toward a benefactor, a dear friend (or family member), a neutral person, a difficult person, all beings in the universe.*

## CHANTS FOR SPECIFIC OCCASIONS

### WALKING MEDITATION from Nagarjuna

I do not walk between  
The step already taken  
And the one I'm yet to take,  
Which both are motionless.

Is walking not the motion  
Between one step and the next?  
What moves between them?  
Could I not move as I walk?

If I move when I walk,  
There would be two motions:  
One moving me and one my feet—  
Two of us stroll by.

There is no walking without walkers,  
And no walkers without walking,  
Can I say that walkers walk?  
Couldn't I say they don't?

Walking does not start  
In steps taken or to come  
Or in the act itself.  
When does it begin?

Before I raise a foot,  
Is there motion,  
A step taken or to come  
Whence walking could begin?  
What has gone?  
What moves?

What is to come?  
Can I speak of walkers,  
When neither walking,  
Steps taken not to come ever end.

We're walking and walker one,  
I would be unable to tell them apart;  
Were they different,  
There would be walkers who do not walk.

These moving feet reveal a walker  
But did not start her on her way.  
There was no walker prior to departure.  
Who was going where?

### INCENSE OFFERING

(Three bells. When Sensei is in place to offer incense, chanting begins.)

ALL: In Gratitude we offer this incense to all Buddhas and Bodhisattva's throughout space and time. (Two Bells. Sensei bows and raises incense.)

ALL: Teaching and living the way of awareness in the very midst of suffering and confusion, Shakyamuni Buddha, the Enlightened One, to whom we bow in gratitude. (Two bells. Sensei bows and raises incense.)

ALL: Showing the way fearlessly and compassionately, the stream of ancestral teachers, to whom we bow in gratitude. (One bell. Sensei bows, raises incense and returns to her place.)

### METTA PRACTICE DEDICATION:

May \_\_\_\_\_ be at peace.  
May their heart remain open.  
May they awaken to the light of their own true nature.  
May they be healed.  
May they be a source of healing for all beings.

## EVENING DEDICATION

Infinite realms of light and dark convey the buddha mind:  
birds and trees and stars and we ourselves come forth in perfect harmony;  
we recite our gatha and our sutra for the many beings of the world;  
in grateful thanks to all our guides along the ancient way;  
all buddhas throughout space and time  
all bodhisattvas ,matamatas;  
the great prana paramita.

## MEAL GATHA

First,  
Seventy-two labors brought us this food;  
We should know how it comes to us.  
Second,  
As we receive this offering,  
We should consider whether our virtue and practice deserve it.  
Third,  
As we desire the natural order of mind to be free from clinging,  
We must be free from greed.  
Fourth,  
To support our life we take this food.  
Fifth,  
To attain our way we take this food.

First, this food is for the Three Treasures.  
Second, it is for our teachers, parents, neighbors, and all sentient beings.  
Third, it is for all beings of the six worlds.  
Thus, we eat this food with everyone.  
We eat to stop all evil, to practice good, to free all sentient beings,  
And to accomplish our Buddha Way.

## MEAL GATHA (Sister Barbara version)

Earth, Air, Water, Fire and Space combine to make this food.  
Numerous beings gave their lives and labors that we might eat.  
May we be nourished, so that we may nourish life.

## BEDSIDE OR CREMATION CEREMONY

Beloved, honored and noble *Name of person*

Pay attention now!

You have lived for a time as a unique and wonderful human being.

Now you are making the transition between this life and what will come forward next.

Just as the elements of the body, earth, fire, water and air, are now dispersing in order to re-enter the cycle of creation and destruction,

So also the elements of the heart/mind (wisdom and compassion, creativity and joy)

Will dissolve and merge with the Whole Universe,

Re-emerging in accord with the great Law of cause and effect as the life of new and precious beings.

As the heart/mind is emptied of memory and experience, of personality and self, You may experience many phenomena: wonderful, unusual and even alarming.

Do not be afraid!

Remember that these are all marvelous and mysterious manifestations of the One Great Mind which is your true mind.

Do not be disturbed or distracted by these phenomena.

Go forward toward the great light, in faith and in grace, supported and guided by all those who have protected you through this life.

Go forward into that great darkness, which is emptiness of our Original Nature. In that darkness all things dissolve and become free from karma.

Recognize your original dwelling place by its qualities: pure clarity, bright luminosity, and vast spaciousness.

You are released now from all earthly concerns and ties.

Go forward to rejoin your original home, at one with emptiness and that great energy of creation.

Go in peace. Go in peace.

## ALONG THE MICHINOKU

Along the Michinoku, everything is wonderful.  
But in Shiogama, fishing boats pulling together  
are most amazing of all. (repeat)



# APPENDIX

## Four Nobel Truths:

- 1-Suffering exists
- 2-Suffering has a cause
- 3-Suffering has an end
- 4-To get to the end of suffering follow the 8 fold path

## The Eight Fold Path: The Middle Way

- 1-Wise View
- 2-Wise Intention
- 3-Wise/Skillful Speech
- 4-Wise/Skillful Action
- 5-Wise Livelihood
- 6-Wise Effort
- 7-Wise Mindfulness
- 8-Wise Concentration

## THE EIGHT BARDOS - THE SON OF REALIZATION – MILAREPA

1. **A:** Sentient beings in the three realms of samsara  
And Buddhas who have passed beyond suffering  
**B:** Are one in their actual true nature  
This is the bardo of view
  
2. **A:** The various white and red manifestations  
And the inexpressible innate mind  
**B:** Are inseparable, being one in the intrinsic state  
This is the bardo of meditation
  
3. **A:** Delusory appearances in their various manifestations  
And one's own non arising mind  
**B:** Are one as nondual co-emergence  
This is the bardo of conduct

**4. A:** Last night's dreams arise from habitual patterns  
We know them to be false when we awaken

**B:** These states are one in being illusion-like  
This is the bardo of dreams

**5. A:** The impure five skandas  
And the pure five families of the victorious ones

**B:** Are one within the non-conceptual completion stage  
This is the bardo of the generation and completion stage of the path

**6. A:** The father tantras arising from skillful methods  
And the mother tantras arising from wisdom

**B:** Are one as the co-emergence of empowerment  
This is the bardo of the essential point

**7. A:** The unchanging of dharmakaya for one's own benefit  
And the unceasing form kayas for the benefit of others

**B:** Are inseparable being one in the intrinsic state  
This is the bardo of the three kayas

**8. A:** The impure illusory body born from a mother's womb  
And the pure form of the deity

**B:** Are one in the luminosity of the bardo  
This is the bardo of result

**All:** When one sees everything clearly and precisely  
There is no samsara and no nirvana to achieve  
Duality and all bardos are transcended.

Tibetan Master Khenchen Konchog Gyaltzen

## GLOSSARY

Bardo means a state between any two things; happiness and suffering, delusion and enlightenment, this life and the next. Our life constantly plays out in between, in duality.



The three realms that comprise samsara are the desire, form and formless words  
Hard as we try, we cannot stabilize or establish as true that which does not exist.  
No matter how long we meditate  
Never see a self

THE FIVE SKANDAS ARE:

Form

Feeling

Perception

Mental Formations

Consciousness

## IN REMEMBRANCE OF JIM WITINSKI

**“Enjoy each moment”-Jim Witinski**



**And in the end what remains is love**



## **FLOWING RIVER SANGHA**

<https://flowingriversangha.com/>