

yellow, and green, with straight black trunks anchoring the light. A breeze passed and leaves sparkled.

As I sat in that ancient place, things slowly came back into perspective. I was upset because I did not want a particular marina built in a pristine sea grass meadow. But given the sweep of ecological time and the global impact of humanity, no one person can save or lose the planet. Even if I lost the fight against the marina, the planet would still resolve those issues in its own way. To think otherwise was simply an ego trip.

Two days before I had come to the same spot on horseback. The sunset had glowed and everything had been luminous. This time I was about an hour earlier, and the light was not quite so vibrant. I sat on the ground in a bed of flowers, with green shrubs and pink meadow beauties rising above my eye level. The forest looked totally different than it had looked from the back of a horse; just a few feet totally changed the world.

Eventually the sound of the wind in the pines became the flow of time, the voice of reality moving like a river. It's always there, always flowing. We usually don't notice it beneath the clutter of commitments and daily schedules, but it's always there. Sometimes we clear away the distractions and discover it.

This place was forest. Other places are buildings, offices, kitchens, roads — all the human culture that has replaced this original fabric that still gives us life, push it back though we will. While I sat in the forest, other people were sitting in meetings, doing reports, buying and selling, designing and building — generally doing "adult" things. WHAT was going on here? Whatever was happening in that little piece of pine forest, with its sunlight and insects, its fox squirrels and flowers, is what this planet has always been about. With that perspective, the fear, anger, and tension disappeared and I could relax. I came back and after a year-long fight won the marina battle after all.

But such battles are endless. The only way to keep going is to wage them with joy, with understanding of one's true role, and most of all with compassion for those on the opposite side, since there really is no opposite side. The goal isn't just to win the battle. The goal is to understand what is really going on in this little piece of time and space. In order to save the endangered wood stork or snow leopard, we must first understand our correct relationship to it. And everything that arises teaches that relationship if we just pay attention.

Anne Rudloe is a marine biologist and environmental activist. She sits with the Cypress Tree sangha in Tallahassee, Florida. □

Satellite Eyes and Chemical Noses

By Jan Sendzimir



Action

If every creature were visible to us it would be no mystery that life is suffering. Inhale and we kill countless microscopic beings; exhale and we pollute our world. Zen's gift is an incisive questioning that cuts to original awareness. If we address pollution as a reflection of suffering, we go to the root cause: hunger.

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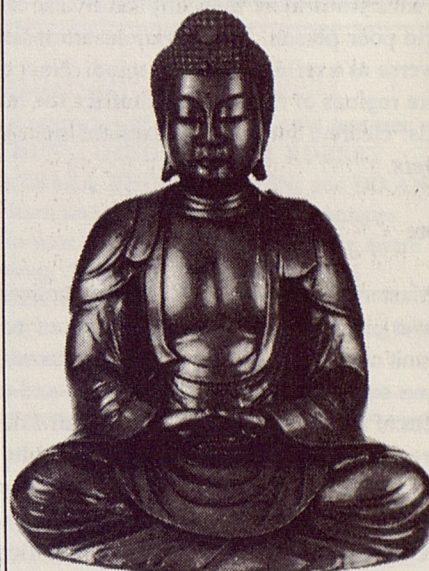
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Satellite Eyes and Chemical Noses

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But as "Zen Buddhists" we may only see the hunger of temple visitors. It's time to recognize that our footprints are all over the planet; the game is global.

One example: destruction of rain forests in the Amazon. Severe freezes in Florida set up such an orange grove planting boom in Brazil that landlords evicted thousands of tenants in order to plant trees. Those evicted joined hundreds of thousands of poor people desperate for food, so desperate they try slash-and-burn agriculture in the rain forests.

Zen practice provides an answer that precedes ecological evidence: cut consumption. The hunger of our lifestyles is a source of destruction worldwide, as evidenced in Brazil. Paul Ehrlich, the eminent ecologist, points out that the environmental destruction needed to support a normal North American lifestyle is more than fifty times that of the average third world poor person. Zen patriarchs admonished us to see the universe as a reflection of our mind. Now ecologists can cite entire regions of the earth that reflect the hunger of shopping malls: clearcut forests, soil erosion, shantytowns with open sewers.

Place

Mastering our sense of place has implications for all of us. A poet observed that the most profound ecological act is to commit oneself to live in one place, to come to rest, so that one knows one's own home, where smells and uses of plants and voices of animals are familiar, as is their suffering. If we stay, we realize how we paper the walls of our home with our own karma. We create our environment. How can we not care?

Our view of home has to expand, and our thinking may have to expand to include initial sacrifice on the road to healing. For example: In Poland, a project explores the use of a swamp to soak up lead and zinc that flow out of a mine's waste water. Biologists and naturalists have called the idea criminal. But add up all the pollution generated if a treatment plant were constructed: pollution would not be confined to one swamp, as in the experiment. Coal mines, steel mills, power plants and other factories powering such a clean-up would be causing pollution. The range of our vision has to grow past the swamp, past our sense of time.

