

Wind Bell



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INTRODUCTION

Please forgive the long delay between this issue and the previous one. Tim Buckley retired as Wind Bell editor in June and his successor, Katherine Thanas, was not available until the Fall. Katherine had previously felt that the city practice in San Francisco had not been fully described in the Wind Bell since the inception of Tassajara, and she began her editorship by taping many hours of interviews with the students, teachers and neighbors of the new Zen Center home at 300 Page Street. To extracts from these interviews she added descriptive text on the history and everyday practice at Zen Center (identified as the Wind Bell voice). Separately (in sections identified as Editor) she has added some personal observations.

The manuscript went through several cycles of editing. In this final version, most of the quotes have been taken from those taped interviews except for those sections otherwise identified. Suzuki-roshi's comments are, in general, taken from lectures, but in a few places he has added brief comments to observations made by others.

The result is the following description from various points of view—though mostly those of 300 Page Street residents—of the seemingly indeterminate, sometimes confusing city practice, the ordinary life which Suzuki-roshi stresses so much.

Peter Schneider
President, Zen Center



CITY PRACTICE

SUZUKI-ROSHI: It may be a mistake to think it is easy to practice zazen when we have a complete building with a nice Buddha Hall and zendo. I know how difficult it is to practice in this kind of building. Because the building is so good there are difficulties. You know that to practice our way is not easy; it is difficult.

Our practice should be related to our life in the city and to the lives of our neighbors, too. This is a city zendo, where everyone may come and practice our way—not only old students but also people from outside of Zen Center. There are big difficulties, for new students and for old students alike. Old students will have double duty and new students will have difficulties which they do not even dream of. So the old students must make practice easier for the new ones. The old students should lead the new students so they can practice our way more easily, but without telling them this way or that way, you should do this or you shouldn't do that. And our daily life in this building—extended from our zazen practice—should have a good relationship with our neighbors, too. Even though someone's nose is beautiful it should not be fixed upside down.

We say our practice is the ornament of Buddha. Even though students don't know what Buddhism is, if they come to some beautiful Buddha Hall then they will naturally have some feeling. But essentially, for Zen Buddhists, the ornaments of the Buddha Hall are the people who practice there. Each one of us is, should be, a beautiful flower. And each one of us should be Buddha himself, who leads people in our practice.





MEL WEITSMAN: The building is rather large so it looks, at times, empty; sometimes, as if deserted, even when we may be doing zazen in the zendo. The ceilings are very high and the building itself is very monumental, but it doesn't have the feeling of monumentality. It's not like a rococo building or a temple; it's more like an office building, just a big space. The feeling, though, is good, friendly. And there are beautiful parts, even though the architecture is really square.

But one thing I feel is that the zendo needs something. It is painted completely white with a black floor. Facing that white wall can be very hard on the eyes. I think we should paint a strip three or four feet up from the floor a darker color so that your eyes aren't always looking at that white wall.

BARRIE MASON: You know, before you see the building, you see the trees and that's just so nice, to be walking along a city street and see all the green, the soft greenness, and then see a nice, very solid, red brick building behind it.

CLAUDE DALENBERG*: There were a few obstacles to buying the building, such as where to get the \$325,000—especially since we had about \$4,000 available at the time. But we decided to go ahead. We asked the students for no-interest loans and they responded generously. We figured rental income would be sufficient to pay off the building and to meet physical expenses, and that we would depend largely upon a volunteer staff.

Apparently we were realistic, for our budget is pretty much in order and here we all are today. Many of us still wake up pretty amazed to be in such a fine building. Some of us find it almost embarrassing.

Suzuki-roshi has given the zendo a good name, the "Maha-Bodhisattva Zendo". But so far "Page Street" is the best we've been able to come up with for the building.

*From his remarks at the ceremony officially opening the building April 26, 1970.

WIND BELL:

Eleven years have passed since Suzuki-roshi arrived in San Francisco May 23, 1959, to become chief priest for the Japanese-American community at Sokoji Temple on Bush Street. Then, as now, he welcomed anyone interested in Zen Buddhism to practice with him. Those who came were mostly from outside the Japanese community. As they arrived, one by one, he gave zazen instruction and invited them to join his daily 5:45 a.m. sitting.

Within two years there was a schedule of two periods of zazen daily, weekend sesshins and a modest work program around the temple. Suzuki-roshi began lecturing regularly in English. The first seven-day sesshin was held in 1962 and in March of that year the first of Roshi's American students to go to Japan left for Eiheiji monastery (one of the head training monasteries in Japan for Soto Zen Buddhism). In that year also, Zen Center incorporated.

The first zazen students sat in pews and then in a small zendo which they built upstairs in Sokoji. Slowly they added to the zendo and finally expanded it to include both sides of the balcony encircling the church proper. Zen Center shared the space and time with other groups besides the Japanese congregation itself, in particular, a Women's Auxiliary on Monday nights, a three-man band which practised on Wednesday nights, a woman's judo class on Thursday, and a Japanese movie concession on weekend evenings.



So availability was limited and Zen Center could not schedule additional periods of zazen. Sesshins could not be held on Sundays and, except for two nights a week, could not continue past 6 p.m. All in all, the Japanese congregation treated Zen Center very well, but it was their church, not ours.



In 1967 Zen Center was strong enough to realize one of Suzuki-roshi's dreams—that of establishing a mountain monastery. That summer Zen Mountain Center opened at Tassajara Hot Springs. From Sokoji Temple to Tassajara the students, both men and women, followed Suzuki-roshi, accepting three days of tangaryo* before qualifying to stay at the monastery. That first summer about 70 students trained there for periods ranging from a few days to three months, led by head student Dick Baker (who received Dharma transmission** from Suzuki-roshi December 8 last year). Some remained after the summer as students and directors; a few have stayed on for four years.

At Tassajara students had the opportunity as a group to experience practice as a way of life, something more than zazen periods in the zendo. As they returned to city lives they sought to create in San Francisco the conditions for a practice-centered community.

Initially this took the form of communal apartments across the street from Sokoji. There was from the beginning a dormitory for persons new to the community. However, there was still the fact that zendo space was rented from the Japanese congregation, its availability limited by their uses, and that the zendo, the Zen Center office and the student living quarters were physically separate.

As zazen students continued to arrive, the energy for intensified practice required a more concentrated setting. In 1969 Zen Center officers began to look for a place which was larger and where students could live and practice together with their teachers. After a few months, by November of that year, we had located, completed financial arrangements for, and moved into 300 Page Street, originally a residence club for Jewish women.

Once Zen Center had moved to 300 Page Street it was possible to add an additional zazen period in the evening, to continue the weekday zazen schedule through the weekends and to begin offering five and seven-day sesshins every other month. Moreover, the sesshins could continue into the night and sesshin students could take all their meals in the zendo and sleep in the building.

*Continuous uninterrupted sitting from 4 a.m. to 9 p.m. with only short breaks after meals.

**Dharma transmission will be explained in a later issue.

PETER SCHNEIDER: It is important to have the various activities in our life such as cooking, eating and sleeping take place in the same space as where we practice zazen. When we lived on Bush Street, Sokoji was on one side and the office and Zen Center housing were in separate buildings on the other, and thousands upon thousands of cars came down the center every day driving

one-way into downtown San Francisco. Suzuki-roshi counteracted this in a very unique way by insisting that the students use the crosswalk, and only cross "on the green". They couldn't believe him—but they did it. There is nearly the same noise level in 300 Page Street but now all that energy doesn't cut right through us.



Our real difficulty now is how not to differentiate between those who because of their family circumstances or newness to Zen Center are unable to live in the building and those who because they can live in the building can practice more zazen, etc. For this sort of reason there is a feeling among some residents and non-residents that to really practice in the city you have to live in the building.

Certainly it is more difficult to participate fully in the building's schedule when you do not live in it, but rather than accept this feeling of insider versus outsider, we should search for ways to make the practice as available as possible to everyone. One way is to help the communal houses nearby find new members when one of them comes into the building or goes to Tassajara. Another way is to help the families to find apartments nearby and work out some way so that their kids can be together.

For example, last year Zen Center bought the house next door so that Kata-giri Sensei and his family could have a place to live. The rest of the rooms in the house were considered as a part of 300 Page Street. But finally it was decided to rent the other space to families and we fixed the yard a little and put stairs from it to the back courtyard of 300 Page so the kids could have a better play area.

JED LINDE: I guess I'm most aware that those who live outside 300 Page Street like us—and others I've talked to lately—feel a little isolated. And most of us don't like that feeling very much, especially after we've experienced the closeness of practicing together at Tassajara and other places.

It's really nobody's fault; it's just that there's this big brick building where the practice is centered and we don't happen to live there right now. There's an adjustment to be made, and you make it. It's harder, though, for families like ours who have older children, and have no choice in the matter. We aren't allowed to live in the building and so it seems that much colder.

