

# DHARMA ZEN CENTER

Volume 2 • Issue 1

Winter 2008

## PART I

# An Interview With Zen Master Seung Sahn

Interview by Diana Evans at  
Cambridge Zen Center

(From Vajradhatu Sun  
Dec '83/Jan '84)

Excerpt from *Don't Know Mind*

...**Diana Evans:** You often talk about “don't know mind”. Could you say something about what that means?

**Seung Sahn:** Don't know mind is very important. Don't know mind is that. Zen means to understand the True Self, but what am I? Don't know. Do you understand don't know? Who are you?

**DE:** I don't know.

**SS:** So, human being come in empty handed and go out empty handed. That is the human situation. When you are born, where do you come from? When you die, where do you go? Life is like a floating cloud which appears. Death is like a floating cloud which disappears. The floating cloud does not exist. Human beings are coming and going, life and death. But there is one thing which remains pure and clear. What is the one pure and clear thing?

**DE:** Mind?

**SS:** What is mind?

**DE:** That is difficult to say.

**SS:** Don't know! Don't know mind is very important. Only say don't know. What am I? Don't know. That cuts all thinking. When you think, then your mind and my mind are different. When you cut all thinking, your mind and my mind are the same. This is because don't know mind is no

thinking and no thinking means empty mind. Empty mind is before thinking. When you keep don't know mind 100 percent, then you are already the universe, and the universe is you. You and everything have already become one.

As we say, that is the Primary Point. The name of the Primary Point is Don't Know. Somebody could say that the primary point is mind, or Buddha, or God, or nature or apple, or consciousness, or anything. But the true Primary Point is no name, no form, no speech, no word, because it is before thinking. When you keep don't know mind 100 percent, you and everything are already one!

So, I ask you, are the stick and you the same or different?

**DE:** The same?

**SS:** Correct, but if you say the same, I will hit you three times. If you say different, I will hit you three times, because this substance is before thinking. The primary point is before thinking, there is no spoken word. If you open your mouth, it is already a mistake. It is thinking. So I will hit you. Close your mouth. Are the stick and you the same or different? Ask him (points to a student that is present).

Are the stick and you the same or different?

**DE (to student):** Are you and the stick the same or different?

**Student:** (hits floor)

**SS:** Correct! The stick's substance, your substance, the uni-

verse's substance are all the same. But opening the mouth is not possible. Even if you say the truth, it is only thinking. Only demonstration is possible. Everything becomes one. Only you have to do it. To do it means that air has no substance, no inside, no outside. Outside and inside become one. I ask you, are the stick and you the same or different?

**DE:** (hits floor)

**SS:** Correct! You understand! That name is Don't Know. That name is the Primary Point. That name is your True Self. That means that complicated mind becomes simple. There is just one point, the primary point. So, where are you coming from?

**DE:** (hits floor)

**SS:** Correct! What's your name?

**DE:** (hits floor)

**SS:** How old are you?

**DE:** 33.

**SS:** No, that is your body! When you die, where do you go?

**DE:** (hits floor)

**SS:** Correct. No problem. That is what we call “Don't Know Center”. Only say don't know. Then you can control your feelings, your condition, your situation. Then you can believe in your True Self 100 percent. That has no life. Only your body has life.

So, that's Don't Know! Don't know is everything, everything is don't know.

Do you have more questions?

# SANGHA NEWS & NOTICES

Happy New Year!

Much has happened since the last newsletter.

On a sad note, Lorian Elbert, resident of Dharma Zen Center, passed away. Although we miss her, her passing has brought many of us closer together, re-forged some old bonds and increased the strength of our practice. Her 49-Day Memorial Ceremony was held on Dec. 1.

In happier news, on Oct. 27-28 we had a very successful retreat with Zen Master Bon Soeng. On Saturday night, the Dharma Room was full to capacity! We are always grateful to Zen Master Bon Soeng for making the time to visit us here at DZC.

On Nov. 17, we held a well-attended Three-Year Memorial

Ceremony for Zen Master Seung Sahn. It was a day of fond remembrance and good, clear Dharma Talks. Combined with the ceremony was a half-day Kido, which was small but powerful.

