

# *Mondo Zen*<sup>TM</sup>

Ego Transformation Koans

Emotional Awareness Intervention Koans



*Hollow Bones*

September 2019

*20th Anniversary Edition*

Hollow Bones Zen

Version 2.11



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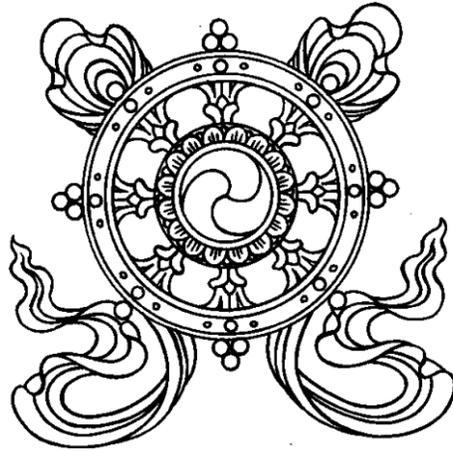
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Deepest gratitude  
to all Sangha, Sisters and Brothers,  
who have contributed to this Mondo Zen Training Manual.  
This has been a collaborative adventure.  
Our many voices together  
created this Mondo dharma teaching.

*Jun Po Denis Kelly Roshi*  
*Abbot, Hollow Bones Rinzai Zen Order*

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***Remember:***  
***Ordinary Mind (Clear Deep Heart-Mind) is the way!***  
***~ Jun Po Roshi***



## CONTEXT AND INTRODUCTION

There is a huge amount of unnecessary suffering in the world - unnecessary because it does not arise directly from our life circumstances but from the conditioned way in which we react to our own memories, stories, and beliefs. From the ego's perspective, reactions such as anger, shame, and disconnection appear to be involuntary and automatic. We seem to be "at the mercy" of these reactive forms of violence directed against self and others. Because of our ego confusion, we waste tremendous amounts of time and energy in self-defeating emotional patterns. However, there is a way out of this suffering.

In order to alleviate this suffering, we need deeper insight into and understanding of our emotional nature. We need to understand the information contained within the deeper feelings underneath our negative emotional reactions. We need to concentrate, meditate long enough to develop the ability to remain present in the face of these feelings, stop the reactive pattern, release the contraction, and choose a compassionate, intelligent response from *Clear Deep Heart-Mind* (also called Dhyana, Chan, and Zen).

To accomplish this, we need to change our philosophical understanding and experience genuine insight. Once we develop insight and change our understanding, we will be able to recognize violence expressed as anger, shame, disconnection, and other self-defeating patterns as confused, immature, emotional reactions masking our deeper feelings of fear, sadness, and genuine concern. In this way, through the Mondo Zen koan practice, we can transform negative emotional reactions into wise, compassionate skillful responses and alleviate suffering.

Our angst becomes our liberation.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jun Po".

*Jun Po Denis Kelly Roshi*  
*Abbot, Hollow Bones Rinzai Zen Order*  
*Appleton, Wisconsin*



## HISTORY

The historical Buddha was a man named Siddhartha Gautama, born in the sixth century BCE. He was an Indian prince who renounced his throne and his wealth to find wisdom and liberation that transcended power, money, or egoic satisfaction, all things he had been handed at birth. He abandoned his family, studied and practiced yoga for eight years and then asceticism for four more. After twelve years, frustrated with his inability to liberate himself from his own suffering and mental delusion, he sat down and vowed to stay in meditation until he found the truth. Legend holds that he sat for forty days. However long he really sat, it was long enough to awaken from the dream of his own suffering.

Siddhartha is remembered with the name “Buddha,” which simply means “Awakened One.” He compassionately awakened from the dream of a permanent self that had kept him, like so many of us, in bondage. He awakened to discover the deeper truth and cause of our reactive, emotional nature. Once he awakened, he founded his own yoga school. He transmitted the philosophy and practical disciplines that he used to liberate himself and end his ego suffering. Remarkably, he taught for about fifty years, traveling around northern India teaching with his disciples. The Buddha taught that a new view was essential. He taught that we must first understand these three truths: impermanence, suffering, and selflessness.

**Impermanence:** When we truly *realize* - understand and embody - *impermanence*, we no longer grasp and cling to that which is eventually going away no matter how tenaciously we cling. This realization brings gratitude as we now fully experience, appreciate, and radically accept the ephemeral nature of this life, this very moment, this fleeting gift.

**Suffering:** When we truly *realize* that the *pain* we experience in sickness, old age, and death is an unavoidable and a natural part of living, we discover the delightful truth that, while physical and psychological pain is inevitable, *suffering* is always optional. We no longer try to flee when pain inevitably arises. We work with it. We come to radical self-acceptance.

**Selflessness:** When we truly *realize selflessness*, we experience the pure, empty nature of our deepest consciousness. We experience our ego’s thinking and feeling as just temporary sensing at the mind’s surface and not as a permanent fixed self. At last we experience genuine insight and know who we really are – Buddha!

These three truths must become experiential realizations, not just philosophical concepts, not just be another interesting book to add to the collection on your coffee table!

## Cleaning up our language—Philosophical reorientation

Within this new view, the term “ego” is used to identify all activities of the self-referencing mind – all thoughts, feelings, emotions, and memories, both positive and negative. The ego is considered to be a wholly-conditioned process or function, a personified structure that arose in infancy, formed in an empty unobstructed mind. It is not viewed as a permanent separate self.

We have been taught and have chosen to believe that our ego is permanent. But in truth our thoughts, feelings, memories, and emotions are temporary, just like our bodies. In Mondo Zen practice, we relate to our thoughts and emotions as just another sense, the same as smell, touch, taste, sight, and sound. Our emotions have the same function as our other senses - they bring us information. Normally, one’s ego has a fixed set of reactions to whatever circumstances are arising. With Mondo Zen, we develop the ability to experience the emotions and understand the information they are bringing from a much deeper, wider view. From here we can begin to respond more consciously and compassionately to life’s circumstances.

From ego’s view, you sit *there*, and I sit *here*. We seem to be two separate beings. This temporary experience of a separate self naturally and continually arises. The error in logic causing this is simple – “I think, therefore I am” (Descartes). But is it possible that “I think, therefore I am” is not deep enough? Is it possible that it is an upside down view? Is it not more accurate to say: “I am, therefore there is thinking,” since we remain conscious, even when no thoughts arise? At a deep level, we intuitively know this, and we subsequently long to understand our deeper nature. Evolution has its own mysterious timetable. Now is the time to evolve! Our time....

The problem with ego, this self-maintaining illusion, is that it formed within us before our brains were developed enough to consciously recognize our deeper nature. One way to experience this truth is by going through an ego time regression, going back through time recalling your adolescent state, then your young child state, then to your infantile state into unconditioned mind, where you experienced only instinctual reactions like hunger and discomfort. Here you had no words, no names, and no signifiers for anything, not even *mama* or *dada*. You are unable to walk or control your bowels. You are *in* a state of mind with no distinction between inside and outside, no self and other. You are just naked consciousness – empty of ego.

Reversing this process, as you grew out of infancy, at some point through your brain development and your physical senses, you became aware of “the world out there,” creating a “self in here.” A temporary construct – *you* – grew as a brain structure within the fundamental, empty, witnessing awareness, creating the self-illusion. You were conditioned by your genes, animal nature, culture, parents or whoever reared you, either mimicking or rejecting their patterns. Over time, your preferences and reactions became habitual, memorized, and ingrained as neurological brain structures.

You now live through this filter of your beliefs and stories that you project onto the world. Your ego constantly references and reacts to these habitual patterns, what we call the hysterical-historical. Concentration-meditation practice allows us to actually witness and stay awake and present in this process.

*We are what we think.  
All that we are arises with our thoughts.  
With our thoughts, we make our world.*

***From The Dhammapada  
(early teachings of the Buddha for lay people):***

Conceptually, it is important to recognize that the ego changes over time; it disappears in deep sleep; it loses the ability to access memory in old age; it can become demented or neurotic and dies when the body dies. It is only because deeper meditative mind – Pure Awareness – exists that ego mind has a place to arise and continue to arise. Ego mind is at the surface of deeper Dhyana mind. Without a deep pure empty mind, ego cannot exist.

It's important to remember that your temporary ego, this sense of "me" that you have constructed does not need to be annihilated and is not "bad." You must develop a strong and healthy ego to function in this world. Liberation comes when we see through the delusion of an ego as a permanent, separate self.