I do feel that almost everyone living outside of Page Street is very grateful for its existence, but that nostalgia for closeness still persists, at least in my case.

SUZUKI-ROSHI*: As we have so many students here, inside and outside of Zen Center, we need more help. I decided to have Lay Ordination for you old students just to help others, not to give some special idea of lay Buddhist because all of us are Buddhists, actually. Every sentient being is a Bodhisattva, whether or not he is aware of it. As this is our conviction I didn't want to give you some special idea of lay Buddhist, but the time has come for us to strive more sincerely to help others.

Our way is like Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva. When he wants to save ladies he takes the form of a lady; for boys he takes the form of a boy; for fishermen he becomes a fisherman. A more sophisticated Chinese expression is to be like a white bird in the snow. When people are like snow, we should be like snow. When people become black, we should be black. And always being with them, without any idea of discrimination, we can help others in its true sense, without giving anything, any special teaching or materials. This is actually the Bodhisattva way.

*From his remarks at the Lay Ordination ceremony in August, 1970.





Softness of mind is the foundation of our practice to help others. You may think we are forcing you into some form, forcing some rituals on you or some special teaching; forcing you to say "Yes, I will." But these things are provided for you just to be like a white bird in the snow.

When you practice zazen in this way, you have the point of zazen and the point of practice. This is why we had an ordination ceremony today. None of us, including various great teachers, find it easy to be like a white bird in the snow. But somehow, we should make our best effort. If you help yourself through practice, you can help others without anything. Just to be with people will be enough.

In spite of your busy, everyday lives you found time to sew your *rakusu**. I think this is a good example of the Buddhist way; even though we are busy

*The small vestment worn as an outer garment, symbol of the Buddhist robe. True to the Buddha's original robe, made from rags, the *rakusu* is sewn of 19 small pieces. "*Namu kie Butsu*"—"I take refuge in the Buddha"—is said with each stitch, thus sewing hundreds of Buddhas into the cloth and ultimately making the *rakusu* Buddha himself.





there is some way to practice the most formal practice. Even though all human beings in the city are busy, there is no reason why they cannot practice our way. If all join our practice of being a Bodhisattva, the result will be great.

WIND BELL:

The air at Tassajara is fresh and clean and every day the students come out of the zendo after breakfast into a startlingly brilliant world of light and shade and sound—sun, sky, clouds, trees, bird calls. The Page Street building is never free from the sound of tires screeching to an abrupt stop, the bus exhaust as the driver brakes its roll down the hill, the slamming of car doors, the voices of neighbors calling to each other, the constant knock at our front door.

Some enter that door in order that city life may drop away. This does not happen, of course, but many find a restfulness inside that is first felt in the building's large open lobby and high ceilings. A sense of order seems to come out of the space itself, and the spontaneous "disorder" of the talk and laughter creates an interesting contrast.

The lobby space opens out in the four directions. To the left are the Zen Center offices, straight ahead the stairs and the kitchen and dining room, to the right the Buddha Hall. Behind is the street. A student receptionist greets newcomers.



The Buddha Hall is simple, white-walled, bare. Tatami mats cover the floor. A wooden altar, student-built, stands in front of the fireplace with a scroll of Amida Buddha just above it. On the altar are enshrined a plaque representing Shakyamuni Buddha and a small metal figure of Bodhidharma, the First Patriarch of China. ("The spirit of Dogen Zenji, the First Patriarch of Japan, is also there."—Suzuki-roshi.)

The building is three-stories and four-sided with an additional large basement floor and sunbathing area on the roof. On the bottom floor are the zendo, laundry room, carpentry shop, and storage space, as well as a few residence rooms.

In the center of the building, on the ground floor, is an open patio which Suzuki-roshi already envisions as a garden with ferns, trees, plants and rocks from Tassajara Creek. Moving stones with Roshi is a favorite practice at the monastery, an opportunity anticipated in San Francisco.

On the second and third floors are residence rooms for 70 students. Suzuki-roshi and his wife live on the second floor.



From the roof of our building students can look out on the skyscrapers of the city's business heart, and on the concrete skyway that cuts through the rectangular blocks. Nearby are commercial sections: Market, Haight, Fillmore Streets. We share Laguna and Page Streets with apartment buildings and large houses built of brick, stucco and wood—some beautifully maintained, others old and neglected. There are "For Rent" signs that never come down. A grassy lot covers the corner a block away.

The first Blacks moved on the block 13 years ago and today the neighborhood, while racially mixed, is predominantly Black. Bi-weekly meetings of the Neighborhood Association are presided over by Hervy Luster, a politically alert and energetic man. The Association works for increased police protection and the organization of community effort for such endeavors as a mini-park and a recent successful school boycott (to replace an indifferent White principal with a Black one for the local elementary school).

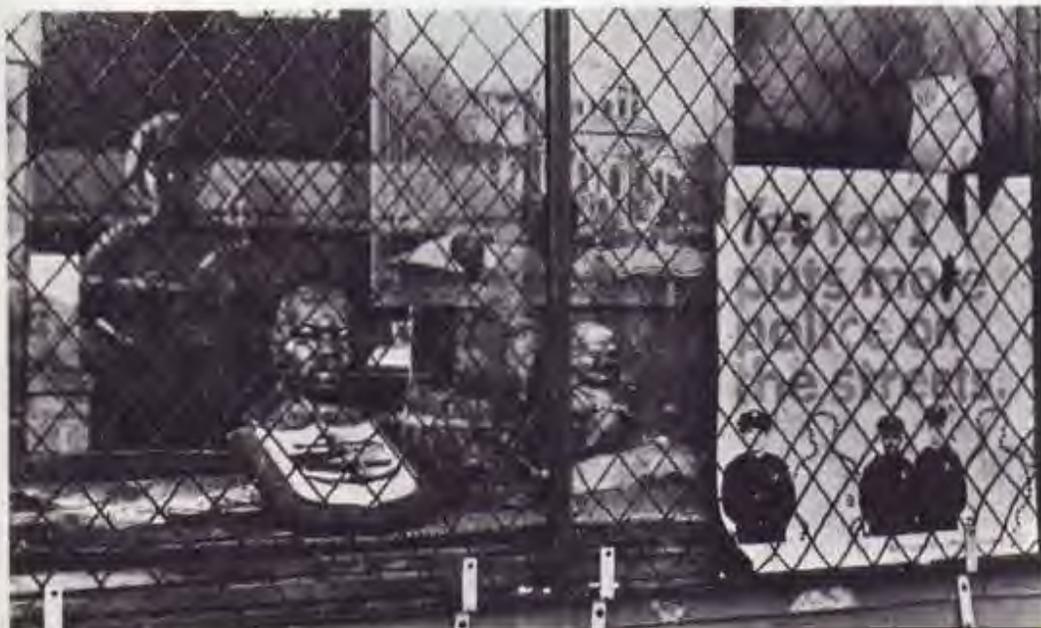
When Zen Center contemplated purchase of the building, we wondered about making our home in a neighborhood so unknown to us as this. Few Zen students have lived so close to urban Blacks or to a city's highest crime rate area. We were afraid, to some extent, but finally we decided to move in. We felt we had something to offer.



Our actual experience of the aggression on the street and thefts in the building left us confused. For several months house meetings discussed at length the question of right understanding and right response. A year ago at Tassajara Tatsugami-roshi responded to a local problem of after-hours snacking in the kitchen by telling us to put locks on the doors and take them off our minds. Something of that nature was the solution we finally found for Page Street. We concluded that open doors, unlocked rooms, the coming and going of new faces in the neighborhood, had made us, like many others, targets for the random aggression bred by the frustrations in America. Our college-trained humanistic approach—to create a dialogue between ourselves and the young Blacks who came to us—seemed somewhat off the point. Confessing our inadequacy at this stage of our understanding, we finally agreed to lock the doors.

One student has said that one aspect of city practice is to deepen our sense of realism and to learn to deal with our fellowman, if necessary, as a thief-with-Buddha Nature. Unsettled, still, about our "solution", we find that daily living in the neighborhood gives us a Genjo koan* with which to stretch the limits of our minds.

*A riddle unsolvable by the logical mind and arising out of everyday life.



PETER SCHNEIDER: The problem wasn't really with thefts but that when we left the front door open the six-to-ten-year-olds in the neighborhood came in to run around the courtyard, sometimes with the students' kids, and it got to be pretty noisy. Then their older, junior-high-aged brothers entered on "inspection" tours, which included pushing our buttons by opening every accessible door and drawer. It got to be too much. There wasn't always someone available to keep down the noise in the courtyard or to chaperone the inspectors, and when there was, the kids could usually out-fox them. So in our general uneasiness about the difficulty in the street we accepted locking the doors.



