



Buddhist Thoughts

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Stage 544 J.K. Hirano

Generally speaking, people are considered to be good and faithful followers if they lead a moral life, attend church services and participate in welfare activities. In Jodo Shinshu Buddhism, however, while these practices are encouraged, they alone do not constitute the Buddhist way of life. What is critically important is that the teachings radically transform our way of thinking and living so that we become true individuals: strong in crisis, humble in success, tender in our feelings and grateful at all times.
The Awareness of Self, Rev. Gyodo Haguri

I am on the last leg of the BCA Eastern Tour. It has been a wonderful two weeks, despite, at times, waking up wondering, "Where am I?" The unfamiliar beds at the various hotels, temples and parsonages were comfortable enough, but there were a number of mornings when I would wake up a little dazed and confused along the way. It has been tiring for an old man like myself, but invigorating spiritually. The quote I began with is from the book Awareness of Self, by Rev. Gyodo Haguri and translated by Rev. Will Masuda. This quote in many ways sums up my personal spiritual journey and also a summary of what I have found on the Eastern tour.

When I was a High School student, I began to really wonder what my life was about. As a third generation male Japanese American growing up in a very homogeneous society like Salt Lake City, I really questioned who I was and what I would do with my life. If there was a God like my Mormon friends spoke of, I felt as though he was trying to be funny yet, I didn't get the punch line. I was American just like them, but in so many ways, I was different. To be honest, at that time in my life, I really didn't know what my own religion had to say about these feelings.

Growing up in Utah and spiritually at the Salt Lake Buddhist temple, my religious needs were met by the comfort of the Sangha basically looking like me and having the same cultural background. My spiritual life was as Haguri Sensei defines in this passage, "...considered to be good and faithful followers if they lead a moral life, attend church services and participate in welfare activities." This is what my Mormon friends did at church, so wasn't this what I was supposed to do also, only with others who were more like me?

As I have mentioned in past articles, to be a part of the temple and my temple friends who looked like me was like having a secret society with our own language. We could say "544" in English and knew in Japanese this was "Go shi shi". "Go" was the English for go, but "shishi" was Japanese was Japanese and meant "to pee", thus the code was "Go pee." These little codes and other cultural aspects of the temple kept me coming. However, the true religious question such as, "Who am I?" was far down

the list compared to the important cultural feeling of “Just like me.”

What is a Buddhist in Utah? I believe that the Buddhist Churches of America had a very important role in helping the Japanese American community survive and thrive after the devastation of World War II, as the new documentary called “Streams of Light” clearly points out. This was a large part of what it was about for a member of the Salt Lake Buddhist temple. It was a place for me to develop my cultural identity more than having my religious or spiritual questions answered. I feel that from the 40s through the late 1990s, our temples were needed to heal the wounds inflicted by World War II and America upon the Japanese American Sangha.

However, times have changed in many ways. I am now no longer a little boy looking for my cultural identity. I am now a member of AARP. The secret society and language is far in my past. As I have changed, so have our society and the religious landscape of America. The Japanese American temples of BCA successfully met the needs of the previous century. But as my body has begun to fall apart, so have our temples and we must both make critical attitudinal and lifestyle changes to survive. Our current members and youth are far more sophisticated than my baby boomer generation. They still need help with their cultural identity, but I believe we can and must be a place they can have their religious and spiritual identities developed and nurtured.

Being allowed to take part in this Eastern tour has reinvigorated me spiritually and helped to remind me of why BCA is so important. I know that I would like to do whatever I can to help us and our temples move into maturity, for in some ways, our temples may still be in the “544 stage” of our development and we are having difficulty in moving beyond it. I am extremely grateful for BCA, CBE, the Eastern District, Bishop Umezu and the Revs. Harada, Kuwahara, Miyamura and Rye who made my trip possible. The Sangha of the Cleveland, Ohio, Washington D.C. (Ekoji), Seabrook, New Jersey, New York, New York, Chicago (Midwest) and Minnesota (Twin cities) temples and Sanghas have been so gracious and welcoming to me. Culturally I have had my perspective opened.