In Mondo Zen practice we deconstruct the ego, re-inform it, and reconstruct a new ego that includes the realization of its essential empty nature and confused immature emotional nature. Because our ego is a *wholly-conditioned process and not a fixed entity*, it can and must be *reconditioned* to become liberated. When we experience genuine insight and realize who we truly are, we can answer the knock at our door. Knock, knock! Who's there? Nobody!

*I have lived on the lip  
of insanity, wanting to know reasons,  
knocking on a door. It opens.  
I've been knocking from the inside.*

***~ Rumi  
(13<sup>th</sup> century, Persia)***

**What is Enlightenment?** Enlightenment is awakening to the pure selfless awareness within us that is deeper than our thoughts, emotions, or feelings. Enlightenment is experiencing and understanding emotional feelings as information. Enlightenment is the experience of the deep truth of clarity and unconditional loving compassion within the human psyche. Enlightenment is not an experience of angels or devils, heaven or hell, mystical visions, bells and whistles, or subtle lights and sounds. Enlightenment is not a belief or a sustained, transcendent, blissful *experience*. A moment of spiritual bliss is the *beginning*, not the end, of spiritual practice. Experiences come and go. States come and go. Views come and go. Blissfulness comes and goes. What is constant is pure selfless awareness.

Remember, to maintain the experience of a separate self, the ego must continually reference itself - me, me, me, me, me, me, me - with an ongoing stream of thoughts, feelings, and emotions. If you stop this self-referencing, as we are training ourselves to do in concentration-meditation practice, you will “die upon your cushion” and discover the truth of empty, compassionate awareness (Dhyana). Do you think you can be reborn without dying?

**Why does all this matter?** It matters because meditation with an incorrect understanding not only limits our insight but can lead to suppression of feelings, rigid self-identification, ego-inflation, mania, and spiritual materialism. Having various “spiritual experiences” or “insights” is only the beginning of true and sustained Enlightenment. Having a strong and consistent meditation practice is one of the most important steps you can take to awaken. But knowing exactly *why* you are meditating, having the right philosophical context is just as important.

If you are truly willing to allow for the *possibility* that your deep mind is purely aware, never blinks, never turns away, never reacts and that your emotions, like all of our senses, are actually a process informing consciousness, you have taken a huge step towards liberation.

***If you have a bad script for your life,  
fire your scriptwriter! Hire a new one.***

***~ Jun Po Roshi***

Through this Mondo Zen process, you can write a new “script.” We call this shift in understanding moving your perspective from egocentric to Buddha-centric, or to be more precise, Buddh-centric (Awareness-centric)!

## ABOUT MONDO ZEN

Are you aware that as conceptual beings, the language we use shapes and limits - our experience? We embody our thoughts. At the foundation of our egos lie core beliefs about who we think we are. The language we use in this manual engages a process of philosophical re-indoctrination to enlighten a confused ego-view. This new view cannot be merely *understood*. That's philosophy. It must be experienced. This is what we call *realization*. In this way we experience how a disciplined, awakening mind actually thinks and feels. This change in view, as reflected in the language we use, is essential if we are going to interrupt our ego's conditioned, habitual reactivity.

Incorrect philosophical understanding blocks insight and realization. We are trapped. Our beliefs translate and limit our experiences. Put simply, there is a thinking-feeling memory problem that is preventing you from just awakening right now, in this moment.

For this reason, we ask that you temporarily set aside your ideas and beliefs and freely experience what arises without immediately filtering it through a religious or philosophical context. You might consider yourself Christian, Muslim, Jew, Scientific Materialist, Buddhist, Atheist, Hindu, or Wiccan. We ask that you become a temporary agnostic during this practice, to be open to the possibility of discovering a deeper, more encompassing truth in which these contexts arise.

Allow yourself the freedom to *experience directly*. Temporarily surrender any preconceptions you might have about what is *supposed* to happen. Openness (agnosticism or "beginner's mind") permits un-programmed experience, unconstrained by previous concepts. During this process we ask that you leave old beliefs at the door with your hat and shoes. You can always pick them up again on the way out, if they still fit!

## Mondo Zen Koan Practice

The word “Mondo” translates into English as “The Way of Dialogue.” The word “Zen” we translate as *Clear Deep Heart-Mind* – a knowing of our consciousness deeper than our thinking, feeling, and sensing mind. The word “koan” means an enigmatic question designed to bring your rational thinking mind to one point of focus – a question that points to a deeper truth about this consciousness.<sup>1</sup> When we put the words “Mondo Zen Koan Practice” together, we are referring to a dialogue practice that uses enigmatic questions to awaken one to *Clear Deep Heart-Mind*, our deepest self, which includes unconditional compassion.<sup>2</sup>

Unlike traditional koan practice, Mondo Zen gives you all of the stages to enlightenment quickly, so that you can get a feel for these stages and get a sense of where this is going. To do this, we may ask you to accept something on a trial basis so that you can get a glimpse of the potential here. You can then go over this route many times to question each stage and deepen your understanding.

At first, these concepts and koans may seem confusing to you. Know that they are meant to challenge you, to deconstruct your current philosophy, to induce insight and establish a new philosophical understanding. To answer these koans, you must *realize* the answers, not just have an intellectual or speculative understanding. This experience transforms the ordinary way in which we understand ourselves and our world.

**Please know and remember** that throughout this Mondo Zen Dialog, **you are your own teacher**. You are led in Mondo to have your own insight experience, and **you claim these insights and experiences** as your new understanding.

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<sup>1</sup> **Facilitator’s Note:** *Mondo dialogue incorporates four divisions of koan study from our Rinzai school: insight, spontaneity, verbal articulation, and precept koans. Our emotional koans are an addition to the traditional precept koans. During this dialogue, confused answers to koans must be challenged to be sure there is correct understanding.*

<sup>2</sup> **Facilitator’s Note:** *The Mondo Zen dialogue practice works like this: (1) We help to deconstruct the participant’s current philosophical view, which leads to insight; (2) Standing within this insight, they can see how they have been blocking realization of their true nature by holding a confused, illusory, and ignorant view; (3) This insight transforms their understanding of the structure of ego; (4) With this experience confirmed as their foundational perspective, they construct and choose a new, liberating philosophy; and (5) They then, through their emotional koan practice, integrate this new understanding into their everyday lives.*

## ***No one can do this for you!***

***~ Jun Po Roshi***

In the Buddhist tradition, we refer to this sharing of an insightful conscious state as “transmission.” The truth is that this teaching transmission travels in both directions - from student to facilitator as much as from facilitator to student.<sup>3</sup> Let us now take our first step together!<sup>4</sup>

*Virtuous Ones, do not use your minds mistakenly.  
The great sea does not need more dead bodies...  
You yourself raise the obstructions that impede your minds.  
When the sky above has no clouds, the bright heavens shine everywhere.*

***~ Master Rinzai  
(9<sup>th</sup> century, China)***

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<sup>3</sup> **Facilitator’s Note:** *It is important to recognize and remember that the Mondo Zen process is a full, Heart-Mind collaboration between “student” and “facilitator.” The facilitator will need to remain deeply grounded and present in Clear Deep Heart-Mind. From Clear Deep Heart-Mind, the facilitator invites the participant to join in and remain in this state of clarity throughout the dialogue. A vital function of the facilitator is to transmit the state we are investigating and hold the integrity of the container, keeping everyone from getting lost in philosophical chatter or attempting to do therapy. **Do not do any psychotherapy!** Do not wander off into shadow work, etc. The koan process is distinct from all these approaches. **The koan process is an awareness practice.** Also, as facilitator, be sure to monitor your teaching skills using the TRUCK method: Did you **Transmit** the koan? Did they experience **Realization** (insight)? Did they **Understand** philosophically? Did they **Claim** this understanding by verbally and physically expressing it? If so, you both **Know!***

<sup>4</sup> **Facilitator’s Note:** *For each koan, make sure you have a clear understanding of the process and the footnotes. Review them all before you begin. If you need time to review them during the session, you can use the two minutes of sitting before each koan or add more time to the sitting, or during the koan process, just ring the bell to sit again so that you can get back on track.*

# THE MONDO ZEN KOAN PROCESS, PART I: EGO DECONSTRUCTION–RECONSTRUCTION KOANS

## A ZEN TRANSMISSION

An ego insists upon its view. It must. This is how it preserves its identity. We live through our conditioning, stories, beliefs, and reactive patterns that we project onto the world. It is important to understand that, at a very deep level, there is a part of us that is absolutely afraid to change our stories, and we will resist change even while we believe we want it. How many times have you set out to change your life only to find some subconscious, shadow part of you resisting and sabotaging what you have declared you want?