SUZUKI-ROSHI: When I say it is difficult to practice in such a beautiful building with a completely furnished zendo I mean rigid formal practice in a complete zendo is not always good practice. The practice then may tend to be dead. To have a strong practice in comfortable surroundings is difficult. But when you practice with various difficulties that practice has a lot of strength in it. To help others who may be in the midst of difficulties in this sense is to help them have good practice. When we practice in the midst of the difficulties of our neighbors and our own difficulties, then we will have good practice. Our practice will be actual.

CLAUDE DALENBERG: Here we don't have the background support of Japantown and the Japanese-American community. That gave us some kind of backdrop, mostly at a subconscious level, which we seemed to need.

Our way of life—our practice, dress, ceremony and so on—are in a way incredibly outlandish. What are we doing here in the middle of an interracial American urban neighborhood? It's fantastic, but a real challenge.



Zen Center should be in harmony with American society, capable of existing on its own two feet in the middle of that society. Now that we're thrown into this neighborhood and subject to the pressures of living here, I hope we will be forced to grow up, to mature, and not continue to be dependent on Japanese surroundings.

MRS. HERVY LUSTER, wife of the President of the Neighborhood Association and proprietor of the cleaning store across the street: Well, at first you looked strange to me, but I got used to you. Because we met in the building three or four times before you started having your meditation at night. We used to have our meetings there on Monday night, but then you went to having meditation at the same time and that's when we had to move our meetings over to the convent. And it seems that's where we lost contact. I understood some of it but most people look at it from the outside, they just don't understand. It looks strange. I heard one of my customers say, 'If they are hippies—some of them dress that way—they are high class hippies'. The way they explained it to me was that the higher class hippie is a person, especially the young ones, just leaving home wanting to be on their own and wanting to do whatever. In other words, they've got enough money there, so they don't have to leave; they're some of the richest ones, so I've been told. But they just want to make a change.

And then another thing is that the front of the building is different now. The drapes were taken down when you made the Buddha Hall. And up in the living quarters, they used to have curtains. I don't know if it's just my imagination or the way I feel about the thing, but curtains used to be even in the windows, in unity. But as you see it now—I can understand the no drapes down in the Buddha room—but in the dwelling quarters some windows don't have anything. And it really draws the attention of people. Usually when they walk in the shop the first thing they focus on is: 'What kind of building is that over there?' It didn't used to be like that.

I wouldn't say you look out of place. The only thing I can say is since the group moved in we're overcrowded as far as parking.

It seems like it's just a bunch of people over in a big building, keeping to themselves, doing for themselves, and that's it. We thought that Zen Center, that along with the religion, you were going to help in a community-wide way.

I don't really put it to your organization because in all organizations there's always somebody in there that's in there for the name, and to get by, and not in there for the real thing. So, that's the way I look at it.

WIND BELL: In what ways could we help?

MRS. LUSTER: Well, in our Neighborhood Association, different things come up. The bus zone needs painting right now, so it would be more convenient for older people to step up on the bus. A lot of the time they can't see the bus coming down for the cars parked there. We do have a parking problem around here, everybody knows that. But in order to make city hall aware, we have to write these letters, and get things done. So we felt that with this group coming in we'd have some more help like the other group helped. During the holiday season we get together needy family baskets. Oh, we've done a lot of things. It would take too much time to tell the things that we have done.

SUZUKI-ROSHI: In the East the main effort we make to solve problems and to help society is to work inside ourselves. But here in the West we try to solve problems actively, by action outside ourselves. The real way to help others should be a combination of the so-called Eastern and Western ways.





YOSHIMURA SENSEI: You know, this building is experimental in Buddhist training; it is a trial approach. This is one of the new movements of Zen Buddhism. Practice, training should be here but not just the same as in the monastery. We should continue to research the best way. Even at Eiheiji life is changing in accordance with the way the background changes. The spirit, though, never changes. If the spirit changes, Buddhism will vanish.

We should always consider the background. If our movement is completely separated from the background of this country, it probably will not settle down here. This will be a kind of temporary, momentary popularization. Maybe our life is just a preparation for the next generation. Not only in this building and at Tassajara, but even in Japan. Maybe the life of the whole generation is . . . should be so.



The people who live in the neighborhood have some strange feelings from this building. I think it's very natural because Japanese Zen priests come and go wearing strange clothes and with shaved heads. Some students also have shaved heads. But as long as Zen Center is in this building we should have full communication with everyone. That's the Bodhisattva way. Buddhism is not to be some special human way. It is for everybody, and it takes a very long time.

In America people have American culture. I think we should mix with this kind of culture. If you live your life by sticking to some special way like Tassajara or Eiheiji monastery, your life at that time is not a true life. It is something like a fake, an imitation.

LORING PALMER: This building is a cold place to go into for the first time. To practice Zen as a monk, it's said, you start on the Ph.D. level. That implies you've been through a lot, have reached a point where you've severed a lot of attachments and are now ready to begin facing a wall and yourself. Well, there aren't so many people here who are at that point. Maybe instead of making people wait out on the steps of the monastery in the cold, as is traditional in Zen monasteries, maybe we could invite them in for tea.

We could help people more than we do. I'm as much at fault as anyone. I have to find some way to communicate this spirit to the others in the building, that we could be a little warmer and share our good vibes with each other a little more, and also with newcomers.

The real reason we are here is that we are students of Suzuki-roshi. The only reason Zen Center or Tassajara exist is because of Suzuki-roshi. A lot of us forget that it is the master-pupil relationship that makes Buddhism. It's true we have the brotherhood between us but also we have the Dharma and the Buddha. It's the relationship between each of these that each student has to work out for himself. It is a lonely place that many of us get to. As it says in *Steppenwolf*, the air gets very thin where the Steppenwolf travels. When you walk alone on the mountain it can be a very lonely place.

REB ANDERSON: You could say, on the other hand, that the only reason we're here is to be in what Suzuki-roshi has created. It's difficult to imagine how this place ever would have occurred without him, but now some people don't see much of him. Most students deal with other students all the time. Some are even afraid of him, or are mostly concerned with zazen practice.



He has said that he wants his older students to take care of new people for him. This will be their practice. One way Suzuki-roshi touches the new students is through the students who have actually had a direct relationship with him. I must say, though, I don't know exactly what he wants us to do or what we are doing.

LORING PALMER: It's very important that we be friendly. It means going out of oneself.

BARRIE MASON: Living here is much more just like daily living. You know, living in such a way that meditation is just part of your life, like eating is part of your life and being around the priests is part of your life, and being around other people and their children growing up here . . . it's just, it's just a whole life.

I didn't know it was going to feel so natural and warm, but I knew it was going to be structured and that if you didn't have a job outside you would be working here. I wish I didn't have to earn a living, and could just stay here all the time.

And, I was talking before about how people don't make such a frantic effort to be friendly, you know, always greeting you. Well, the priests are really like that. When I served Katagiri Sensei's dinner, he was very cool, he just accepted his dinner, very distant and formal, somehow. But then when they're being spontaneous . . . like I was washing the window, I was clear out of the window, hanging on by my knees and scrubbing away, and he ran up and grabbed me around the waist . . . and that was such a quick, spontaneous, friendly . . . thing to do. And it was so different from when you're serving him his meals in the zendo.

And the priests always seem to reflect you. Like if you run into them in the hall, you really feel that formality, but if you come up very softly and just bow or something and walk past, you feel a lot softer feeling.

MEL WEITSMAN: Even though all our life is zazen, our life is on two levels. In one sense our life is nothing special and on another level, every moment is a special moment. We're always living on more than one level and reconciling opposites. Each moment we're transcending opposites.

REB ANDERSON: In the city we don't necessarily want those forms, those very somber elements, which we're trying to establish at Tassajara. At the same time we don't want to be too free.

I see the building as a combination. On one hand, it is some place where we can try something that's never been done before: let's have a scholar come and lecture to us, let's have Sunday School. At the same time, we're supposed to be something very traditional, too. Not semi-traditional, but the real thing, the real



service, as it is actually done at Eihei-ji, yet in the context of walking out the front door and going to work instead of going to the next thing on the schedule. So when we do our zendo practice and our Buddha Hall rituals, our eating practice and our sesshins, we emphasize and develop those traditional practices. The other side, the city side, just naturally comes from being in the city.

MEL WEITSMAN: For some people practice is easy; it's a very secure feeling. Some people don't have many desires. But the people who really have a hard time, and still keep their practice up . . . those are very important because when you see people like that practicing it gives some vitality to the practice.

The zendo practice is the side we have to emphasize. I think if you live in the building you should come to as many zazen as there are. Four a day. I know some people have things to do at night, especially in the city. But some are willing to sacrifice that night life for their practice, people should be willing to do that.

The more examples we have of young people devoting themselves to zendo practice, the better for everybody. When everybody does zazen, the practice gets stronger. There are many beautiful people in the world, but the thing that makes our practice different is zazen.