The following Sunday many of us went to Tahl Mah Sah for their Three-Year Memorial for Zen Master Seung Sahn. It was a wonderful multicultural event, with Mu Sang Sunim giving one of the Dharma Talks.

On Dec. 9, we celebrated Buddha's Enlightenment Day. It was well attended, and we all enjoyed celebrating together as a Sangha.

As you may know, Mu Sang Sunim was in the hospital recently recovering from illness. We are happy he is home again, and feel-

ing much better (if a little tired). Welcome home, Mu Sang Sunim!

Eun-Kyung Stein was also in the hospital recently, but for a much happier reason. Eun-Kyung and Michael Stein had their baby! Congratulations to both of you, and welcome Iden Hyeon Stein!

We have also expanded our Outreach Program. We are still feeding the homeless at the Midnight Mission every month. And recently, we went to Venice Beach very early in the morning to hand out sleeping bags to those who needed them. We plan to do similar projects in the future. If you would like to participate or make donations (especially sleeping bags, but also clothing, blankets, food or money), please contact Ron Allen at (213) 923-9169.

## January

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		<b>1</b> 5 am – Morning Practice 7 pm – Meditation Instruction	<b>2</b> 5 am – Morning Practice 6:30 pm – Evening Practice/Long Sitting	<b>3</b> 5 am – Morning Practice 6:30 pm – Evening Practice	<b>4</b> 5 am – Morning Practice	<b>5</b> 5 am – Morning Practice 6:30 pm – Evening Practice/Long Sitting
<b>6</b> 10 am – Sunday Practice/Dharma Talk 6:30 pm – Evening Practice	<b>7</b> 5 am – Morning Practice 6:30 pm – Evening Practice	<b>8</b> 5 am – Morning Practice 7 pm – Meditation Instruction	<b>9</b> 5 am – Morning Practice 6:30 pm – Long Sitting/Kong-an Interviews	<b>10</b> 5 am – Morning Practice 6:30 pm – Evening Practice	<b>11</b> 5 am – Morning Practice	<b>12</b> 5 am – Morning Practice 6:30 pm – Evening Practice/Long Sitting
<b>13</b> 10 am – Sunday Practice & Circle Talk 6:30 pm – Evening Practice	<b>14</b> 5 am – Morning Practice 6:30 pm – Evening Practice	<b>15</b> 5 am – Morning Practice 7 pm – Meditation Instruction	<b>16</b> 5 am – Morning Practice 6:30 pm – Evening Practice/Long Sitting	<b>17</b> 5 am – Morning Practice 6:30 pm – Evening Practice	<b>18</b> 5 am – Morning Practice	<b>19</b> <b>4:30 am – 9:30 pm</b> <b>Retreat with Paul Park, JDPSN</b>
<b>20</b> No Morning Practice 6:30 pm – Evening Practice	<b>21</b> 5 am – Morning Practice 6:30 pm – Evening Practice	<b>22</b> 5 am – Morning Practice 7 pm – Meditation Instruction	<b>23</b> 5 am – Morning Practice 6:30 pm – Long Sitting/Kong-an Interviews	<b>24</b> 5 am – Morning Practice 6:30 pm – Evening Practice	<b>25</b> 5 am – Morning Practice	<b>26</b> 5 am – Morning Practice 6:30 pm – Evening Practice/Long Sitting
<b>27</b> 10 am – Sunday Practice/Dharma Talk 6:30 pm – Evening Practice	<b>28</b> 5 am – Morning Practice 6:30 pm – Evening Practice	<b>29</b> 5 am – Morning Practice 7 pm – Meditation Instruction	<b>30</b> 5 am – Morning Practice 6:30 pm – Evening Practice/Long Sitting	<b>31</b> 5 am – Morning Practice 6:30 pm – Evening Practice		