I realized long ago that if our temples were merely for moral guidance, welfare and even cultural activities to some extent, we would lag behind compared to the larger Christian Churches. In Utah, if all we want is a black-and-white guide to morality and welfare activities we should just join the Mormon church, because they are really good at that, as I was reminded at the play, “Book of Mormon” on Broadway. What we have that the Mormons or Christian Churches do not; is the Nembutsu teachings, which define us as “true individuals, strong in crisis, humble in success, gentle in our feelings and grateful at all times.” Although these qualities may be found at Christian churches just as welfare activities can be found at our temples, the Nembutsu teachings emphasize the development of human beings described Haguri Sensei.

I would like to share a few highlights of my trip. The first was standing on the exact spot of the Lincoln Memorial steps looking out towards the Washington monument, where Rev. Martin Luther King gave his “I have a dream” speech. To my surprise, this experience brought tears to my eyes. Just visiting Washington on my own, I don’t think would have allowed me the same experience. Jane and Frank Blechman of the Ekoji Buddhist Temple graciously took me around and shared this with me. In New York, it was having a late dinner with members of the New York Buddhist temple, sitting in a busy, noisy Manhattan restaurant, conversing about the Dharma and other topics. The diversity of their Sangha and the setting made me think I was Dorothy Parker, the center of attention, sitting at the fabled Algonquin Roundtable. At Minnesota’s Ft. Snelling, thanks to Wayne and Jane Takeshita, I found the record of my father entering the Military Intelligence Service (MIS) during World War II. I’m grateful to Rev. Ron Miyamura who made sure I had my fill of Chicago hot dogs and Italian beef sandwiches. There were so many wonderful cultural experiences, however it was meeting the Eastern District Sangha members that spiritually nurtured and invigorated me.

I have served the San Jose Buddhist Church Betsuin, Salt Lake, Ogden and Honeyville Buddhist temples. I have visited many of the temples on the West Coast, Northwest and Mountain States Districts of our Buddhist Churches of America (BCA). I have had the pleasure of attending a Fukuin in New York and to speak at the Midwest Buddhist temple. However, during 25 years of serving BCA, I had never really been aware of the Sangha members of the Eastern District. To my appreciative surprise, they were as Haguri Sensei defines a Jodo Shinshu Buddhist: “ *true individuals: strong in crisis, humble in success, tender in our feelings and grateful at all times.*” The Eastern District Sangha, in spite of having a very different cultural background from the West Coast and an extreme shortage of ministerial support, has grown beyond the need for a 544 mentality. They thirst for the Nembutsu teachings and are grateful for what they receive. I hope the Eastern District can lead BCA in our transition from a Nikkei culture-based institution to one that is truly alive with the Nembutsu teachings. Our BCA must go beyond labels of Japanese, American, Male, Female, Gay, Straight to an organization for all of us human beings, floundering in this ocean of birth and death. I am so grateful for having been allowed to take part in this Eastern Tour and for all I received. I could say so much more, but for now, all I can do is bow my head in gratitude and say “Namo Amida Butsu!”

BWA News

Gail Minaga/Karie Minaga-Miya

April was sure busy and just flew by fast. We started the month out with Hanamatsuri service. There is a lot to prepare to have our annual service. The Hanamido is a small gazebo like structure that is beautifully decorated with flowers. This structure houses a small statute of baby Siddhartha (Shakyamuni Buddha) at the Hanamatsuri service. We extend our deepest appreciation to Takeko Doi and Terry Fujinami for decorating the Hanamido for our service. On Saturday, April 13th, several BWA members had an opportunity to learn how to make the delicious sakura mochi. The BWA is in transition this year and the passing of the baton to the next generation of recipes, techniques and flavoring will take time. We give our appreciation to Takeko Doi for sharing her recipe, Setsuko Nagata for patiently teaching us how to make the mochi and Jane Sakashita for encouraging us as we fumbled our way through the process. We had a few salty leaves that we'll remember to soak in water a bit longer next time. Thank you goes to Reiko Matsuura, Reiko Watanabe, Kathy Terashima, Maya Chow, Connie Sakashita, and Gail Minaga for giving up their Saturday afternoon to participate.