BEVERLY HOROWITZ: Here we have many different kinds of people living different kinds of lives. The important thing is that we learn to work and live together in harmony. So that we understand in a very definite way that we are together.

There are some people here who are playing a very strong monastic game and trying to set the building up to being like Tassajara. And they give people jobs to do that they don't want to do and though it hurts, it stretches their minds. And other people don't want an official thing but an actual thing and just living here is enough.

And the thing is, it's not even clear what Roshi wants. Some people tell me that Roshi wants our practice here to be like Tassajara, but I have definitely picked up a feeling that he doesn't want that at all. What he wants is for us to live and just get through these things, and enjoy our lives.







WIND BELL:

The return to city life, after Tassajara, may be viewed with apprehension, a journey sometimes delayed. Frequently a student feels he has come back to just the same place he left months before, sitting a little heavily in that familiar everyday life he thought he had escaped.

A city is obviously the expression of man's conflicting moods, impulses, desires, fears—its institutions an extension of our inner life. It is our violence, our greed, our self-denial—as well as a source of our deepest self-affirmation. In the city, unlike Tassajara, Zen students must face the test of alternatives to a regulated pace of life, and often have unresolved doubts about the restrictiveness of city practice.

Each person works out his own practice within the building schedule, with some resultant strain on the common effort, but so far there has been room for many ways . . . and a stretching of individual minds to accommodate the ideas of others.

ANNETTE HERSKOVITS: It's very rare to be surrounded by people who are aware of egoist reactions and try to fight them. Most people let themselves be caught by their egocentrism. People here don't consider self-affirmation is the necessity of their personality. They always want to go beyond it.

Sometimes I feel a little repressed, here. I'd like to . . . take someone around the neck . . . or kiss somebody (laughing). I would be much more exuberant outside but I prefer in some ways how I behave here. Most of that exuberance is not of much value. The first thing I like is that you are required to do things well even if it takes time. People have told me two or three times: "Take your time, but do it well." You have the feeling that everyone around here tries to do things well. When you work outside you have to do things fast, you are rushed, everyone is nervous. It is so painful. Outside everyone is trying to show you that he is righter than you and that is so tiring. Here people don't give you compliments and they don't wait for compliments.



WIND BELL:

Those living in the building are asked to attend a minimum of one zazen period a day and to share the house cleaning and kitchen work. We try to have few rules and to enforce them with restraint, reflecting one aspect of Suzuki-roshi's teaching that to make rules is the easy way. Most students find an important teaching in their zazen attendance and house work as they discover to what extent they participate when the choice is their own.

The major requirement for living here is that you have completed three months of zazen practice, that your effort is seen as sincere, and that you can meet the monthly payment, now \$90. This includes a \$30 pledge fee for Zen Center staff and maintenance and teaching expenses.



For the most part the building has been filled to capacity during the 16 months we have occupied it, although only one-fourth of those who originally moved in on November 15, 1969, are living in the building today. Another fourth have changed places with students returning from Tassajara. Perhaps one-third are fairly new students who have not yet met the six months' practice requirement for Tassajara, are persons who need to work or who want city lives. The remainder are short-term dormitory guests here for a few nights or a few weeks. There are inevitably students who discover after a few months that this is not the right place for them. A few were asked to examine their reasons for being here because their effort seemed not consonant with that of the group; perhaps three or four of them left.

Students are living here who have been practicing more than ten years, and some who have just started. Most of the residents, about 70 per cent, have been practicing from one to three years; 15 to 20 per cent have practiced more than three years. Only ten per cent have practiced less than one year.

Three generations now live in the building. We are each other's children, parents, sisters, brothers. Mostly the residents are single, in their '20's, but there are a few married couples and maybe ten students from 30 to 60 years old. At

present one infant lives here. Within two blocks live seven Zen Center families with 15 children among them, ages one to 13. A weekly Sunday School was started in the fall and children now receive their own instruction in zazen, chanting and bowing.

The building, and the community, are administered by a council of six officers who work full-time in the building and are responsible to Suzuki-roshi and the 12-man Board of Directors which runs Zen Center. Officers are older students, frequently newly ordained priests (*unsuis*) or lay Buddhists. They meet newcomers, supervise the daily work, attend to currents of discontent or satisfaction—and share, with Suzuki-roshi, the responsibility of the community life, its form and substance.

Each weekday morning after breakfast the officers and disciples meet for tea with Roshi to greet each day, occasionally to transact business, but more often simply to spend a brief time with him. This tea is called *chosan*.

Every few weeks a house meeting invites residents' participation in house questions. Their advice is asked on such matters as the use of space, more equitable sharing of house work, morale, etc. Suzuki-roshi or Katagiri Sensei attend to answer questions and to explain why we are asked to follow certain practices that may give us difficulty.



EDITOR: Students in administrative positions find their assignments richly complicated by the depths, the poetic analogies the teachers find in the problems that arise. The priests' generous and soft minds release our own deeper impulses, help us find a balance between the need for hard decisions and our own striving for soft and open minds. Gradually the notion of simple personal answers is renounced. We must simply find a way to live with some problems. At meetings when I start to get excited and find myself interrupting others I know I've been caught by a problem, and I try to back off because I know others are being caught, too, and that way we won't find a good solution.





WIND BELL:

Because of the need for Zen students to withdraw for periods of time to train at Tassajara or to sit week-long sesshins economic problems are frequently acute. Historically the training of Zen monks in traditional Buddhist countries has been financed by the general populace either by government or private donations to monasteries and temples or to individual begging monks. In America this kind of financial support is not yet available. The community helps in one way by providing scholarships for the small staff who maintains the building and helps new students—the buyer, the

cook, the work leader, the librarian, the director, etc. Almost everybody else works outside except the dorm students beginning their practice who follow a full day's schedule in the building.

On something as fundamental as paying one's own way or being supported by Zen Center, the Board of Directors reflects the division of opinion within the community itself. There are 21 students on scholarship in San Francisco and Tassajara (and more during the summer guest season at the monastery), a fact which makes some people at Zen Center uncomfortable. But as the student numbers increase and, moreover, as Suzuki-roshi asks certain ones to devote themselves to study of the language and the texts,



and to go to Japan for further training, Zen Center must find some way to support the training of American teachers as well as the administrative staff.



EDITOR: I sat in on a Board meeting once when some very difficult questions came up about student support. What the Board decides can mean a student will stay on at Tassajara for full-time monastic practice—or will leave to take a job "in the world". It is hard in these discussions to rise above personal reactions to the person in question and also beyond individual attitudes toward work and self-support. Generational differences can be enormous. It seemed to me that as the Board talked about these questions and as different views were aired—as each person expressed his feelings openly, trusting the others to do the same—a collective wisdom seemed to come out of the discussion that no one alone could have found. I was very encouraged.

WIND BELL:

At Page Street we usually eat together in the dining room. A gentle gong rung through the building announces the time. The most formal meal is dinner which is eaten in silence, and two nights a week, and Saturday mornings, we eat in the zendo in zazen posture. A combination of American and Japanese foods and utensils is used.

Kitchen practice is central to our training, and traditionally the kitchen staff puts in the longest hours. For many students this can be the most satisfying work assignment of



all, a place to make unexpected discoveries about the nature of an onion, or an apple, or a kernel of wheat. Our kitchens at Tassajara and Page Street are well known for their bread and their bakers but they are also known as a place for hard practice, and where strong feelings and habits about food can be very revealing.



STEVE WEINTRAUB: The dishwashing that we do here isn't done with care. All the bowls, all the cups are chipped. It's not so much the dishwashing people, it's the dishwasher . . . but there has to develop some way of doing it so that things will not be broken.

I was impressed when I went to Tassajara and heard about Brother David coming and changing the dishwashing schedule, about having a loving care for the things we use. That's one of the things I see Beverly doing in the kitchen. Someone said she treats the vegetables like her brothers and sisters. She treats the pots and pans that way, too.

SUZUKI-ROSHI: Kitchen work and meal practice are very important. This is the first step toward the practice of non-duality. Those who have non-dualistic meal practice can extend that practice endlessly into various practices. The way we take care of kitchen work should be the same way we take care of our posture and breathing and every part of our body in our zazen.