Dynamics

The average North American family moves every seven years. How can we learn the rhythm of a flood or drought cycle when each stanza comes but once a decade? Odorless and colorless, carbon dioxide and methane have been mounting for decades, and as the greenhouse heats up, who has the patience to recognize a wave that crests once a century?

Awakening to the beat of our compassionate heart in Zen

practice is miracle enough. And this may be one path effective enough to let fall the lifestyle which bleeds the rest of the planet. But our responsibilities are even wider. The changes are swifter and more all-encompassing than the five senses can grasp. We need satellite eyes and chemical noses on balloons and anchors all over the planet.

To recognize waves of change, one needs a flexible view. But whether trying to follow ripples on the pond of Mind or the swelling of atmospheric warming, students of Zen or ecology face a common enemy: certainty. A deep religious conviction, born of grappling with a profound question, unmistakably recognizes the stink of certainty. An old saying goes: "Even a true statement will stake a donkey to one spot for ten thousand years."

Certainty surfaces as a deadly tendency among environmentalists: a death-grip belief in a halcyon, natural world in perfect balance. This is a mirror image of how industrialists see nature: a world in equilibrium, a balance so powerful that it always rights itself. By their view, no matter how much pollution is poured into the sea, it will always absorb it, and be ready and willing to deliver more natural wealth. How often does one find combatants who resemble each other so much

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POETRY

*When listening
for the hills*

*No ought
or should
in their standing
or your sitting
Their murmur is obvious.*

*Why weep
over our mortal
fleeting
against the slow
sweep
of mountains
dancing?*

*What other flesh
can flip this
grief
into the joyful shout
of
100
years?*

*Jan Sendzimir
Utah, 1986*

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PROVIDENCE ZEN CENTER

Fall Practice Series

"Introduction to Zen" Workshop

A one-day workshop designed to introduce the beginning student to basic Zen philosophy, history, and practice methods. DO AN SUNIM will lead this discussion-oriented workshop designed to give you a firm foundation in Zen practice, and to help you develop a regular meditation practice at home. The day will include a public talk by JANE McLAUGHLIN and a tour of PZC.

September 9, 1990, 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. \$40.00 (\$30.00 KUSZ members/college students)

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This one-day retreat balances discussion with actual practice of sitting, chanting, and walking meditation. JACOB PERL, JDPSN will give a Dharma talk and lead retreatants in Soen Yu (Zen-style energy breathing). MU SOENG SUNIM will talk on the history of Zen. DO AN SUNIM will instruct retreatants in traditional Korean Zen chanting.

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This will be a day of strong practice that will also prepare you to sit more intensive meditation retreats. JACOB PERL, JDPSN will give kong-an teaching interviews. The retreat practice will include bowing, chanting, sitting, and walking meditations. DO AN SUNIM will orient retreatants in retreat forms. You'll observe silence the balance of the day, including an informal vegetarian lunch.

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January 2 - March 29, 1991 Retreat begins Jan. 2 at 10:00 a.m.; subsequent entries at 4:30 p.m. on Jan. 11, Jan. 25, Feb. 8 (experienced students only), Feb. 15, Mar. 1, and Mar. 15. \$210 per week (\$130 KUSZ members/college students) \$1500 full retreat (\$1300 KUSZ members/college students)

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Soen Yu and Dharma Play Workshop

Learn Zen-style energy and visualization exercises from JACOB PERL, JDPSN, as developed by Zen Master Seung Sahn as aids to more traditional Zen practice forms. Powerful Soen Yu breathing exercises can give added energy to your practice and daily life. Dharma play utilizes creative visualization to help overcome hindrances to your practice and give stronger direction to your life.

October 21, 1990, 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. \$50.00 (\$35.00 KUSZ members/college students)

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Registration

- Introduction to Zen Workshop September 9, 1990
- Foundations of Zen Retreat September 16, 1990
- One Day Retreat September 23, 1990
- Christian-Buddhist Retreat October 6 & 7, 1990 (staying overnight __ Friday __ Saturday __ Sunday)
- Soen Yu and Dharma Play October 21, 1990
- Winter Kyol Che (entering _____ leaving _____)

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Satellite Eyes and Chemical Noses