By the time we publish this, the BWA will have had their meeting (on April 21st). We are busy getting ready for Nihon Matsuri on April 27th. The 21st was a busy day. The Temple purchased a new AED (heart defibrillator) and it is installed near Sensei's office. Training was held for those who wanted to attend on Sunday the 21st. There also, was a food handlers class for both Temple Members and others from JCC.

Here is a reminder for Nihonmatsuri. It will be held on Saturday April 27, 2013 and BWA will be making Chicken Bento Box and Spam Musubi. We will be preparing on Friday April 26, 2013. We invite BWA members and anyone who can help prepare for the cooking on Saturday to come and help. Thank you Reiko Matsuura for coordinating the cooking for this event.

Please note: The 2019 World Federation of Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha Buddhist Women's Association (WFJSH BWA) convention will be held in San Francisco. For planning purposes, the convention planning committee asked that FBWA districts and chapters distribute the attached survey to

not only our members but everyone in our Sanghas, therefore, Gail and I ask that you complete the survey and return to BCA by May 20th, 2013. The survey process was also described in the March BCA Update. The surveys (hard copy or on-line) are due to the 2019 WFJSH BWA Convention Planning Committee, c/o BCA Headquarters, 1710 Octavia Street, San Francisco, CA 94109, **by MAY 20, 2013.**

Upcoming Events:

- Mother's Day
- Gotan-E Service – Shinran Shonin's Birthday on May 21st 2013
- The closing of the Time Capsule- there is still time to get your family history together and put in the capsule.



Dharma School News

Judy Watanabe

The year is quickly ending for Dharma School. It has been a wonderful year with such great students and teachers. The kids did such a good job on their performances at Hanamatsuri. We also had the kindergarten class go to Ogden to perform at their program. Thanks to all the teachers for teaching the kids their darling programs. Thanks to Tracy Akimoto-Roberson for her organization of the event.

The Dharma School sponsored the Nikkei Center lunch on May 4. We had a great turn-out and it was a lovely day. Special thanks to Mary Misaka Jessop and Yo Misaka for cooking the lunch. Also thank you to Brenda Koga, Stephanie Sueoka, Reiko Mitsunaga, Karen Seo, Maya Chow and LaVerne Kyed for helping out with the lunch.

Parent's Day is May 19 and the YBA will be cooking us lunch. Please come and join us for lunch and a nice day honoring our parents.

On June 2, will be our annual Lagoon Day with the Ogden Buddhist Temple. Tickets will be sold at the Salt Lake Buddhist Temple. Ogden will be buying chicken for the lunch and Salt Lake needs to bring a dessert. It is a fun outing to do together and we hope we have a big group to go.

Graduation day and the last day of Dharma School will be June 9. We hope you can all attend this service to honor those graduating from high school and college.

One last thing. The past few years the Dharma school has been having a “camping” outing to Mill Hollow. It is a lot of fun. There are little cabins with showers and plumbing (always a nice thing to have) and places for fires and star gazing. There is a lake nearby for fishing and hiking. We are looking to have more people join us this year. It is a fun opportunity to get to know each other better and enjoy the beautiful scenery of Mill Hollow. We are trying to schedule the dates, we hope it will be Aug. 30-Sept. 1. So put that on your calendar and we will let you know as the dates get set.