DAILY SCHEDULE

5:00 a.m.	Zazen
5:40	Kinhin
5:50	Zazen
6:30	Service
7:15	Breakfast
8:00	Chosan
8:30	Work meeting
12:15 p.m.	Service
12:30	Lunch
1:30	Work meeting
3:30	Tea
5:30	Zazen
6:10	Service
6:30	Dinner
8:30	Zazen





WEEKLY SCHEDULE

*Monday through Friday**

5:00 a.m.	Zazen
5:40	Kinhin
5:50	Zazen
6:30	Service
12:15 p.m.	Service
5:30 *	Zazen
6:10 *	Service
8:30 *	Zazen

**except Tuesday when we offer.*

7:45 p.m.	Lecture
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Saturday

5:00 a.m.	Zazen
5:40	Kinhin
5:50	Zazen
6:30	Service
7:15	Breakfast
8:00	Work meeting
9:10	Zazen
10:00	Lecture
11:00	Saturday School



WIND BELL:

For residents at Page Street the experience of living in the building gives rise to questions of intent and involvement. Dealing with these questions is an essential aspect of the life. As students ask themselves "Can I sustain this effort? How serious a Zen student am I?" Suzuki-roshi tells them to make constant effort without the thought of achievement. "Be grateful for your difficulties for they are opportunities for practice."

BOB SHUMAN: To live in the building makes your life more structured and gives you a framework in which to do zazen. And there's a common effort, to some extent, anyway. My life here is very physical, it seems. I get up, go to zazen, eat breakfast, make my lunch, go to work, come home, go to zazen, service, eat supper, sit around and joke, go to zazen and try not to joke around too much afterwards because by then it's 9:15 and so I'll try to go to bed. I go to bed at about ten o'clock and that gives me about 6½ or 7 hours sleep and then I'm up again for another two periods of zazen that I push myself through. I don't know where it's all going but I see no end to it at this point—I really have no other alternative.



Underneath all this is very much a struggle, I feel, to work out a basic type of problem of life. In doing something like this over a long period of time this natural, basic type of problem will arise and you will have to deal with it in a moment to moment way and it is actually pretty wonderful to confront it this way, just doing this simple activity.

There's no end to this type of practice. I think that this is the only thing I have to do right now. I have no place else I want to go. The only other possibility would be to another Zen group. Or maybe I'd work on my practice in a different way, but outside of that, there's no other possibility. Nothing, absolutely.

I really feel at home here. When you spend such a great amount of time in one place it's amazing how much it becomes such a touching part of you. You get to really love it, like you love your mother, in a very deep way.

This feeling of a real deep kind of love seems to be but a simple matter of sharing . . . the struggle of life . . . of making that struggle at the same time with other people who are making the struggle. And over a long period of time it makes for the deepest type of relationship.

There's something so natural about it. It's not based upon sharing ideas, it's much deeper than that; it even goes beyond sharing emotional experience. The thing I'm talking about is deeper than that, just being with these people for a long time, and it doesn't really matter who the people are, whether you're emotionally compatible or not. There's a real deep feeling of communication that takes place. You're sitting in the bathroom on the toilet seat and you see someone's foot on the other side of the thing and you know whose foot it is . . . it's very complete.

WIND BELL: When problems come up we take a look at them . . .

BOB SHUMAN: And we don't get hung up on them.

WIND BELL: Some of us do.



BOB SHUMAN: Well, we get hung up on them, but there's such a great amount of time that we're here that it's like some new area of the relationship then opens up and that's all part of this much bigger thing.

MARY QUAGLIATA: The building does give a certain structure that we rely on, but it does that so you can continually pursue something. I think that we're all trying to discover the enlightenment within which we are all living. We all know that it exists and that we're part of it, but we're never aware of how it's functioning. Maybe that's what makes us all alike.

I feel there's great harmony here. I feel that with other people too, but here we make it conscious. If I'm on the Muni bus there's hardly anybody who knows that we're living in harmony. Here we try to find and emphasize that harmony rather than the discord. And then we try to help people outside the building to experience this harmony. Or to make the building a more open place for people to come.

All my life I've been such an introvert that in any kind of tense situation I'd just remove myself, always. Until maybe two years ago I didn't have the strength not to. Then I began to experience being able to not remove myself and to look at the thing objectively and, I guess, just laugh at myself. Before, I'd get tense, I'd see my ego being threatened. Now I can look at it . . . "oh, that's my ego, that's that false thing, that isn't me."

I guess those things are really why I'm here. Everything revolves around love and what that is, I think. It's the thing we never talk about, and I don't think it's probably right to talk about it. But, isn't it the issue? To get yourself to the point where you love whatever you're with, whatever you're doing. Constantly you're in a state of complete acceptance and you're completely utilizing your energy with no trace. And you never separate your thoughts from your action or divorce yourself from the present situation, and you're never choosing to be anything or wishing or desiring to be anywhere else.

Somehow, here in the building I can concentrate on that. Anything I do all day long is this kind of thing, this finding in my mind those externals, those



hitches where I'm wishing something else would happen. Desiring this, desiring that instead of just seeing oh, how wonderful it feels to walk, or, now I'm walking, what's walking about? Now this is cutting carrots. What's cutting carrots about?

WIND BELL: How about difficulties?

MARY QUAGLIATA: I think I have the same difficulty here that I've had anywhere. I have no more difficulty here than anywhere else. It's a feeling of dealing with a sadness or an emptiness, a loneliness. I've had it all my life. I have a problem wanting love and not ever really getting enough. Probably what brought me to Zen was knowing this was a clinging to an ego and that if I want that pain to go away I have to break down that idea of there being an ego that needs love. So in my practice, instead of centering on what I need, I know that since I need it, everyone else needs it, so I try always to be as kind as possible,

to always show the other person in the building including the people in the buildings that are outside, that you care about them, that you're not devoted to them, but you do experience what they're experiencing and you want to help. You can do that here.

YVONNE RAND: You could say there is a monk in all of us, but there are a lot of other things in us, too, and what we're trying to figure out individually and collectively is how to reconcile some of those parts of ourselves. Someone may want a kind of monastic experience for a period in his life but not necessarily for his whole life.

We have within the building now the seeds of many different kinds of practice, which makes a kind of ambiguity in the situation, but we are gradually getting clearer about what we want and need. Already we have 10 or 12 people here on scholarship, who lead a kind of monastic life.



I think eventually there will develop, outside this building, apartments in which four, five, six or seven people live together. When people are really committed to sitting and also want to live in smaller groups, they will do that. I see that as the next thing we will move to.

I think that also, as a group, we are maturing more and beginning to pay more attention to our personal lives which we might have thought of as private, not practice as much as something else. I first realized that last spring watching one of the couples trying to figure out whether they should go to Japan or not. I saw all of us going through a series of personal emotional problems and I realized that as we were each trying to find some solution for ourselves we were doing that for the community, too. Our problems and solutions are communal concerns. Zen Center is actually just the sum of all of us individuals working out our lives. When I began to see that, I had a very good feeling about it.

My kids really like the building, they did from the beginning. They have a good feeling about it. They feel welcome here. Hilary can go and see one of the babies and do some babysitting and occasionally she can go into the kitchen and cut up carrots. Christopher can follow Steve Wright around and gossip with him about plumbing.

It's decidedly harder for the boys because they're the ones who introduce the elements that we don't want in the building, like noise and rowdiness. Already in one week's time having the back courtyard for them to play in has made a difference. Last evening I went to zazen. Hilary was next door sewing a zafu and Christopher and Yasuhiko and Eric were playing in the back courtyard and were perfectly happy. They could do what they needed to do and I could do what I wanted to do.

One of the problems we've been working on as a community is the question of a family. How does a family exist and participate in Zen Center? It made a big difference when the Johansons came back; they are very clearly a family. They had been away for several years and now wanted to come back to be near Roshi, to sit zazen, to try to find out what it means for them as a family to live as Buddhists. They wanted to try to work that out with other people and I felt, personally, a real encouragement from that.

I feel that we are a very rich community and I feel as if I'm on ground that allows me to develop in a way that I have never felt in any other situation. I'm amazed every time I set foot out in the world and look at Zen Center from some distance. I think that we're really good.

Around here I'm much more aware of the struggle, the hassles, the difficulties. I'm sometimes overwhelmed at the number of crises I find myself participating in. I don't feel badly about that, but I don't realize what a good job we're doing of trying to work out our way. Of what truly difficult kinds of questions we're trying to answer.

I think we are quite literally trying to figure out how to live our lives in a world that is extraordinarily complicated and difficult, trying to find some point of rest which allows us to be ourselves quite freely.

Doing zazen together makes a huge difference, I suspect. We as a community are a group of people taking a lot of risks. Just when you sit you're opening yourself up to whatever comes up in you.



WIND BELL:

Probably students start sitting zazen in order to answer the life-and-death dilemma of their own existence and because, for them, Western culture has run out of answers. Those who stay have come to realize that Suzuki-roshi is showing them a way of life, not a form of therapy, and that he is building a community based on the teachings and practice of Shakyamuni Buddha, handed down through the patriarchal lineage which started in India, was brought to China and Japan and now to the United States. This religious tradition not only embodies a daily practice, zazen, as its foundation, but a life style which is devoted to the Bodhisattva ideal of serving others before one serves oneself. Suzuki-roshi asks us to get rid of "stinky" self, of our "stinky" ego, of our self-conscious, selfish mind and to merge our life and activities with the ground of Big Mind.

