

From: joedwl@aol.com

Subject: Fwd: Trust but verify

Date: November 19, 2015 at 3:14:28 AM HST

To: "Sherry Chayat roko"@ , "peter glynn shinkonwado"@ ,
"Jikyo Bonnie Shoultz bshoultz"@ , "Larry Gagler
gangyo"@ , "Karin Drew karindrew"@ , "Karen Dodds
karendodds"@ , "Joseph Buxbaum joseph.buxbaum"@ ,
"Chris Wolf cwolf"@ , "Linda King golindaking"@ ,
 , "Jeffrey Alan JHovden"@ , "Daniel Diffin
hokutonando"@ , "Chris Phelan cphelan"@ , "Ryoju
lynchnyc"@ , "tina grant jodogrant"@ , "Dennis Giacomo
giacomo.dennis"@ , "Vasken Kalayjian VKALAYJIAN"@ ,
"Matthew Perez nonsense.cat"@ , , "Matthew Russell
matthewrussell.1989"@ , "Sarah Holland careerfix"@ ,
"Tenku Ruff tenkuruff"@ , "Paul Silverman pjsilverman"@ ,
"Dokuro Jaeckel dokuro"@

Dear Sangha,

Having served on the Board of the ZSS (2006-12) before and during the crisis that started on June 21, 2010, as of today, I've never gone public on the Internet or blogs or the infamous Shimano Archives in any way. It didn't seem right. There were too many people opining who had no real knowledge of the facts, plus others with axes to grind. Over these 5 years about 20/25 people stuck it out and have attended Shoboji on a regular basis, and lately some new, younger people are very active. Up at DBZ, Shinge Roshi's monks, residents and Kessei students, have kept the zen lamp alive at our beautiful, well-kept mountain zendo. The new boilers were recently installed.

I will be at All Souls on 11/21 for the meeting and ask all of you to consider what I have to say and take a look at the attached documents before then.

The last time the entire ZSS sangha was called to a special meeting like this was in July of 2011 to hear "an important announcement" from Eido Shimano. (see attachment, #1). The problem with this statement is that it was proven totally false. After announcing his retirement, Mr. Shimano left and went directly to Europe to hold sesshin, and since then he has actively cultivated a group of

student followers (many of whom were at the July 2011 meeting and heard this announcement.) This fact alone would make me skeptical about another special meeting of the Sangha, but there is more.

The real reason for that meeting quickly surfaced. Mr. Shimano, along with his supporters who were a vocal majority, tried to force those directors of the ZSS Board in attendance to have an immediate public vote on amending a recently adopted Board Access Policy. That July day the Board ultimately decided there would be no vote. It was against the ZSS By-laws to have a meeting with no prior notice and not all directors were there to waive that provision. In addition, as president, I felt it was totally out of bounds for anyone to try to coerce the Board this way. That's when homophobic slurs and threats of violence started. Someone grappled with Kanze (R.I.P.) who was trying to protect others. A video recording of this chaotic scene was taken by Zensho Martin Hara.

Thus, we need to be wary of what will transpire on the 21st. We can't let Mr. Shimano control the agenda or his followers to pack the meeting. So I urge all who want the Zen Studies Society to flourish to come to All Soul's Episcopal Church on Saturday afternoon.

We also can't allow Mr. Shimano to give another generic apology. (See attachment, #2) To regain our credibility in the contemporary Buddhist community and the wider cyber-connected world the Society needs to totally clear the air of past cover-ups, lies and downright dishonesty (e.g., Roshi-letter 2/1). There will be no healing and no real peace until Mr. Shimano comes clean and rectifies as much as he can of the hurt he has caused the present and historical sangha. If he remains stuck in the belief that he himself is simply one of the injured parties with no attempt at taking responsibility for specific things he did and said; then there's no hope for real reconciliation. Making amends means talking to real individuals, apologizing in private, not uttering generalities in open meetings.

Some will say, hey Soun, it's time to forgive and forget. Yet we know those who ignore the past are certain to relive it. Of course, I'd like to see a final peace descend over our still active sangha. But not at the cost we will incur if we let Mr. Shimano get by with a general apology, skipping over all particulars. There are some specific names and dates I know I'd like to ask him about. Maybe Mr. Shimano is planning on holding private meetings with those he has used and hurt; perhaps he already has. I hope to hear that at the meeting.