May Shotsuki Hoyo

May 19, 10:00 am

Name	Date of Death	Next of kin
Akita, Sam Hideo	5/17/64	Janet Thomas
Aoki, Michio Mike	5/13/92	Sharon Carmichel
Atagi Tomi	5/26/89	June Seo
Fujii Fumiye	5/10	Masami Hayashi
Hirano Ikuye	5/10/88	Jerry Hirano
Hirano Kazuyo	5/31/92	Jerry Hirano
Iwasaki Tori	5/28/69	Paul Iwasaki
Minaga Taka	5/15/96	Mark Minaga
Miyake Mitsuyoshi	5/31/84	Jim Miyake
Moshizuki Kuniko	5/21/83	Takeo Mochizuki
Namba Jin	5/20/84	Kaz Namba
Ninomiya Tei	5/8/64	Yoshiko Ninomiya
Nishida Seiichi	5/15/64	Aiko Okada
Nishikawa Shigeru	5/18/98	Nancy Wayman
Nakahara Nancy	5/21/99	Lily Nakahara
Okino Masano	5/18/81	Masako Imamura
Shiba Hideo	5/4/96	Ayako Shiba
Sueoka Kame	5/15/89	Dru Sueoka
Suzuki Saku	5/31/00	Yeiko Nagata
Tanaka Hiroshi	5/6/91	Masahiro Tanaka
Tsuyuki Yoshiko	5/27/91	Mark Tsuyuki
George Nakai	5/12/01	Maryanne Nakai
Haruo Nakagiri		Howard Nakagiri
Nishiye Sasaki	5/15/05	Shigeru Sasaki
Sumi Hattori	5/16/2006	Gary Koga
Ben Mayeda	5/20/07	Craige Mayeda
Helen Yoshinaga	5/2009	Rolen Yoshinaga
Roy Yoshinaga	5/27/2001	Rolen Yoshinaga

Major memorials for 2013

If your loved one passed away in one of the following years, you may wish to schedule a memorial service. For more information, please call Rev. Hirano.

Year of Death	Service
2012	1 st Year
2011	3 rd Year
2007	7 th Year
1997	17 th Year
1989	25 th Year
1981	33 rd Year
1964	50 th Year
1912	100 th Year

2013 APRIL DONATIONS

Nanae Taketa	25	March Shotsuki Hoyo
Jean Ikemoto	150	Special
David Shiraiwa	50	In memory of Juzaburo & Chiyo Matsumiya
Ivan Van Laningham	100	Special
Jr Jazz Team	380	Gym Use
Nancy & Tom Hohler	20	Special
Kristen & Daniel Larson	50	Special
Hiroshi & Mary Aramaki	25	Shotsuki Hoyo- George Sakashita
Tosh & Jean Shiba	30	In memory of Kuniko Okuda
Sandy Iwasaki	25	Ohigan
Jun Sudoko	100	Building Fund
Rebecca Jackson	5	Special
Ivan Van Laningham	100	Special

HANAMATSURI

Kiyomi Ryujin	50	Thomas Endo	100
Joseph & Rose Kamaya	50	Nobue Sudoko	25
Haruko Moriyasu	50	Kazuko Terasawa	35
Dora Iwasaki	25	Hatsue & Walter Masauda	20
Hiroshi & Mary Aramaki	50	Kenneth Nodzu	25
Robert Kasubuchi	30	Yuriko Dennison	50
Yuriko Iwamoto	25	May Akiyama	25
Ivan Van Laningham	100	Brian & Tammy Fukushima	200