PETER SCHNEIDER: I don't think anyone ever really knows why he begins practicing. It is clear that you knew that something was wrong, you at least guessed at some level that you were suffering, but as you practice your understanding of that keeps changing and maybe it never stops. When someone asks

why did I begin I feel a little embarrassed because the story is very ordinary and all the reasons sound silly.



MEL WEITSMAN: Students come for different reasons. In the beginning, out of curiosity and because they're looking for some kind of religious practice that doesn't have overtones of dogma. Zen is open, the gateless gate. And it gives them a practice which includes their whole being . . . physical-religious practice. And rather than being told what the truth is, they get to find out for

themselves, which is very appealing. I think that's why most people come, because zazen itself is the teacher. It's like breathing fresh air.

ANNETTE HERSKOVITS: I had read so much about Zen, but I had never really tried to practice. It's not enough to *think* one should try to put a stop to one's inner ego-centered monologue. When you try to do it, it's very different. After the sesshin I was really changed. I knew it would not last but at least it's good to experience it for a few days.

For one thing I was much more aware of my inner monologue. I had the impression of being very much in control of what was going on and able to not let myself get caught up in dead ends. Let's take a little example. I am very bad with children usually. It's connected with my childhood, bad experiences I had with children. After the sesshin I went for two days with a friend who has two

children, and it just went very easily. I could manage the children well. Things like that.

I could speak of many transformations which I've gone through staying here and sitting the sesshin, but I have to see what comes of them when I leave and go back to my life outside. I want to continue sitting. It's the only time that I get the impression that I reverse the flow. Otherwise I have the impression of being the prey of something else. It's very hard to explain. When I sit it is the only time I get the impression I can have some power in my life. Otherwise I feel just the prey of my life.

BARRIE MASON: After sesshin you feel the strength that comes out of the zendo. That's where people put down their roots, while they're sitting, and that kind of strength holds the rest of it. The kitchen is the material heart and the sitting is the psychic or spiritual strength.

This was my first sesshin. I sat between two people who were really hard sitters, and I felt like we were the three musketeers, almost like we locked elbows you know. On one side the fellow was a Gemini and I know that Geminis are very irritable, and any little fidgeting you do they're so susceptible to distraction that they notice it and they don't like it. So I had to be real careful, like I couldn't put my sweater too close to him. And I tried not to wiggle, because I didn't want to bother him, and that was really good. I liked having to worry about all that.

And after the sesshin, I really appreciate Katagiri Sensei a lot more. I was very surprised at his lectures, they were different from his Sunday morning and Tuesday evening ones. The more you are around someone like him, the more you feel his presence.



He had a lot more feeling stuff in his lectures. They were freer and he said things that I'd never heard anyone say before. I don't know if he said it or not, but I got the feeling that Zen practice is just getting all the way past your conscious level. Like when Katagiri stuck the needle in his master's arm, it wasn't that the master felt pain and then thought 'oh pain, oh I won't show any emotion'. It's like long before he had taken care of pain. Before he had ever felt that pain, he had gotten below the level of pain and somehow accepted it, pre-accepted it. So that when the pain came it was already accepted. Does that make sense?

WIND BELL: Why would you say you're here?

BARRIE MASON: I came because I wanted to sit a lot more than I was. And I wanted to be around people and I wanted to leave where I was . . . and this seemed like the only place to go. Here I am trying to learn a life style, a way of living that turns life into a constant creative thing. I want to open myself to growth, instead of living in a way where I'm always having to protect myself and fight things off and be afraid.

I really like the people here. They're trying to be careful about themselves and each other and their lives. There's a feeling of order and preserving, taking good care of things, not being destructive and careless and wasteful.

When I first came to Zen Center it seemed strange. I thought gee, these people are really horrible. Here they are, Americans, and they're wearing zories and eating miso soup and rice with chopsticks. It's so phoney, so absolutely phoney! But now, I don't feel that way. I still think the way some people do it is sort of artificial. But as I did it I learned to like using chopsticks. And when you're taking your shoes off to go in and out of the zendo all the time, it makes sense to wear zories instead of Western shoes. And when you're sitting zazen all the time it also makes sense to wear floppy pants.

STEVE WEINTRAUB: A big difficulty that a lot of people here have is with commitment. They want to hold on to something, you know, something selfish. So they don't commit themselves fully to Zen practice. They feel drawn to other things, a conflict with other things. I think most people have this question about commitment.

WIND BELL: So, why are we here?

STEVE WEINTRAUB: That's a good question. I think we couldn't say why. Maybe just Roshi and Katagiri Sensei. When I came here I was really inspired by them. I can't express how much . . . I've never felt like that about anyone before. And also, before them, Tai-san was . . . just incredible. Just seeing him, the way he was, and hearing what he said. The things I had been ruminating over for years and years and years . . . he would say exactly, in one sentence, exactly the question . . . and then he would say in one sentence, the answer. That kind of feeling. Then he got right into the center and hit the nail right on the head. And the same with Roshi, that he was just saying perfectly, perfectly . . . some things that were just perfectly right.

I'm sure that's a great influence on a lot of people, to have those examples around, to have those people to listen to.

CLAUDE DALENBERG: The drop-out rate I think, is roughly the same as it was five or six years ago. Maybe 80 per cent in a year. Eighty per cent of the students coming to the door for the first time might not be expected to be coming within a year.

And the third year seems to be a very difficult year for a surprising number of students. An older student in one sense might be a fourth year student who has gone through some big adjustment problems of the third year. Many of the students drop out in adjusting to that crisis or difficulty, or whatever it is.



WIND BELL:

Why students stay at Zen Center is not always clear. Whatever the immediate event that brought someone to the practice, the experience of sticking with zazen through at least a year or two brings the student past the initial difficulties with posture, pain, motivation, depression, frustration. Perhaps he sees a transformation happening in the lives of the "older" students and finds that example of growth in others the most salient teaching of our practice.

What marks an "older" student? We call "older" students persons who have been here three years or more, although there are exceptions to this. These are the ones who move into administrative positions and are the ones to whom are given zendo and Buddha Hall responsibilities such as leading service, carrying the *kyoshaku* (the stick) during zazen, attending Suzuki-roshi, etc. Some "older" students go to Japan to study the language or for further practice, return to American schools for Japanese or Chinese language study, or become ordained as novice priests (*unsuis*).

PETER SCHNEIDER: It is difficult to define what an older student is other than chronologically. There is no feeling about Suzuki-roshi's oldest students that something has been added or gained, that they have attained some measurable understanding or awareness. Rather they seem to be very clearly themselves, not humble in the usual Western religious sense, but lacking a certain kind of confusion, the kind people have when they take seriously acting out who they think they ought to be rather than just being who they are.

WIND BELL:

In August Suzuki-roshi ordained 36 students who had been sitting with him for three years or longer as 'lay' Buddhists, admitting he wasn't quite sure what it meant to be a 'lay' Buddhist. Each student was asked to sew his or her own *rakusu* for the ceremony, to come freshly bathed head to toe, and in freshly laundered clothes, to take the precepts and to receive a Buddhist name. These students wear their *rakusus* to zazen, service and meals and are assigned a special row in the Buddha Hall.

Last year Suzuki-roshi also ordained six young Americans as first order Buddhist priests and there are more ordinations planned for 1971. To date he has married 32 student couples. At Tassajara he has marked out the site of our cemetery and directed the laying out of the rock garden at the site. The location is a ten-minute walk up an easy incline, a few feet out of sight of the Tassajara creek. It is a secluded spot, shaded, filled with the buzzing of insects and in the spring and summer, the bloom of wildflowers.

SUZUKI-ROSHI: If, when I die, the moment I'm dying, if I suffer that is all right, you know; that is suffering Buddha. No confusion in it. Maybe everyone will struggle because of the physical agony or spiritual agony, too. But that is all right, that is not a problem. We should be very grateful to have a limited body . . . like mine, or like yours. If you had a limitless life it would be a great problem for you.

This limitation is a vital element for us. Without limitation nothing exists, so we should enjoy the limitation. Weak body, strong body; man or woman. The only way to enjoy our life is to enjoy the limitation which was given to us.





WIND BELL:

Since the practice has no beginning and no end, perhaps the best way to end a description is simply to express the fact of its continuity.

BOB SHUMAN: Basically I think there is a deep problem that I have in my life and I think that's the thing I'm working on, but that problem isn't something substantial. It is something that comes and goes and it arises in many different forms as a craving or fear. Your mind has to be pretty big not to want to push it away but to work right in the middle of it, to be together right in the world of craving and fear, not caught by it.