Have you suffered enough? Are you finally willing to change your mind?

To our ego, this is simply a matter of survival. What precious part of us are we truly willing to let die? How can we surrender who we think and believe we are? When will we finally be willing to die, to be reborn, to update and enlighten our stories, dramas, traumas, our roles as victim or villain, hero or heroine? **Here we are.** Realize that this may very well be your time to awaken more fully from the confining dream of ego-as-a-permanent-self!

### ***Absolute Commitment to Being Open, Honest, and Vulnerable***<sup>5</sup>

**Facilitator:** To move forward, we need at least temporary permission from the part of you that makes decisions, that part of you who decided, for example, to engage in this very process. We need permission from the “you” who decides what information to let in and what information to reject, for example, what you like or dislike (food, music, poetry, who to love, etc.). This is a dialogue that can change your life but only if you allow it.

For this to work, we must agree to make a commitment!

***As your facilitator, I am willing to commit to being open, honest, and vulnerable.***

***Are you willing to commit to being open, honest, and vulnerable with me? With yourself?***

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<sup>5</sup> **Facilitator’s Note:** *Speak directly to the people – call them by their name. Ask them, “Can we have a life or death commitment?”*

Our ego's greatest fear is loss of control. This fear is perfectly understandable and perfectly sane. But it also, unfortunately, prevents you from experiencing things as they actually are. You are probably suspicious of this very process and insist upon holding onto what you believe. Do you have a sense of this?

Our Mondo dialogue requires a mutual agreement to complete honesty, vulnerability, and openness. In order for Mondo to be effective, you must be willing to engage the koan questions fearlessly and completely. Are you **willing** to engage in this? Are you willing to stay right here, engaged, taking all of this in and speaking out if you don't understand or if you have a concern? To be willing, you must have volition (you must choose), and you must also be willing to let go of your current perspective to try on a new perspective.

We recognize, respect, and honor your ego and invite your ego to partner with us in taking on a broader outlook and a more inclusive, liberating experience of life.

*Empty your mind of all thoughts.  
Let your heart be at peace.  
Watch the turmoil of beings,  
but contemplate their return.*

*Each separate being in the universe  
returns to this common source.  
Returning to the source is serenity.*

*If you don't realize this source,  
you stumble in confusion and sorrow.  
When you realize where you come from,  
you naturally become tolerant,  
disinterested, amused,  
kindhearted as a grandmother,  
dignified as a king.*

*Immersed in the wonder of the Tao,  
you can deal with whatever life brings you,  
and when death comes, you are ready.*

*~ Master Lao Tzu  
(6<sup>th</sup> century, China)*

**Facilitator:** Now may I have permission to talk with the “you” who is absolutely resistant to change, the one who is humoring me right now? Will you open up and allow a shift in your understanding?<sup>6</sup>

Now may be your time to awaken! Know that your ego won’t be asked to go away but to expand and experience a more enlightened view. (You’ll get more cookies!)

The Buddha said: “Do not trust teachers, teachings, or institutions. Trust only that which is true in your own experience” (see the *Kalama Sutra*). We invite you to experience this truth for yourself by temporarily giving up all of your limiting beliefs, ideas, and concepts. Embrace Beginner’s Mind and discover what this truth can mean for you as we investigate these koans together.

### **Concentration-Meditation**

We will begin our Mondo dialog koan process with a short concentration-meditation practice by listening to the sound of a ringing bell and silently repeating the word “Listen.” With each in-breath, silently recite the word “listen.” **Listen more deeply than you ever have listened.** Every time the bell is struck, follow the sound of the bell into absolute silence.<sup>7</sup> With each out-breath, silently with passion recite the word “listen.” Throughout our dialog, remain aware of and connected to this deeper listening. With each in-breath, draw deeper into pure silence. With each out-breath, bring this consciousness forward. Listen from and as perfect silence.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> **Facilitator’s Note:** *If they say no or seem reluctant, find out what they would need to commit. One way is to ask them to speak up if, at any point, they are in disagreement with what’s being said, don’t understand, or are humoring you. You can always remind them at any point in this process that they have agreed to be “open, honest, and vulnerable.” Remind them of this and ask them if they are still committed to it.*

<sup>7</sup> **Facilitator’s Note:** *At any point in this process, when you (or they) lose deeper awareness or become overly conceptual, emotionally distracted, or tongue-tied, remember to stop the dialog, ring the bell, and drop in. When you give instruction and sit in silence, transmit the state of deep listening. Do not just mouth the words. Maintain clear eye contact throughout this dialogue.*

<sup>8</sup> **Facilitator’s Note:** *We begin the Mondo Zen dialogue with guided concentration–meditation. In our tradition, meditation has three parts. First, we concentrate the mind on one point (Dharana). When we achieve this perfect, one-pointed concentration, we realize Dhyana mind, our deep meditative mind in which, at the surface, concentration is taking place. When we experience, realize, understand, and claim this depth of mind, we smile. We finally transcend, see through our ego, and experience genuine insight and freedom. This realization brings compassion and unreasonable enjoyment (Samadhi). We could use any of our senses (we include thinking and feeling as senses) to concentrate our mind. In this case, we use the sound of the bell and the word “listen.”*

**Facilitator: Ring the bell, sit two minutes with the Listen Koan, and then read:**

***First Koan: Is it possible to just purely listen without an opinion?***<sup>9</sup>

**Facilitator:** You have listened as deeply as you can to the ringing sound of this bell. Reflect and connect to this depth of listening. Is it possible to listen with no agenda, no opinion?<sup>10</sup> Is there a depth of just pure listening? Is your mind deeper than the thought, “Listen”? Is there a deeper listening than the sense of “I am listening”? Is this mind deeper and more spacious than what arises within it?<sup>11</sup> Is this mind deeper than the sensations, thoughts, and emotional feelings that are experienced within it?

**Explanation:** With this koan we realize, identify, and claim this awareness that transcends whatever is arising within this awareness, this Clear Deep Mind.

We prevent realization of ever-present, selfless Clear Deep Mind, this Pure Listening, by having an incorrect philosophical understanding, using confused language, persisting in an immature psychology, and not going deep enough in our meditation practice. Once we change our understanding and have this realization experience, we have begun to Awaken. This may be your first point of realization of Clear Deep Mind or a ripening of seeds already growing. This un-opinionated listening is Pure Awareness, also called Dhyana or Zen. **Understand the difference between conceptual listening and meditative listening.** With this koan realization, we directly experience pure awareness for ourselves.

**Facilitator:** Are you willing to just purely listen as we go forward?

*Enough, these few words are enough!  
If not these words, this breath!  
If not this breath, this sitting here!  
This opening to life we have refused again and again, until now!  
Until now!*

*~ David Whyte  
(21<sup>st</sup> century, United Kingdom)*

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<sup>9</sup> **Facilitator’s Note:** *Their first answers to these koans may be intellectual. That is ok. If answers seem more thought than felt, have the participant slow way down to (hopefully) experience this deeper listening.*

<sup>10</sup> **Facilitator’s Note:** *If they do not have the experience of this deeper listening, ask them if it is at least philosophically possible that there could be un-opinionated awareness within us. Can they accept this as a possibility and move on? The rest of the koans will help bring a deeper experience.*

<sup>11</sup> **Facilitator’s Note:** *If they are having difficulty, ring the bell and instruct them to try to stop the sound from going deeper than their relative mind. “Go on – stop the sound. Try really, really hard – stop the sound. Keep it out.” Whether your ego likes it or not, the sound is penetrating right through your ego mind into deep silence.*

**Facilitator: Ring the bell, sit two minutes with the Listen Koan, and then read:**

***Second Koan: Where within your body is the center of this deeper listening located?***

**Facilitator:** Slow waaay down! Listen deeply, scan your physical body. Where is the center, the locus of this deepest awareness within you? Point to or touch this center of listening.<sup>12</sup>

Describe the qualitative difference in feeling – both physically and psychologically – between surface ego/head listening (overstanding) and deep, embodied heart listening (understanding).

**Explanation:** It is very enlightening to discover that most people respond to this question by pointing to their heart.<sup>13</sup> When we ask where the ego listening is, they point to their heads. After experiencing the clarity of pure awareness, we now add the word “Heart” to Clear Deep Mind. We acknowledge deeper listening from *Clear Deep Heart-Mind*.