Gassho,

Soun Joe Dowling

#1 _____

Eido T. Shimano
Abbot
The Zen Studies Society
Dai Bosatsu Zendo - Kongo-Ji
223 Beecher Lake Road
Livingston Manor, New York 12758-6000
Telephone (845) 439-4566
Facsimile (845) 439-3119

December 1, 2010

News Editor
The New York Times
620 Eighth Avenue
New York, New York 10018

Re: "**Sex Scandal Has American Buddhists Looking Within**" - published
Saturday, August 21.2010, The New York Times National section

Dear Sir,

It has been three months since the article written about me appeared in your National Section. In this day and age, it quickly spread all over the world and, I am told, was translated into Japanese. I was hurt deeply. However, I endured for more than three months and endeavored to calm down. Since this is the year that I am planning to retire, I do not want this article and my retirement to be linked. One has nothing to do with the other – there is no cause and effect.

As the date for my retirement is nearing, I think that at the very least, I need to point out the inappropriate attitude of the writer of the article and the misinformation contained in his piece. I highlight the following:

1. Mr. Oppenheimer did not inter-View me for this article, nor did he speak

with Mr. Aitken or the young woman who is referred to in the article. The article states that he attempted to contact me and that I did not return several phone calls - this is just not true. I was never contacted by Mr. Oppenheimer, nor did I receive any correspondence from him at either my Livingston Manor address or my New York City

2. It is clear to me from reading the article and knowing the facts, that Mr. Oppenheimer obtained his information from second and third hand sources and the opinions expressed therein are neither factual nor backed up by proof. In fact, none of the individuals who have been quoted in the article were at the dinner table when the purported statement was made and therefore they could not have "overheard" what was said.

3. In addition, I have not resigned because of these false accusations. At the beginning of this year, during a meeting of the Board of Directors in January, I made an announcement that 2010 was the 50 year anniversary of my being in America and that I planned to do a final fund .raising for a mountain gate entrance for the monastery and would step down from the Abbot. This fundraising was to be the final act in a 50 year career in the United States. The article falsely states that I am stepping down from the Abbot because of allegations. Moreover, I would like to mention the following: When the article appeared, I was in Switzerland doing a silent retreat. When I returned to the United States, many people brought this article to my attention. The effect has been profound. Many people are hurt and confused. As an aside, minutes from our Board of Directors meetings are private documents. If they wound up in Hawaii or in Mark Oppenheimer's possession, they were improperly obtained and/or delivered. Did anyone question why Mr. Aitken would write about a Buddhist monk for 50 years, when I have had contact with him only twice since 1964? I shall look forward to hear what your journalist, Mark Oppenheimer, has to say about the contents of my letter.

Very truly yours,

EidoT.Shimano, Abbot

#2

The following statements were made on July 2nd, 2011 at Dai Bosatsu Zendo Kongo-ji, with about 45 sangha members from DBZ, New York Zendo Shobo-ji and the Zen Center of Syracuse in attendance.

Eido Roshi:

Good afternoon. Thank you for coming to Dai Bosatsu Zendo for this rather important meeting. The day after tomorrow will be July 4th. In 1776 this nation became independent, and just two hundred years later, in 1976, this Zendo was dedicated. Last year, on July 4th 2010, Aiho and I resigned from the Board of Directors after forty-five years of service.

Of course, everybody knows that this Zendo and Shobo-ji in New York were established because of thousands and thousands of people's help. But Aiho and I are the only two still here from the beginning to this point, still thinking and dedicating—rather, combusting—our Dharma passion.

We are in the midst of a transition period. This transition is nothing new for other places: in a monastery from former abbot to new abbot, in a

company from former president to new. What is unique in our case is that The Zen Studies Society has never experienced an official transition.

When I took over the inactive Zen Studies Society from Dr. D. T. Suzuki, he had gone to Japan. During the transition from Dr. Suzuki's time to my time, the secretary was very happy to give to me all the documents and the corporate seal. In this case, during the past year - particularly the past six months - we all suffered. The Sangha suffered, the Board of Directors suffered, and I suffered. Unless we come to some kind of positive, corrective, and peacefully harmonious solution today, The Zen Studies Society, Dai Bosatsu Zendo and New York Zendo will all be in trouble.

Please do not think you are the only ones who suffered. We all suffered in one way or another. In my case, many sleepless nights continued and finally I got shingles, full of pain, which still continues. In the midst of this pain I asked, what is the best way to solve this painful situation - not only my physical pain, but the Sangha's pain? I thought this way and that, and came to the conclusion - and naturally everyone would agree - that the Dharma is the most important and it must continue.

