



Dharma Soup

Notes from Karida

El Morro Buddhist Sangha
April 2009

Celebration of the Spring Equinox

Saturday evening March 21, began with a vegetarian potluck enjoyed by a packed house of forty at the Old School House Gallery. The meal was followed by a brief presentation by Roger, "History of the Bodhisattva Kuan Yin, from India to America."

The main event, an overview of Roger's new book, *Journey of the heart: Meditation with Kuan Yin*, included projections of seventeen beautiful original illustrations by artist Cynthia Elsner Hayward. The artist was in attendance along with visitors from Massachusetts, Kansas, and Arizona.

All in all, the event was judged as a successful first El Morro Buddhist Spring Equinox celebration put on by the El Morro Karida group. Thanks to everyone who worked so hard to make it successful.

***Don't forget---Sangha
meeting Tuesday evening
7:00 at Inscription Rock
Trading Post April 21st.***

Purposeful purposelessness

A mountain stream:

even the stones make songs -

wild cherry trees.

— Onitsura 1660-1783

I wake in the morning and think, "what must I do today?" The inevitable list is written. At the end of the day I look back at all the unfinished business and add it to tomorrow's list. Items crossed off my lists are a testimony to purpose and accomplishment. Yet there is a dark side to this obsession — an incompleteness: the burden of things not done.

Each day, and each list, comes and goes and I am left with the uneasy feeling that there must be a better way of being. My tomorrows would not be burdened with as much carryover baggage. However, this seems to be a strategy of regret. In looking back I'm afraid that life might seem emptier: lessened in some way by challenges not met. Of course there is the temptation to make shorter lists or none at all.

For awhile I tried not making a list until the end of the day and then listing only my completed tasks. That way every list was a record of success — nothing left undone. Eventually I gave that up because it seemed like cheating.

The answer to this dilemma always seems to come when I take time to look deeply at mountains, trees, and flowers — that world of nature outside my narrow sense of self. I ask the mountain, "What is your purpose?" The answer, "No purpose." Yet deep within there persists a notion that there is purpose here: something unperceived. Perhaps there is hidden purpose on a grander scale.

Contemplating this natural world of mountains, trees, and flowers, I begin to expand my narrow sense of self and a deep mystery begins to unfold: the world of nature has "purposeful purposelessness." When I bring this "purposeful purposelessness" into my own daily life the lists are not as oppressive: the regrets fewer. Somehow I feel that Onatsura must have traveled very lightly: a very refreshing way of living. — Roger

A short vocabulary that may help with your Buddhist readings.

Bodhisattva: One who has vowed to put all other beings first in the journey to enlightenment. The personification of Compassion

Buddha : A title that usually refers to the historic person Siddhartha Gautama (c. 563 – 483 BCE) although the term is a title rather than the name of a specific person. It is derived from the Sanskrit word *budh*, "to be awakened," referring to one who knows in the sense of having become one with the Supreme Truth.

Dhammapada: One of the earliest sutras

Dharma: The teachings of the Buddhas. Also the law of cause and effect

Hridaya, Karida: Both terms for "heart/essence."

Hridayam: mantra to evoke the "heart/essence."

Hypostasis: The projection of inner states or processes

Kuan Yin: Same as Kuan Shih Yin: a feminine personification of compassion especially popular in China. Also named *Avalokitesvara* and *Chenrezig*

Mahayana: A school of Buddhism that developed from early Theravada and is primarily found in Tibet, China, Korea, and Japan

Mantra: A sound used as an aid to meditation

Mara: The personification of the forces of evil

Mudra: A hand gesture that is symbolic of states of consciousness

Prajnaparamitta: The most profound wisdom

Roshi: Japanese term for an old and respected Zen teacher

Sangha: The Buddhist community

Sensei: Japanese term meaning teacher.

Siddhartha Gautama: The given and clan name of the historic Buddha who was born around 550 BCE

Sutras: Buddhist texts

Theravada: "The Doctrine of the Elders" who formed the first Buddhist Council immediately at the passing of the Buddha. The earliest form of Buddhism found principally in the southern parts of Asia

Vajrayana: A form of Buddhism that found its greatest development in Tibet

Wheel of the Dharma: A figurative term expressing the process of learning and teaching of the Dharma

TAI CHI WITH REED (at Old School Gallery)

Sundays, 9:30 am. Join Reed Anderson for abbreviated Wu style movement and basic Wah Mountain Breathing discipline. Easy for beginners. Call Reed for info at 783-4067.

If you haven't done it yet, check out:
www.karidasangha.net
and while you're there light a candle.