**Facilitator:** Now you have located and identified this deeper awareness, this unity of clarity (wisdom) and caring (compassion), this *Clear Deep Heart-Mind*. For the rest of this process, listen and respond from this deeper awareness. Keep *Clear Deep Heart-Mind* open.

*Who is hearing?  
Your physical being doesn't hear,  
nor does the void.  
Then what does?  
Strive to find out.  
Put aside your rational Intellect,  
Give up all techniques.  
Just get rid of the notion of self.*

*~ Master Bassui  
(14<sup>th</sup> century, Japan)*

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<sup>12</sup> **Facilitator's Note:** Most people locate deeper listening at their heart. If they do not feel the sound in their heart, invite them to breathe the sensation into their heart to see if they can feel any difference. Ask them to listen with their heart as a felt-experience. It is not absolutely necessary for them to feel the sound in their heart. If they cannot feel it in their hearts, let them work within their own experience. If they cannot listen from their heart, take their “heart” to wherever their particular locus is. What is most essential is to feel and understand the difference between ego listening (“head listening” or “overstanding”) and deeper listening (“heart listening” or “understanding”). We can literally listen with our hearts, not just as a mental concept but as a felt reality.

<sup>13</sup> **Facilitator's Note:** Be sure they experience this.

**Facilitator: Ring the bell, sit two minutes with the Listen Koan, and then read:**

***Third Koan: Who are you, who am I, who are we, within this deep, heartfelt listening?***<sup>14</sup>

**Facilitator (after they answer):** At this depth of mind, the answer is “I don’t know.”

**Explanation:** This koan reveals our ego confusion, our disconnection from our deeper self. You are not just your thoughts, feelings, and emotions. Your ego doesn’t know what it is — and has been running from this insight your whole life. At this depth of mind, we do not know who we are. At this depth, we are *nakedly aware* and *silent*, not opinionated. We are simply Pure Witnessing Awareness. Pure Witnessing Awareness doesn’t know anything! In not-knowing, there are infinite possibilities. We are finally getting nowhere! Has listening ever spoken, ever said anything? Pure Listening has never spoken!

From the conditioned ego’s perspective, not-knowing is scary. From *Clear Deep Heart-Mind*, it is simply the Truth, the root of unbounded, peaceful freedom. From this depth, you are simply “not-knowing.” Paradoxically, when you finally realize that this depth of mind has never spoken, there will be much for your ego to say.

*No eye can see It, no ear can hear It – then by what name can It be called?  
The man of old said, “To speak about a thing is to miss the mark.”*

*~ Master Rinzai  
(9<sup>th</sup> century, China)*

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<sup>14</sup> **Facilitator’s Note:** *The only valid answer is, “I don’t know.” They may need coaching to get to this answer. If necessary, let them answer incorrectly several times. They will always answer with a thought, feeling, story, or sensation. For example, if they answer with “love” or “bliss,” simply remind them that these are feelings that come and go, not the fundamental truth of who they are. Invite them to listen more deeply. Even if they respond with a seemingly correct answer such as “pure awareness” or “emptiness,” remember that their expression may be just “a finger pointing at the moon,” but they also need to experience and present the moonlight. They may be coming from conceptual ego, evaluative mind, and not connected with this state of consciousness. For example, if they say “I am pure awareness” with an emphasis on the “I,” they may be coming solely from conceptual ego mind. Always remember, we are looking for the state of consciousness that is underneath the spoken words! They must be speaking from the realization, through the ego and not just from the idea of the realization. If they do not arrive at “I don’t know” on their own, suggest that, at this depth, perhaps they do not know who they are. When they admit this, agree with them: “At this depth, I don’t know either. Finally, we’re getting nowhere!”*

**Facilitator: Ring the bell, sit two minutes with the Listen Koan, and then read:**

***Fourth Koan: What is the difference between “I Don’t Know” and “Not Knowing”?<sup>15</sup>***

**Facilitator:** I will ask you who you are several times. First, answer, claim, and say, “I don’t know” speculating from your ego, your head (overstanding). Emphasize the pronoun “I” when you answer. Raise your open hand, and then clench a fist as you answer to embody this answer. Feel the contraction in your physical body and psyche. Keep holding that fist.

Now while staying connected, speaking from *Clear Deep Heart Mind*, when I ask you “Who are you?” remove the pronoun “I.” Drop any ego identification with the pronoun “I.” Say, “Not-knowing” and open the fist, release the physical and psychic contraction. Claim and reveal the embodied state of not-knowing, of empty not-knowing-being.<sup>16</sup>

Now, alternate your answers between “I don’t know” (clenching fist) and “not knowing” (opening fist). We will do this several times.

Can you feel the opening and relaxation within your body and psyche when moving from your ego to *Clear Deep Heart-Mind*? Now describe the difference in your physical and emotional experience when you respond from these two locations.

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<sup>15</sup> **Facilitator’s Note:** Ask them “Who are you?” several times. The first few times they should answer “I don’t know” from their heads (overstanding) and clench their fist. The next few times they should answer “not knowing” while connected to Clear Deep Heart-Mind and opening their fist. Then, ask them, “Who are you?” and have them alternate between the two answers, feeling the difference between ego contraction and the open receptivity of Clear Deep Heart-Mind. As facilitator, you are looking for an opening and relaxation within their body and mind. See if you can observe the difference between “not knowing,” speaking through their ego versus speaking merely from the opinionated and value-weighted ego. Tell them when you can hear the difference in the tone of their voice for each response.

<sup>16</sup> **Facilitator’s Note:** From your position of close rapport, notice how the person says this. If they are still exclusively in their head but saying the words “not knowing,” you should be able to feel their ego contraction and sense their concern to get it right. If the answer is really coming from Clear Deep Heart-Mind, there will be a clarity and confidence that you can see, feel, and hear. Oftentimes they will lean towards you if they are in Clear Deep Heart-Mind. Remember, when asking this of them, you must demonstrate this experience and transmit this state.

**Explanation:** This koan realization allows you to experience the emotional and visceral difference between the intellectual process of *knowing* versus the pure receptivity of compassionate *being*. In time and with enough practice, we eventually experience and integrate these two locations, the head and heart, as one locus. We now can have the amazing experience of actually speaking through our ego, connected with *Clear Deep Heart-Mind*. In the unenlightened thinking and emotional ego mind, options are limited by views and beliefs. In awakened *Not Knowing*, there is freedom and infinite possibility.

*Not Christian or Jew or Muslim, not Hindu,  
Buddhist, Sufi, or Zen. Not any religion  
or cultural system. I am not from the East  
or the West, not out of the ocean or up  
from the ground, not natural or ethereal, not  
composed of elements at all. I do not exist,  
am not an entity in this world or in the next,  
did not descend from Adam and Eve or any  
origin story. My place is placeless, a trace  
of the traceless. Neither body nor soul.  
I belong to the Beloved, have seen the two  
worlds as one and this one call to and know,  
first, last, outer, inner, only this  
breath breathing human being.*

~

*There is a way between voice and presence where information flows.  
In disciplined silence this opens. With wandering talk this closes.*

*~ Rumi  
(13<sup>th</sup> century, Persia)*

**Facilitator: Ring the bell, sit two minutes with the Listen Koan, and then read:**

***Fifth Koan: What are you like, what are we like, at this depth of consciousness?***

**Facilitator:** Describe our mind at this depth. Drop into this depth of awareness, this purity. Describe this depth with four different words, signifiers, adjectives. Do not describe what arises and falls away within your consciousness – i.e., what you think or feel.<sup>17</sup> Remember: things that come and go are not *This!* *Call and connect with this state of Clear Deep Heart-Mind.*<sup>18</sup>

**Facilitator** Are we time bound here? Are we irritated here, no matter what may be going on out there? Are we constricted here? Do we *have* awareness, or *are* we awareness itself? Are we afraid here? Are we angry here? Are we noisy here? Are we aware here? Are we aware with an opinion or just purely aware?

In describing this depth of consciousness, we recommend the following terms or synonyms: **fearless, eternal, silent, timeless imperturbable, vast, empty... still/serene, peaceful/patient, aware.** (This **FESTIVE SPA** acronym is to help you remember these descriptors.)<sup>19</sup> These words describe this state of awareness, not what arises within this awareness. This awareness is Dhyana. This is where we take our seat.