In the meantime, I have received about sixty letters, telephone calls, faxes and person-to-person contacts saying, "Please continue to teach. I will miss you. Don't abandon us." I thought, this might be true, but suppose I were dying. If that were the case, these kinds of phone calls, faxes and letters would not have been written. Then I thought, it must be a kind of attachment in the Rinzai Zen tradition.

As you know, there is dokusan. That is a unique practice, and by doing so we struggle and we grow. Sometimes during sesshin we have dokusan three times a day. The more we meet, the more some kind of deep emotions may develop along with the Dharma. This could be called

attachment. Then I thought, wait a minute - if I accept their request, their "Please continue," for one more year, two more years, three more years, then the problem is the same, maybe even worse. I introspected and asked myself, am I attached to my students or not? The answer was yes. Some of you have been doing zazen and dokusan with me twenty years, thirty years. Naturally what could be called attachment by both parties grew. I thought, this is not the way to solve this transition period. I have to retire. I have to sacrifice and they have to sacrifice. Sometimes things have to be sacrificed.

After long days of thinking, I now have the following attitude: starting today, I highly recommend - I strongly suggest - that all of you become Shinge Roshi's students. That is the only way that One Sangha, like it used to be, can be created under her leadership. Of course, my style of teaching and her style of teaching are different, our personalities are different, and many other things are different. But the Dharma - which has been transmitted from Hakuin Zenji, to Gempo Roshi, to Soen Roshi, to me and to her - is not different. She is the only one, at this point, who can take on this big task and responsibility. I have confidence in her, and we are also responsible for encouraging her growth so that The Zen Studies Society's Chairman of the Board and Abbot will be Shinge Roshi only.

I have retired, but some of you may think, "Are there any exceptions?" No. I will stop doing dokusan and giving teisho in a formal way. Some of you may feel uncomfortable at first because you are not used to Shinge Roshi. I have experienced this personally. When I first went to Heirin-ji as an unsui, the Roshi over there was Shiroso Keisan Roshi. Three years later, I moved to Ryutaku-ji and became a student of Soen Roshi. Their teaching styles were very different, and for a while I was "not together." But there was karmic congeniality between Soen Roshi and myself, and later I thought that my period of confusion was a gift. By

passing through that confusion I became stronger. In Japan, if an old Roshi is going to retire—for either health reasons or some other reason—there will be confusion among the training monks. Some leave, some stay, some are confused...but it ends up most of the time that half of them remain and half go somewhere else.

I don't want this to happen at Dai Bosatsu Zendo, but if I completely retire and you don't support Shinge Roshi, the life of DBZ will come to an end. This is nobody's wish. When I think of the fifty to sixty students who wrote me such passionate letters, I feel so bad. But if I am weak now, and take them back, this will not work. So, my thoughts and my feelings are always with you, whether you love me or hate me. This is the only way we can recreate One Sangha, with harmonious togetherness. For some of you it must be quite difficult to hear such a declaration. You may say, "How mean you are!" But this is the only way. This is the only way.

When I come here, Shinge Roshi and the residents always cheerfully welcome me. Although I don't attend sesshin anymore, and I will not do dokusan anymore - in any place - I do visit from time to time. This is my life! I gave my life to the Dharma and I hope that this can peacefully be continued here and at New York Zendo Shobo-ji. I think I have said clearly what my attitude is from now on, and beyond that, it is up to you.

Attached Message

From Zen Studies Society <office@zenstudies.org>

To	Joseph.Dowling@ncc.edu
Subject	A message from Eido Shimano
Date	Tue, 07 Sep 2010 15:20:19 -0400 (EDT)

September 7, 2010

Dear Friends,

I would like to acknowledge the pain and unnecessary suffering you went through in your hearts due to my faults. I have a profound feeling of remorse for my actions.

This August marked my 50th anniversary in the United States. During this half-century I have received so much from people the world over. Over time, I took your kindness for granted and arrogance grew in my heart. As a result, my sensitivity to feel the pain of others decreased. Now, as I reflect on the past, I realize how many people's feelings and trust in me were hurt by my words and deeds. Please accept my heartfelt apology.

My mother was the person who encouraged me the most to follow Buddha's path. Tomorrow is her memorial day, as she passed away on September 8, 1986. Hearing her voice, I have decided to observe my 50th anniversary in the United States by stepping down from my position as abbot of the Zen Studies Society on the last day of Rohatsu sesshin in 2010.

Even though I carry sadness in my heart, as a Buddhist monk, my vow to practice will not end. In order to preserve the Dharma legacy, ensure the training of future teachers, and to purify my own karma, I must march on.

Gassho,

Eido Shimano