If you're lost in the woods, let's say, and I was, deep in the wilderness, then because you have some idea that there's a better way you also have the idea of reaching that safe point. That feeling of helplessness, that's a very strange feeling. For me it takes place mostly in my chest, and in my breathing. You sort of lose your mind or something, you lose your stability completely. That's the thing I'm talking about . . . that real existential feeling of nothing to rely upon. I mean, having it penetrate your whole body and just raising all the anxieties. And all of that nervous energy just goes . . . right into that.

I had that feeling idea, when I was lost in the woods, that there's nothing here to help you, the trees don't care, you can cry and cry to the trees or to the rocks or to the sky, but they're indifferent. They're on a different level, they're not going to relate to this world of terror, they're not going to help you: "here's some food, here's some warmth". But on a deeper level, maybe with time, quite naturally you get beyond that idea of being completely torn apart by that terror. I think eventually, the deep way of the trees and rocks and everything . . . if you can get by as far as taking care of your food and clothing. I think there would be a type of mind evolution or something, call it Big Mind. I think eventually a real deep confidence would enter your body, it seems to me.

KATAGIRI SENSEI: I have felt lots of things. Most students have come to sit here in meditation with us seeking Oriental religion, because they feel in themselves a resistance to American religion. Because of the lack of religious tradi-

tion in American life today, they think that Zen will give the complete right answer. I think such an attitude of seeking for religion, Eastern or Christian, is very unstable, even though for a while such a religion will give some good feeling to them.

As a cultural form, Zen is growing pretty fast, which is called Zen "boom", Zen bubble, and young people, specifically, are liable to be attracted. But I wonder if their understanding of Zen has anything to do with their daily lives, no matter how hard they study. It is because for them Zen is merely booming Zen, nothing more, that they cannot get at the heart of Zen itself.

Recently I have felt very strongly that students have to understand more clearly how to make Zen concrete in their daily lives. Our practice is not just to sit in meditation in the zendo. The important point is how Zen meditation should be used in daily life, outside of Zen Center. Shakyamuni Buddha's way is to live our life truthfully, which means to put Zen to practical use vividly and fully according to the time and circumstances.

For instance, there are many cockroaches in the kitchen. Zen students, like many other people, do not like to kill any living thing, because even a fly or a cockroach has the same life force as a human being. Everything grows from the same source, which is called life force. From this point of view we don't like to kill.

Many things grow simultaneously on the same ground. Some we call good, some we call bad. The good and the bad arise from our careful or negligent attention. If you plant a rose in the ground, the rose has a life force and the ground has a life force. If you neglect taking care of the rose or arranging all of its circumstances, I think bugs will grow pretty fast and eat the rose. Then people, looking at only the one-sided visible situation, seeing the present bug on the rose, will say, without asking themselves to reconsider by what attitude they have dealt with it, "I don't like to kill."

I think that is a very big mistake. If you don't kill the bug, the bug will eat the rose pretty fast. If a rose were your child how would you take care of it?



Parents must make every effort to raise their child, whatever may happen. They should know, nevertheless, that the child may be taken ill despite their unflinching effort to make his growth safe. That is why we practice—to understand properly the child and his environment, to protect him from an accident in his life without making an unnecessary sacrifice of others.

The important point is not whether to kill bugs or not to kill them, but to look at the whole situation, present, past and future, by recognition of the truth of transiency and interdependence. If we want to take care of the rose, we have to take merciful care of the past, present and future of the rose—all the things that exist around the rose. With warmhearted responsibility and wholeheartedness, we have to be attentive to the treatment of the rose so as not to attract bugs. Because bugs grow.

This is the basic way of understanding Buddhism. On the level of the life force, there are many things going on at the same time, depending upon where your attention is. If you ignore something, something bad grows fast. If you take considerate care of something, it grows well. Cockroaches don't exist only in the present. They arose from the past and will exist also in the future. It lies with you to increase or decrease the conditions for their breeding.

Why sit in meditation? In order to get quietness for yourself alone? If so, the practice of zazen is something like using a drug. Take a drug instead of zazen and you could have more quietness, which is called a big hallucination—fantastic. After the drug has worn off, I think your troubles will come back. Then you take the drug again. Same thing. If people want quietness through the practice of zazen, they have to realize that their daily lives must be arranged for tasting quietness because other people also want the same thing.

We can't live alone in this world. Even if you live alone in the deep mountains you can't live alone. Since this is so, we have to take care of everything with considerate attention and feeling. Towards our children, towards our neighbors, towards people.



Little by little, little by little. My hope is, as much as possible, to learn Buddhism with the students, realizing the important point: to put Buddhism into daily life.

In a sense it's the teacher's fault. But the important point is not that it's the teacher's fault or whose fault it is. No, my point is not whether the atmosphere of Zen Center life and the students' lives is good or bad. Everybody in Zen Center is growing. I am very glad to see that. The students are learning little by little what Buddhism is, what they themselves are, what their lives are. But my point is the students should put Buddhism into daily life, not in the future. Not on superficial aspects called meditation, tranquillity or enlightenment, in order to express their resistance to modern technological life.

I feel pensive that American Buddhism, Zen Center students, are isolated from American society. That's a problem. I hope we will not forget to practice earnestly with transparent reflection upon ourselves and not be neglectful of our daily lives.

CLAUDE DALENBERG: Four years ago I thought I knew what practice would be like. But it isn't what I thought it would be. It's harder, in the sense of self-acceptance, just being what you are. What I am. The willingness to change my image of myself, to give up my self-glorification. Of course that's hard.

The sutras say it, that everything changes, and it's obvious at an intellectual level, but you have to go through it yourself. Not with just your head, but with your whole being . . . with your body and your nerves and your stomach.

This is the kind of problem I've been trying to wrestle with . . . discovering the depth of my own ego and my own vanity, and the shallowness of my own heroic images of myself. It has not been sweetness and light. But I consider it has been fruitful. Good practice. Tough practice. One part of the problem has been the simple question of what is Zen Center. What is a church or a religious community? And in what ways, in what very subtle ways might I be using Zen Center as some sort of crutch?



WIND BELL: Claude, do you feel like a Bodhisattva?

CLAUDE DALENBERG: In my way I am trying to follow the Bodhisattva's vow. Being a Bodhisattva is quite a different order. The Bodhisattva's vow is kind of an eternal vow. No matter how numberless sentient beings are, and so forth. So for me it means, if I'm on the wrong track then I have to start over again. In the Bodhisattva's vow if you make a mistake, a big one or a small one, you just face up to it and start over again, whenever you're able.

DAN WELCH: In an interview I had with Soen Roshi in Japan I told him "I think I need some encouragement." He said, "If you want to get encouragement you should encourage others."



YOSHIMURA SENSEI: It is easier to teach now. There has been a big change in your understanding compared with one year ago. At that time I couldn't say anything about things that were confusing. Most students would have taken such examples literally. So I couldn't say anything. It became impossible to say anything.

But at the same time I still feel the same difficulty . . . my own difficulties . . . with my practice. Teaching is my practice. If I want to speak about something in a lecture, I should consider it for almost a whole week.

And I'm trying to cut off the intellectual sense and use lots of actual examples. That's pretty hard. I stopped reading Buddhist books because they never gave me good solutions. Now I just read magazines and Japanese and American novels. That's helpful in finding examples. I want to understand something about America. From that position which I understand, I want to talk. The sutras and the commentary books were written a long time ago, when the background was much different from now. Even in Japan I can't use the sutras themselves or commentary books.