**Explanation:** With this koan realization, you are claiming your fearless compassionate heart. This depth of heart within each of us can never be broken. Your ego thought that this heart could be broken. This heart opens infinitely and compassionately to the pain of this world. It is critical that you experience this. This heart does not deny feeling. This heart does not close down or turn away from

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<sup>17</sup> **Facilitator's Note:** *As facilitator, you are looking for them to describe their immediate experience. What is this depth of mind like? Not what arises in this depth of mind. This can be tricky. For example, sometimes people will answer with a word like "love." If this occurs, you can explore this answer with them to discover whether they are talking about the emotion love, or if they're really experiencing the deep selfless, unconditional compassion that arises right out of emptiness.*

<sup>18</sup> **Facilitator's Note:** *When they say a word like "silent," slow way down, lean in and ask them, "How silent?" Remember, as facilitator, you must transmit these subtle realizations. For example, when you say "silent," everything within you comes to rest. When you say "fearless," you are compassion embodied. Be sure they are experiencing the state they are naming. Once they start to experience and understand awareness at this depth, ask them: "Do thoughts and feelings disturb this depth of mind?" In truth they have never disturbed this deep clarity of our mind. Remember to ask them to articulate their new understanding at moments of insight. Have them repeat their chosen words and feel the connection to this state. Do this several times. Remind them that they can remain aware of this ever-present Clear Deep Heart-Mind. Remember to T.R.U.C.K.*

<sup>19</sup> **Facilitator's Note:** *These descriptors are accurate state descriptors of deeper awareness within our mind that cannot be violated. In other words, the words they choose must accurately describe a state of deep awareness that cannot be divided, qualified, or quantified. For example, you cannot violate, divide, or quantify silent, vast, timeless, empty, fearless, etc.*

the pain in your life nor does it neurotically drag it around weeping. From here, compassionate intelligence transforms emotional reactivity.

When you are awakened within *Clear Deep Heart-Mind*, is there anything that you cannot face? NO! You can stay consciously present and awake in the face of anything that arises. With this koan we use words, signifiers that directly point to and call forth *Clear Deep Heart-Mind*.

Understand that within this depth of mind, you are ***fundamentally compassionately aware*** –To be ***fundamentally aware*** is to be in Dhyana. Dhyana realization includes an awakened state of compassionate curiosity. Do you realize that within this insight, you are describing a Bodhisattva, an Awakened One?

### ***Quietness***

*Inside this new love, die.  
Your way begins on the other side.  
Become the sky.  
Take an axe to the prison wall.  
Escape.  
Walk out like someone suddenly born into color.  
Do this now.  
You're covered with thick clouds.  
Slide out the side. Die,  
and be quiet. Quietness is the surest sign  
that you've died.  
Your old life was a frantic running  
from silence.  
The speechless full moon  
comes out now.  
Do this now.*

***~ Rumi  
(13<sup>th</sup> century, Persia)***

**Facilitator: Ring the bell, sit two minutes with the Listen Koan, and then read:**

***Sixth Koan: Express your new insight with a silent gesture of embodied consciousness.***

**Facilitator:** Now silently through your eyes and with a body gesture, show me: “Who are you?” Express your new insight with a silent expression of focused and inquisitive awareness. Use your body, and especially your eyes, to express this understanding in a nonverbal way. It can be a small gesture or something more dramatic. Move spontaneously, informed by *Clear Deep Heart-Mind*, expressing through your ego but not exclusively from it.

Now, again, several times, demonstrate this depth of realization, with and through your body. “Who are you?” Show me.<sup>20</sup>

**Explanation:** With this koan realization, you realize you can be awake and connected to the deeper truth of pure awareness (*Clear Deep Heart-Mind*) while engaging, seeing, and moving the body. Awareness is embodied!

*I suddenly find myself upside-down on level ground;  
When I pick myself up, I find there's nothing to say!  
If someone should ask me what this is all about,  
Smiling, I'd point to the pure breeze and bright moon.*

**~ Zhenru  
(12<sup>th</sup> century, China)**

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<sup>20</sup> **Facilitator's Note:** As facilitator, you will see that they have “gotten it” in their eyes, when you see pure awareness, a depth of awareness, infinity, staring back at you. There will be a release of the contraction, the barrier that someone has when their ego is exclusively active. You'll feel resonance with this Awakened Mind, this single expression of awareness. They will move spontaneously – a spontaneous expression of insight. Oftentimes, they'll lean in, their eyes will sparkle or get bright, and a smile and look of playfulness will come to their faces. Remember, being awake is playful, fun, light, and deeply, deeply curious! If they are not embodying this depth of awareness, demonstrate for them with your own embodied gesture, but don't rush it. Remember, to transmit, transmit, transmit! Dhyana includes the state of compassionate curiosity.

**Facilitator: Ring the bell, sit two minutes with the Listen Koan, and then read:**

***Seventh Koan: Use a signifier and your name to recall Clear Deep Heart-Mind. Respond with this awareness.***<sup>21</sup>

**Facilitator:** First, pick one of the descriptors that you used to describe This Mind (e.g., vast, silent, empty, still, etc.). Pick the descriptor that most resonates with you.

I will now call to you as that name several times.<sup>22</sup> Respond from *Clear Deep Heart-Mind*. Respond using words, including the expression through your eyes and your chosen physical gesture.

**Facilitator (when done with above):** Wouldn't it be transformational to have your given name, your common name, evoke *Clear Deep Heart-Mind*?<sup>23</sup> I will now call to your given name. Again, respond from *Clear Deep Heart-Mind*.

**Facilitator (when done with above):** Next, call to yourself using your given name and any name you are called, and respond from *Clear Deep Heart-Mind*. Do this several times. Respond using words, the expression through your eyes, and your chosen physical gesture.

Now that you have had the experience and have words (signifiers) that connect to this depth of consciousness, you can use these signifiers, including your own name, to access and recall *this* mind.

Imagine how helpful it will be to respond to your given name from this fearless depth! Who shows up when you respond (vastness, fearlessness, silence, timelessness, Buddha)? Before you choose your response, you must stay awake and clearly discern what is actually happening.

**Explanation:** With this koan realization, you have established a pathway and vehicle to access your *Clear Deep Heart-Mind*. After experiencing, defining, and naming this state of consciousness, you can

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<sup>21</sup> **Facilitator's Note:** Ask them to select one of the signifiers: silent, vast, timeless, empty, fearless, imperturbable, aware, peaceful, still, eternal.

<sup>22</sup> **Facilitator's Note:** If they choose the name "Vast," you say, "Hey, Vast!" Look for them to respond from Clear Deep Heart-Mind. Oftentimes, they will lean in. Look for their body to open. Look to their eyes for confirmation. Don't be afraid to be playful and fun in this koan. For instance, you can ask them, "How Vast?"

<sup>23</sup> **Facilitator's Note:** Whenever they hear their given name (e.g., "Hey, Jane!") or any name they are called, they can choose to enter Clear Deep Heart-Mind. Their given name can now become a signifier to access Clear Deep Heart-Mind. Know that all verbal response comes through the ego, but in this case, it will be transformed, consciously informed by Clear Deep Heart-Mind.

train your ego to call forth *Clear Deep Heart-Mind* in the thick of life when it matters most. Remember, your ego is a wholly-conditioned process, which means it can be *re-conditioned*. Anytime someone calls any name you are called, you can bring forth and express your true deep nature. Your name can now be used in the process of Awakening! Remember this whenever your name is called. Your given name has now become your dharma name.

*Every day Master Zuigan used to call to himself, "Master!" and would answer, "Yes!"  
Again, he would call, "Stay awake! Stay awake!" and he would answer, "Yes! Yes!"  
"Don't be deceived by others, any day or any time."  
"No! No!"*

*~ Mumonkan*

**CASE 12: Zuigan Calls Himself "Master"  
(13<sup>th</sup> century, China)**

**Facilitator: Ring the bell, sit two minutes with the Listen Koan, and then read:**

***Eighth Koan: Does this Clear Deep Heart-Mind come and go?*<sup>24</sup>**

**Facilitator:** Get in touch with your deepest Self. Feel this *Clear Deep Heart-Mind*, this openheartedness, in your body. Does *this* come and go?

**Facilitator (after they answer):** No. *Clear Deep Heart-Mind* does not come and go. Who comes and goes?

"You" - your sensing, feeling, thinking ego - come and go. Your ego awareness of this depth of mind comes and goes. It is good to remember that your ego vanishes every night when you enter deep, dreamless sleep and reappears when you wake up in the morning. When you die, whatever may or may not persist, your sensing, feeling, thinking ego will cease. All sensing, including thought and feeling experienced through physical form will dissolve and disappear into emptiness – Shunyata!