Nobuo Aoki	50	Connie & Phil Sakashita	30
Faye & Jim Eng	100	Ruth Schriock	25
Paul & Kathy Terashima	50	Dean & Rise Hirabayashi	25
Dave & Holly Black	25	Michelle Matsuura	20
Renee Matsuura	50	Stephanie Sueoka	25
Suzan Yoshimura	25	Jerry & Carmela Hirano	100
Kazuko Yakumo	50	Tracy Akimoto	25
Rebecca Jackson	15	Chris & Shelley Taketa	50
Kimi & Tom Hattori	25	Pam Sugihara	20
Brenda Koga	25	Lynn & Marilyn Shimada	50
Aki & Neil Chow	25	Robert & Tami Tokita	40
Mark & Gail Minaga	25	Joni Sueoka	25
Hisako Minaga	25	Justine Hirasuna	15
Rick & Bobbie Ikegami	20	Richard & Lynne Doi	100
Troy & Judy Watanabe	30	Grace Oshita	100
Sandra Iwasaki	25	Bruce & Christy Fong	25
Nanae Taketa	50	Tamiko Adachi	20
Kathleen Hirabayashi	30	Linda Oda	20
James Aoki	25	Karie & Marcus Miya	100
Jeannie Painter	10	Bart & Robyn Hirabayashi	15
Henry & Tammy Kuramoto	25	Jun Sudoko	35
Buster Mayeda	50	Lisa Imamura	50
Chris Oki	25	Misuko Shimada	50
Masami Hayashi	100	Terry & Mits Fujinami	100
Nancy Takagi	25	Kirk & Betty Yamashita	25
Maxine Furubayashi	50	LaVerne & Ernie Kyed	50
Reiko & Byron Watanabe	50	Setsuko Nagata	50
Dave Sekino	50	Ichiro & Takeko Doi	100
Brent & Sherrie Koga	25	Misao & Elsie Doi	75
Jeanne Konishi	75	Jane Sakashita	25
Dot Richeda	30	Jeff Watanabe	25
Reiko Mitsunaga	25	Helen Mitsunaga	50
Tomio & Junko Mitsunaga	100	Alice Ogura	25
George Aoki	30	Tom & Fran Akimoto	40
Owen Stewart	20	Tom & Eiko Kishimoto	20
Shizue Sakai	100	Kyle Matsumura	50
Stan Endo	50	Shirley Farr	50
Asako Mori	30	Sadie Kato	30
Richard Matsuda	25	Sachiko Tohinaka	25
Donna Sato	25	Rose Watamura	20
Sherrie Hayashi	50	Chic Terashima	50

APRIL SHOTSUKI HOYO

Nobuo Aoki	50	For Eva Aoki
Hisako Minaga	100	For Kozo Minaga
Karie Minaga-Miya	100	For Kozo Minaga

Nanae Taketa	25	For Shinobo Taketa
Kimi & Tom Hattori	25	For Shizue Adachi
Pam Sugihara	20	For Shizue Adachi
Dave Sekino	50	For Lilian Sekino
Misuko Shimada	50	For Shigeru Shimada
Lynn & Marilyn Shimada	25	For Tai Oishi
Robert & Tami Tokita	20	For Shizuko Mitsunaga
Faye Mitsunaga	20	For Shizuko Mitsunaga
Jane Sakashita	25	For George Sakashita
Mark Minaga	25	For Kozo Minaga
Tom & Fran Akimoto	75	For Kiyoshi Akiyama & Chotaro Matsuura
Tamiko Adachi	25	For Shizue Adachi
Tracy Akimoto	25	For Landon Akimoto
Tracy Akimoto	25	For Shizue Adachi
Grace Oshita	50	For Rae Fujimoto
Sherrie Hayashi	50	
Kathy & Paul Terashima	50	
Chic Terashima	25	

DHARMA SCHOOL

Takae Nakamura	20	Goodie Bag
Jun & May Sudoko	20	Goodie Bag

JR YBA

Chiz Ishimatsu	100	Special
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ADDITIONAL **TEMPLE** MEMBERSHIP

Anthony & Robyn Liu	Yuriko & Carl Dennison
Kristine Clifford	Marcus Miya
Tomiye Ishimatsu	Hisako Minaga
Chizuko Ishimatsu	Troy Holbrook Family
Takae Nakamura	Robert & Tami Tokita Family
Li Fam	Reiko Mitsunaga