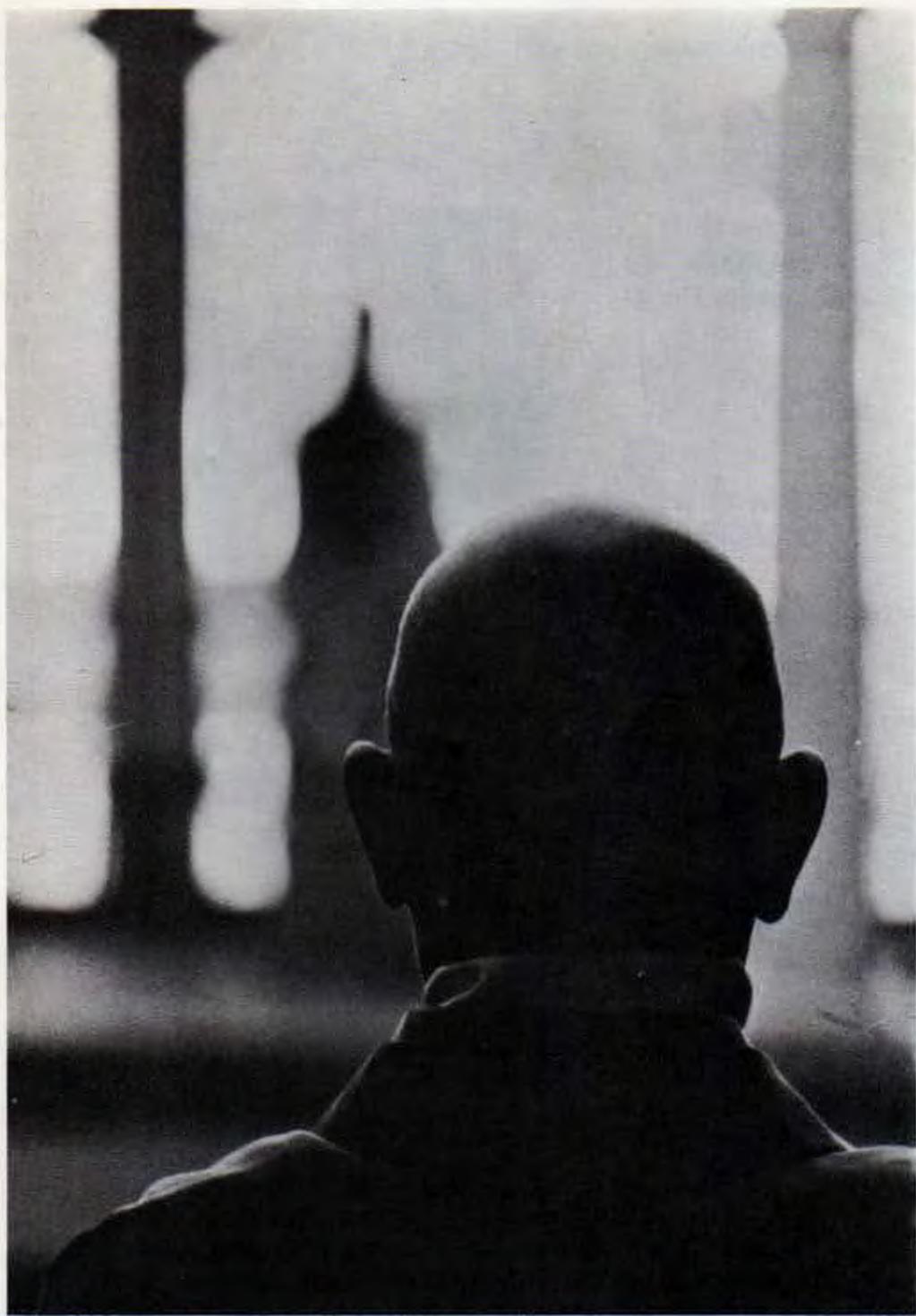
So almost always I have a headache.

SUZUKI-ROSHI: Our practice is to help people, and how to help people is to practice our way in each moment. That is how to live in this world and how to practice zazen. To have absolute refuge, we do not have emotional activity or thinking activity in our practice. To stop thinking, to be free from emotional activity when we sit does not mean just to be concentrated, but to have complete reliance on ourselves, also. We are just like a baby who is on the lap of its mother. That is zazen practice, and that is how we should extend our practice to our everyday life.

Of course, there are no special rules on how to treat things or how to be friendly with others. How we find the way in each moment is to think about how to help people practice a religious way. If you don't forget this point, you will find out how to treat people, how to treat things, how to behave yourself, and that is at the same time the so-called Bodhisattva way.







As a result of the investigation, the Commission has found that the information provided by the witnesses is reliable and that the information is true and correct.

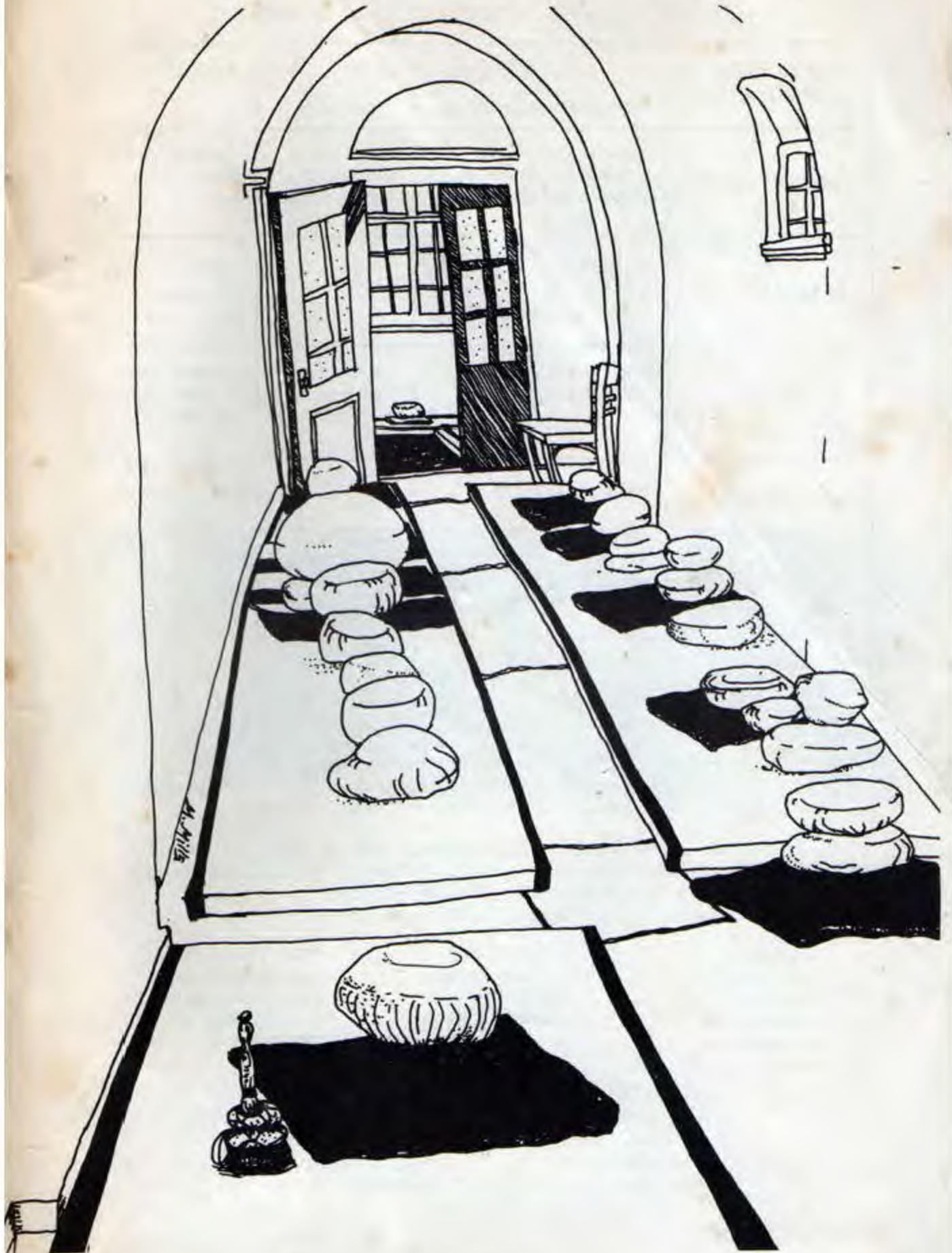
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ZAZEN AND LECTURE SCHEDULE

ZEN CENTER & AFFILIATES	ZAZEN AND SERVICE		LECTURES
	Monday through Friday	Saturday	
SAN FRANCISCO	5:00-7:10 a.m. 5:30-6:30 p.m. (except Tues.) 8:30-9:15 p.m. (except Tues.)	5:00-10:00 a.m. (incl. breakfast & work period)	7:30 p.m. Tues. 10:00 a.m. Sat.
BERKELEY	5:00-6:45 a.m. 5:40-6:20 p.m. 8:30-9:15 p.m. (except Tues.)		Monday morning after zazen
LOS ALTOS	5:30-6:30 a.m. 8:00-9:00 p.m.	5:30-9:15 a.m. (incl. breakfast & work period)	8:30 p.m. Weds. Thursday morning after zazen
MILL VALLEY	5:45-6:45 a.m.		6:45 a.m. Weds.
SANTA CRUZ	5:30-7:00 a.m. 8:00-8:40 p.m.	5:30-10:00 a.m. (incl. breakfast & work period)	8:00 p.m. Tues. zazen & lecture
CARMEL	6:00-7:00 a.m. M, W, F only		7:30 p.m. Thurs.

*In San Francisco, zazen instruction is given for new students Saturdays at 8:30 a.m.

*A five-day sesshin is held starting the first Saturday of April, June, October and December

*A seven-day sesshin is held starting the first Saturday of February and August

*In Berkeley, Los Altos and Mill Valley lectures are given after zazen, as indicated.

*In Berkeley there is no zazen on days that end with a 4 or 9 except Mondays when there is always zazen followed by lecture. Zendo is open Monday through Friday only.

*In Los Altos a discussion group meets alternate Tuesday evenings at 7:30.

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