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<sup>24</sup> **Facilitator's Note:** *From the ego's perspective, Clear Deep Heart-Mind appears to come and go. But, in reality, it is the ego's awareness of this depth of mind that comes and goes. An ego with correct understanding can be informed and transformed by Clear Deep Heart-Mind realization and Mondo Zen koan practice.*

**Explanation:** Consider this - If we were to regress back down the timeline to our infantile, unconditioned state of mind, we would realize and remember a pure unconditioned awareness with no ego story, no words, no language, no inside, no outside, no self, no other. When, from a mature perspective, we awaken to this depth of mind, we discover ***this is the empty, deeper nature of our mind.*** You can now claim your awakening!

**Facilitator:** Wherever there is sentience (the ability to perceive, think, or feel), there is *This* consciousness. Mental forms cannot arise without empty awareness of mind in which they arise. Feel into this. Do you understand this, experience this? This *Clear Deep Heart-Mind* does not - cannot - come or go.

This depth of mind has no eyelids, never blinks, never sleeps, never turns away. Wherever you are, no matter what is arising within you, this awake, silent, empty, fearless *Clear Deep Heart-Mind* is always here. Do you recognize that in owning this truth, you now can claim your freedom? Do you understand the significance of what this truth can mean in your life? Tell me! Ask your scriptwriter: "Are you willing to remember this and add this realization to your story?" Claim your Awakening!

**Explanation:** With this koan realization, we claim and stabilize our insight. Clearly articulating this insight and philosophical understanding, we are no longer bound to ignore this imperturbable presence. Within this realization, we experience that nothing can destabilize, frighten, or overwhelm our conscious awareness. Our ego remains intact and still functions but can now be re-educated and transformed. We now know this depth of consciousness.

*One instant is eternity;  
eternity is the now.  
When you see through this one instant,  
you see through the one who sees.*

**~ Master Wu-Men  
(13<sup>th</sup> century, China)**

**Facilitator: Ring the bell, sit two minutes with the Listen Koan, and then read:**

***Ninth Koan: Now that you have experienced Clear Deep Heart-Mind, what must you do to bring this realization forth right now and at any time in your daily life?***

**Facilitator (after they answer or to help them answer):** You must **Remember** *This*. And then you must **Choose** *This*.

The Buddha said: “Do not trust teachers, teachings, or institutions. Trust only that which is true in your own experience” (Kalama Sutra).

You are the one who located deeper, compassionate listening within your body. You are the one who described what we are like at this depth. You expressed your insight with a silent gesture of embodied consciousness and with verbal expression. You know this truth within your own experience.

**Explanation:** You must **remember** this truth. You – your ego – must claim this understanding. You claim your own insight! You must **choose** to live this truth. *You* must develop genuine insight. *You* must release your attachment to, and change your understanding of, the nature and structure of *your* temporary ego. Only you can take your seat. It will not be given to you. Only when you choose to live this way, with absolute resolve, will this Awakening manifest and bring meaning to your life.<sup>25</sup>

**Facilitator:** With enough concentration-meditation practice, we develop the ability to slow way down and stay present in meditative mind – *Clear Deep Heart-Mind*. When the challenges of life arise, we will also learn to recognize and release the body’s contractions and transform our negative emotional reactivity.

**Explanation:** We choose our new seat with insightful understanding, knowing and claiming the ego as just a temporary wholly-conditioned figment of imagination at the surface of our aware being. How amazing! The ego can *choose* to become less self-absorbed! The ego can become conscious of its own conditioning! Therefore, you can choose to take a seat in Dhyana - pure, compassionate awareness - and respond with *this* awareness.

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<sup>25</sup> **Facilitator’s Note:** *We must make a choice to awaken. Be wary of any hint of the highly sophisticated victim mentality, where we passively sit around and wait for the day awakening comes. At the end of the day, after we have had this insight experience, we must make the additional choice to live in this truth. Eventually, with enough practice, we automatically respond from this awareness. Be sure they understand the responsibility that awakened living is a choice. It does not happen to us, nor is it gotten from a single experience. It takes consistent practice to develop and sustain the ability to choose and respond consciously.*

**Facilitator:** Are you willing to choose this path right now?<sup>26</sup> What might be possible if you made this choice?

*I went everywhere with longing  
in my eyes, until here  
in my own house  
I felt truth  
filling my sight.*

*~ Lalla  
(14<sup>th</sup> century, Kashmir)*

**Facilitator: Ring the bell, sit two minutes with the Listen Koan, and then read:**

***Tenth Koan: What feeling arises when you actually experience this insight and understanding?***<sup>27</sup>

**Facilitator (after they share their feelings):** This is Samadhi – unreasonable enjoyment. The integration of genuine insight requires both will and surrender. Awakening includes a willing surrender of ego and willful presentation of insight and new understanding. With genuine insight and correct understanding, radical self-acceptance and compassionate equanimity become constant.

**Explanation:** This realization can induce sacred laughter. This is the joy and bliss of Samadhi, seeing not exclusively *from* the ego but *through* your newly-informed ego. Within this koan realization, you finally “get the joke” – physical and emotional pain is inevitable, but suffering is optional – that the stability of *Clear Deep Heart-Mind*, the unconditional love, the compassion is always right here. This

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<sup>26</sup> **Facilitator’s Note:** Many people struggle with the idea of having to choose this reality. If they have doubts, explain that this claiming a doubt is their ego’s escape clause. Be ready to challenge them dramatically and playfully. Also if they say, “I will try,” this is another ego escape clause.

<sup>27</sup> **Facilitator’s Note:** Some people have a difficult time answering this question with a feeling. If that happens, ask them to rate their feeling on a scale of 1 to 10, 1 being “lousy” and 10 being “delightful.”

good feeling is Samadhi, unreasonable enjoyment!<sup>28</sup> Through this recognition, you identify and claim your freedom and insight. Eventually, with enough meditation and koan practice, this state of freedom and enjoyment can become constant - no more coming and going.

*Ten thousand flowers in spring, the moon in autumn,  
A cool breeze in summer, snow in winter.  
If your mind isn't clouded by unnecessary things,  
This is the best season of your life.*

**~ Master Wu-Men  
(13<sup>th</sup> century, China)**

***The truth is that this Heart can never be broken.***

**~ Jun Po Roshi**



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<sup>28</sup> **Facilitator's Note:** *Samadhi is Unreasonable Enjoyment, not caused by anything other than the realization of Clear Deep Heart-Mind. Relative happiness is conditional and therefore transient. Samadhi is unconditional happiness that is boundless. Samadhi is experiencing and radically accepting the gift of life, all of it, the so-called "good" as well as the so-called "bad." True happiness is all-inclusive and does not rely on external circumstances. It is a state of awareness that transcends and includes relative happiness and unhappiness.*

## ***Articulate Your Understanding: Review the Mondo Zen Koans***

1. Is it possible to just purely listen without an opinion?
2. Where within your body is the center of this deeper listening located?
3. Who are you, who am I, who are we, within this deep, heartfelt listening?
4. What is the difference between “I Don’t Know” and “Not Knowing”?
5. What are you like, what are we like, at this depth of consciousness?
6. Express your new insight with a silent gesture of embodied consciousness.
7. Use a signifier and your name to recall Clear Deep Heart-Mind. Respond with this awareness.
8. Does this Clear Deep Heart-Mind come and go?
9. Now that you have experienced Clear Deep Heart-Mind, what must you do to bring this realization forth right now and at any time in your daily life?
10. What feeling arises when you actually experience this insight and understanding?

## ***Check in for new understanding***

**Facilitator:** Now, please, slowly and carefully articulate what you have realized. What have you learned? What is new in your understanding? How will this realization help you? Do you recognize and own the significance of this exercise?<sup>29</sup>

## ***Taking this home and making it real***

You have just confirmed how this new koan understanding has changed your view. Do you realize that you have access to this freedom all the time? Do you choose to enrich your view? Will you add this new experience and understanding to your toolbox? Will you remember this reality and what you’ve just experienced?

**Explanation:** For most of us, just a moment of insight is not enough to accomplish lasting transformation. We must also clearly understand and change our philosophy, and develop a strong and consistent concentration-meditation practice.