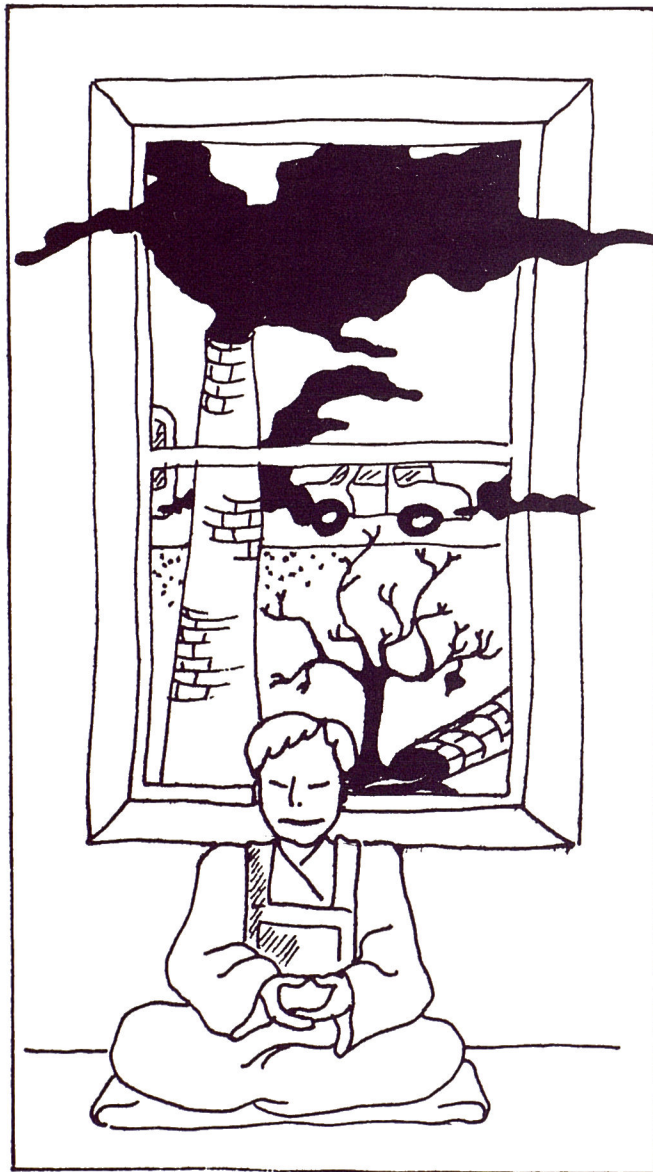
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that the only thing to do is stand outside the circle?

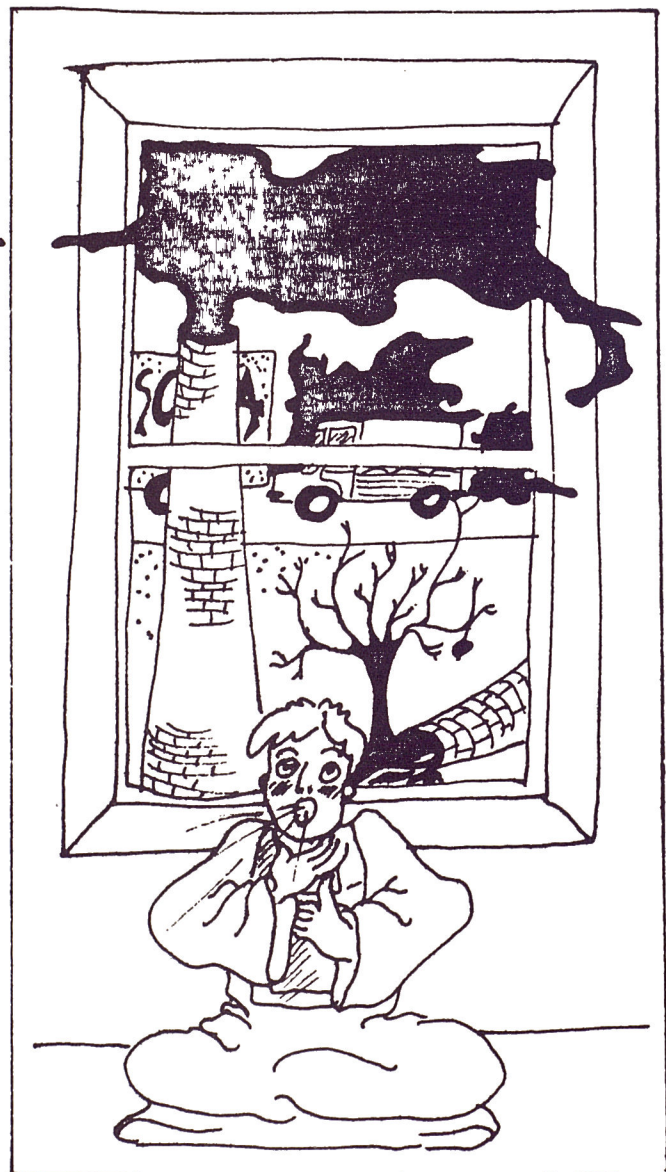
There are as many paths out of the circle as there are faiths. But once our faith has borne us past the snares of everyday life, what then? How can we complete the circuit and return our faith and peace to those who need it inside the circle? Ecologists are only now reclaiming the wisdom of the sutras. There

is no balance ; there is nothing to cling to. No clinging means no dependence, means no hunger, means no exploitation. Five million homeless children in Brazil would hope we learn our lessons before they are forced to make the rainforest their home.

Jan Sendzimir is an environmental professional who lives in Florida. He is the director of the Gainesville Zen Circle. □



Breathe in . . .



Breathe out . . .

GARY VINTA 1992