# FEBRUARY

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					<b>1</b> 5 am – Morning Practice	<b>2</b> 5 am – Morning Practice 6:30 pm – Evening Practice/Long Sitting
<b>3</b> 10 am – Sunday Practice & Circle Talk 6:30 pm – Evening Practice	<b>4</b> 5 am – Morning Practice 6:30 pm – Evening Practice	<b>5</b> 5 am – Morning Practice 7 pm – Meditation Instruction	<b>6</b> 5 am – Morning Practice 6:30 pm – Evening Practice/Long Sitting	<b>7</b> 5 am – Morning Practice 6:30 pm – Evening Practice	<b>8</b> 5 am – Morning Practice	<b>9</b> 5 am – Morning Practice 6:30 pm – Evening Practice/Long Sitting
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<b>17</b> <b>YMJJ Retreat with Judy Roitman, JDPSN</b>	<b>18</b> 5 am – Morning Practice 6:30 pm – Evening Practice	<b>19</b> 5 am – Morning Practice 7 pm – Meditation Instruction	<b>20</b> 5 am – Morning Practice 6:30 pm – Evening Practice/Long Sitting	<b>21</b> 5 am – Morning Practice 6:30 pm – Evening Practice	<b>22</b> 5 am – Morning Practice	<b>23</b> 5 am – Morning Practice 6:30 pm – Evening Practice/Long Sitting
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# MARCH

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<b>30</b> 10 am – Sunday Practice & Circle Talk 6:30 pm – Evening Practice	<b>31</b> 5 am – Morning Practice 6:30 pm – Evening Practice					<b>1</b> 5 am – Morning Practice 6:30 pm – Evening Practice/Long Sitting
<b>2</b> 10 am – Sunday Practice & Circle Talk 6:30 pm – Evening Practice	<b>3</b> 5 am – Morning Practice 6:30 pm – Evening Practice	<b>4</b> 5 am – Morning Practice 7 pm – Meditation Instruction	<b>5</b> 5 am – Morning Practice 6:30 pm – Evening Practice/Long Sitting	<b>6</b> 5 am – Morning Practice 6:30 pm – Evening Practice	<b>7</b> 5 am – Morning Practice	<b>8</b> 5 am – Morning Practice 6:30 pm – Evening Practice/Long Sitting
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<b>16</b> 10 am – Sunday Practice & Circle Talk 6:30 pm – Evening Practice	<b>17</b> 5 am – Morning Practice 6:30 pm – Evening Practice	<b>18</b> 5 am – Morning Practice 7 pm – Meditation Instruction	<b>19</b> 5 am – Morning Practice 6:30 pm – Evening Practice/Long Sitting	<b>20</b> 5 am – Morning Practice 6:30 pm – Evening Practice	<b>21</b> 5 am – Morning Practice	<b>22</b> 5 am – Morning Practice 6:30 pm – Evening Practice/Long Sitting
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# THANK YOU . . .

Thank you to Kwan Jin Sunim for keeping the garden and fish in the pond alive.

Thank you to David Ledeboer for keeping Mu Sang Sunim company during his hospital stay and for keeping the rest of us informed.

Thank you to Hyung Mun Sunim for all his hard work at DZC. You helped improved our water filtration system, beautified the patio and outside stairs and fixed the Dharma Room door, among other things in a very short time.

Thank you to Matt Kamm who continually goes above and beyond as Housemaster.

Thank you to Sonya Shelton for keeping things running smoothly here whether you know it or not.

Thank you to Bridget Duff for joining the Board of Directors and for your constant support of DZC.

Thank you to everyone who supported us and chanted with us through our trying times.

And finally, thank you to Paul Park, JDPSN, for your continued guidance.

Dharma Zen Center is only able to exist because of people like this.

# UPCOMING EVENTS

- On the first Sunday of every month, we go to the Midnight Mission in downtown Los Angeles to help serve food to the homeless. We leave from Dharma Zen Center at 3:30 p.m. If you have any questions about our Outreach Program, please call Ron "Bodhidharma" Allen at (323) 936-9169.
- On January 19 from 4:30 a.m. to 9:30 p.m., we will have a retreat with Paul Park, JDPSN.
- On February 16-17, we will have a retreat with Judy Roitman, JDPSN, who is the Guiding Teacher for both the Kansas Zen Center and the Red Earth Zen Center in Oklahoma.
- On March 15 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., we will have a one-day retreat with Paul Park, JDPSN.

***To register for any of the above retreats, please call Dharma Zen Center at (323) 934-0330 at least 48 hours in advance.***

## DHARMA ZEN CENTER

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