This Hollow Bones Dharma is drawn from the practical teaching of the Buddha and our Zen lineage, updated for our times. In order to fully embody and express awakening in your daily life, it is important for you to be able to communicate and facilitate this Mondo Zen process with others, for both your benefit and theirs. Until you can authentically share this teaching with others, you do not clearly

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<sup>29</sup> **Facilitator’s Note:** *If you are working with someone who is in their head or getting philosophical, let them explain at their own pace. Once they’re finished, ask them for a bumper sticker take-away. What is one phrase they could use to remind them of this experience and insight? If needed, you can then remind them of this phrase in the second half of the Mondo Zen Process. Be sure to get their commitment!*

understand your realization. You may not be called to teach this in any formal way, but until you are *capable* of teaching, you will have difficulty owning and living this truth. Learn, share, and teach by embodying this Dharma! Live these teachings!

**Facilitator:** Please know and remember that to maintain and utilize this understanding, most of us will need a strong and consistent concentration-meditation practice, Mondo Zen koan practice, and a community/sangha for support. Through your concentration-meditation practice, you become aware of and cultivate awareness of your deeper mind, develop the ability to remain non-reactive in the face of threat or insult, and have time to stop unconsciously reacting, open your eyes and your heart, clearly discern, and compassionately respond. As Master Hafiz has realized:

***Ten Thousand Idiots***

*It is always a danger  
To aspirants  
On the  
Path*

*When they begin  
To believe and  
Act*

*As if the ten thousand idiots  
Who so long ruled  
And lived  
Inside*

*Have all packed their bags  
And skipped town  
Or  
Died.*

***~ Hafiz  
(14<sup>th</sup> century, Persia)***

# THE MONDO ZEN KOAN PROCESS, PART II:

## EMOTIONAL AWARENESS INTERVENTION KOANS

### A ZEN TRANSMISSION

#### **Meditation in Action**

An ego *insists* upon its view. It must. We live through our conditioning, stories, beliefs and reactive patterns that we project onto the world: our *hysterical-historical human conditioning*. We don't realize that we are unconsciously, habitually reacting. When you have cut through the surface noise – the sensations, feelings, thoughts, stories, and self-referencing streams of ego - this is *Clear Deep Heart-Mind*. When you have penetrated into your deepest truth and directly experienced vast, empty, silent awareness, this is *Clear Deep Heart-Mind*. This naked awareness is pure, curious clear mind, unadorned by emotions, thoughts, stories, or beliefs. From this clarity, you see what is happening without any emotional reaction or limiting beliefs.

The second part of the Mondo Zen protocol is designed to allow us to recognize, enlighten, and transform our habitual destructive emotional reactions into conscious compassionate responses. A well-trained Zen student's life is an expression of the marriage of wisdom (clear discernment) and compassion (unconditional love). Wisdom, the ability to remain present and aware in *Clear Deep Heart-Mind*, is only half of the work. To complete the work, to embody compassion, we must change our philosophical understanding of the nature and function of feelings and emotions and learn to act intentionally from this new understanding. Together, this wisdom and compassion allow for skillful means to emerge authentically from the inside out. We naturally simply know what to say or do.

In Mondo Zen, we consider our emotional feeling to be no different than our other senses. With philosophical reorientation and meditative insight, emotion is experienced as sensing that brings information, no different in function than seeing, hearing, smelling, touching, and tasting. From this depth of witnessing, a strong feeling is no different than a bright color or loud sound. It is essential that we recognize and understand this. Consider the freedom of relating to feeling in the same way that we relate to our other senses.

***Feeling is information. In order to consciously respond rather than habitually react, it is essential that we experience and get the information within all our feelings – including those deeper feelings that lie underneath our habitual negative emotional reactions.***

**With enough insight, we realize that unconscious, negative emotional reactivity creates unnecessary suffering.** Through emotional koan practice, we consciously choose intelligent, compassionate

responses to our feelings instead of unconscious, counterproductive, habitual, negative emotional reactions.

Violent emotional reactivity (what, in Mondo Zen, we consider to be a “surface” or “superficial” emotional reaction) is also expressed as a contraction in the body. This shows that the ego is not yet conscious of the compassionate care that is underneath the reactivity/contraction. Violent emotional reactivity can take many forms. The three most common ones are:

1. Violent Anger - Violence against others
2. Shame - Violence against self
3. Disconnection (turning away and shutting down) - Subtle violence to relationships, including relationship to self

Reactive anger can be expressed in many ways, such as a violent outburst or physical violence,<sup>30</sup> However, anger can be experienced as powerfully grounded and non-violent intense clarity of mind. Shame and disconnection may not be as dramatic as an angry outburst, but they are just as violent and just as destructive. We need to hear the voice of shame as an inquiry into the truth, not a trigger of negative beliefs. We need to turn disconnection into a call to be engaged with the situation, not turn away or disappear.

Reactivity expressed as violent anger (towards other), shame (towards self), or disconnection (from relationship) is experienced by most of us as an automatic “knee-jerk” reaction. However, we can claim and develop the capacity to choose our response. By developing a regular concentration-meditation practice, we gain more space, more time, so we can witness our physical contraction and emotional reactivity as they arise. Then we can consciously intervene, stop, release the contraction, drop into Clear Deep Heart-Mind, and choose a different, more intelligent, compassionate response.

To transform our habitual reactions, we must change our understanding and through concentration-meditation training, develop the ability to remain AWAKE in the face of perceived insult or danger and even intense pain (both physical and emotional). This allows us to slow down and experience the entire sensory-cognitive-emotional process. Once we experience these deeper feelings and understand the information they are providing, reactions like violent anger, shame, disconnection, jealousy, and envy become wonderful opportunities to awaken. In this way, *our angst becomes our liberation!*

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<sup>30</sup> **Facilitator's Note:** Sometimes forceful action is necessary as when we must set a strong boundary or use physical force for protection. Yet even with this forceful action, when the ego is informed by *Clear Deep Heart-Mind*, there is also compassion. Physical force does not equal emotional violence. It is possible to use physical force without closing down, without turning away, without putting on armor, without violent reactivity.

**Facilitator**<sup>31</sup>: Right now, today, right here, are you willing to claim your ability to recognize, enlighten and transform your habitual destructive reactions into compassionate response? Would you like to awaken and have a more conscious relationship with your feelings and emotions?

***Our angst becomes our liberation.***

***~ Jun Po Roshi***

*Zen practice in the midst of activity is a million times superior to that pursued in silence.*

***~ Master Ta Hui  
(12<sup>th</sup> century, China)***

**Facilitator: Ring the bell, sit two minutes with the Listen Koan, and then read:**

***Eleventh Koan: What are the deeper feelings that lie beneath violent anger, shame, and disconnection?***

**Facilitator:** Remember the last time you reacted angrily, felt shame, or disconnected from relationship. Describe it.

Slow waaay down! Drop into *Clear Deep Heart-Mind*. Choose the reaction you most relate to – anger, shame, or disconnection.<sup>32</sup> What were the feelings underneath the reaction?

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<sup>31</sup> **Facilitator's Note:** *Whenever the Mondo Process is broken into several sessions, we must renew our Commitment to Being Open, Honest and Vulnerable (pg. 9). A common place for a break is after Koan 10, before the Emotional Koans. You renew the commitment by summarizing then rechecking "Are you willing to commit to being open, honest and vulnerable with me? With yourself?" and "May I have permission to talk to the "you" who is absolutely resistant to change? Will you open up and allow a shift in your understanding?" This happens before you proceed with "Right here, right now, etc."*

<sup>32</sup> **Facilitator's Note:** *Remember that the reaction can be multi-layered. For instance, anger can be a violent reaction to shame.*

**After they have answered:** There are three primary feelings underneath negative reactions – fear, sadness, and deep caring. What were you afraid of? What were you sad about? What do you care deeply about?

Have you ever, in your entire life, been angry or ashamed about something you did not care about?<sup>33</sup>

**Explanation:** Slow waaaay down and get this. When you're *really* angry or ashamed, you *really* care about something! When you're angry at a loved one and strike them, insult them, or storm out of the house, you really *care*! When you're feeling ashamed and acting out a false belief, you really care. When you disconnect or numb out to protect yourself, do you want to be contracted, upset, and separate from others? Of course not! You want communication, understanding, resolution, closeness, and connection. You feel deep caring and yet, because of conditioning, you're driven to behave in ways that have the opposite effect. You are expressing deep care with violence.<sup>34</sup> How sad! How foolish and counterproductive this reactive behavior has been.

Whenever you experience anger, shame, or disconnection, you deeply care about something. Violence expressed as reactive anger, shame, or disconnection is an ignorant expression of your hysterical-historical human conditioning. The same goes for envy, jealousy, false pride, depression, anxiety, lust, and many other negative emotions.

**Facilitator:** Philosophically and emotionally reoriented and abiding in meditative mind, we are free to make other choices. We must remember that no one can shame us, make us violently angry, or make us disconnect. No one makes us jealous, fills us with envy, or makes us lust after them. We can choose conscious responses to transform these negative reactive feelings.<sup>35</sup>

An Awakened Mind - one abiding in *Clear Deep Heart-Mind* - experiences **anger** not as a violent reaction but as intense clarity of mind and deep concern.

An Awakened Mind experiences **shame** as a false belief that I am inadequate, worthless, and invalid. An Awakened Mind hears and differentiates shame (I am worthless) from guilt. (I did something wrong).

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<sup>33</sup> **Facilitator's Note:** *If they have a difficult time relating to these negative emotional reactions, have them choose another.*

<sup>34</sup> **Facilitator's Note:** *You have always had a choice, but due to genes, hormones, our animal nature, and cultural conditioning (parents, teachers, culture), we have been blind to these choice points.*

<sup>35</sup> **Facilitator's Note:** *With this teaching, we ask people to understand that deep caring is at the root of emotional reactivity. With this new understanding comes great opportunity and responsibility to consciously respond with clarity and compassion and not react with emotional violence. There is always a choice point.*

Guilt is experienced as a wake-up call, an integrity check, exposing something I have done for which I will accept responsibility.)

An Awakened Mind experiences **disconnection** for what it is — a missed opportunity to respond, to connect, to communicate, or resolve a situation.

An Awakened Mind experiences fear not as a reaction of fight, flight, or freeze but as excitement and opportunity. In an Awakened Mind, intelligence, interest and compassion transform all negative reactive emotions.

**Consider this ringing phone analogy.** Emotions are telephone calls bringing us information. Answer this phone when it rings. Do not refuse to answer the phone (depression).<sup>36</sup> Do not drag the phone around jumping up and down shouting “the phone is ringing” (anxiety).<sup>37</sup> Do not hit someone with the phone (anger) or blame yourself for its ringing (shame). Do not run away from the phone or get so intoxicated, busy, or stressed that you cannot hear it ringing (disconnection, denial). Answer the phone! Experience your deeper feelings, get the essential message that is informed by each feeling itself, then hang up the phone. Understand and choose your response. Stop *mindlessly, unconsciously reacting* to the phone’s ringing. Use your new insight and *respond* mindfully when the phone rings.

Also be aware and careful not to practice something we call idiot compassion - remaining silent or not responding when something needs to be said or done or enabling someone’s unconscious behavior.

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<sup>36</sup> **Facilitator’s Note:** *Anxiety and depression are philosophical problems, not just emotional ones. With anxiety and depression, we refuse (or are unable) to experience the deeper feelings and get the information found within them. Anxiety and depression, correctly understood, are good news. Congratulations! You are finally in a crisis. Answer the phone. What is the cause? What can you do now that’s different?*

<sup>37</sup> **Facilitator’s Note:** *Remember to stay alert and mindful regarding critical differences between facilitating Mondo Zen in depth (on purpose) and actually doing psychotherapy (by accident). In Mondo, emphasis is placed on present moment awareness, allowing participants to work with “what is.” On the other hand, psychotherapy deals primarily with helping people look at their past experiences. This focus relates to a wide variety of psychological conditions that tend to either block or prevent the participant from staying in the here and now. It actually prevents them from getting to the deeper feelings. If and when needed, we make appropriate referrals to other professionals with the credentials and skills to assist. As Mondo facilitators, when we notice that a participant starts to disconnect/disassociate (e.g., can no longer sustain eye contact or keep his or her emotive reactions in check), we stop, ring the bell, sit, breathe deep, slow waaay down, regain clarity, and then continue.*

We will now practice the **No/Know Kata** (see p. 42).

- No – to the reaction/contraction. Stop, release the emotional and physical contractions. Drop into *Clear Deep Heart-Mind*.
- Know – I know the deeper truth of who I am – *Clear Deep Heart-Mind*.
- What's Next?

### ***The Guest House***

*This being human is a guest house.  
Every morning a new arrival.  
A joy, a depression, a meanness,  
some momentary awareness comes as an unexpected visitor.*

*Welcome and entertain them all!  
Even if they are a crowd of sorrows,  
who violently sweep your house empty of its furniture,  
still, treat each guest honorably.  
He may be clearing you out for some new delight.*

*The dark thought, the shame, the malice,  
meet them at the door laughing, invite them in  
[liberate yourself, transform them]\**

*Be grateful for whoever comes  
because each has been sent  
as a guide from beyond.*

**~ Rumi  
(13<sup>th</sup> century, Persia)**

*\*(Jun Po's addition)*

**Facilitator: Ring the bell, sit two minutes with the Know/No Koan, and then read:**

***Twelfth Koan: Now that you know the deeper feelings beneath these violent emotive reactions, can anyone or anything ever make you violently angry, shame you, or make you disconnect/dissociate?***

**Facilitator (after they answer):** No one can make you violently angry, shame you, or make you disconnect. Your habitual emotional reactivity is not *caused* by anyone or anything else – even though it is *triggered* by them. You have always had the opportunity to choose your response.

You confirmed for yourself that *Clear Deep Heart-Mind* is real and accessible, that *Clear Deep Heart-Mind* does not come and go, that *Clear Deep Heart-Mind* cannot be disturbed, and that it is possible to stay consciously present (Awake) in the face of anything that arises. You can now choose to live in this freedom, accepting the responsibility to stay present in *Clear Deep Heart-Mind*, and not surrender to your habitual, reactive emotional patterns.

You now know that deep care lies beneath your emotional reactivity. You can now choose to live in this freedom, or you can choose to continue living in reactive patterns. Can you feel the freedom in this realization? Are you willing to remember this and actually transform your life?

**Explanation:** Too often we assume that we are “victims” or are not able to be in control of our emotions. Our confusion is apparent in the language we use. Out of ignorance we say things like, “He made me angry!” In fact, we get to choose to be responsible for our own reactivity. No one makes us react with violence to our feelings of anger, shame, or disconnection. These are our own unconscious emotional reactions.

We have a difficult time seeing a choice point because our body’s fight, flight, and freeze reactions and untrained mind react so quickly and automatically. Being unaware of our deeper feelings, we are conditioned to react unconsciously, superficially, and destructively. The noise level of our emotional reactivity overrides, overpowers, and blocks both our insight into our true nature and our ability to experience compassion.

With concentration-meditation training and emotional koan practice, we develop the ability to slow way down and stay present so we can choose our response. This allows us to transform our immature negative emotional reactivity.

**Facilitator:** We will now practice some responses for anger, shame, and disconnection. Now stay in this awareness, allow the emotion to arise, stop, release the contraction, drop into *Clear Deep Heart Mind* and slowly repeat after me:

**Violent Anger** - “I am feeling anger. I have intense clarity. I feel fear and sadness. I care deeply, and I choose not to be violent. I choose to compassionately respond.”

**Shame** – “I am feeling shame. I feel fear and sadness. I care deeply, and I choose to no longer accept these introjected false beliefs. I choose to compassionately respond.”

**Disconnection** – “I am feeling like disconnecting from this relationship. I feel fear and sadness. I care deeply about this relationship. I choose not to disconnect. I am staying right here. I choose to compassionately respond.”

**Explanation:** With this realization, we experience and understand that there is always time to interrupt a negative emotional reaction and make a conscious choice.<sup>38</sup> The truth is that we have been getting lost in the noise of our “surface” emotional reactivity, unaware of this focused clarity. We can now slow way down, stay with the focused clarity of mind, and experience the arising of fear, grief and concern, clearly understand the information in these deeper feelings, and consciously choose a response. This focused clarity of mind is our meditative mind, our *Clear Deep Heart-Mind!*

With training and practice, you can *transform* your negative emotional reactions. There are choice points, where you can *consciously choose* to respond instead of habitually react. For most of us, these choice points are not immediately obvious.<sup>39</sup> To recognize a choice point, we must practice concentration-meditation. We must develop the ability to remain present in *Clear Deep Heart-Mind*. We can then understand our emotional reactivity; we can intervene and actually choose a conscious response instead of a habitual reaction. Developing this capacity is the embodiment of true compassion.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> **Facilitator’s Note:** *One way to physically experience the truth of this koan is to engage in No/Know Kata.*

<sup>39</sup> **Facilitator’s Note:** *This choice point may not be conscious, at least in the beginning. As one example, it is very difficult to track the fight, flight, or freeze process because it shuts down the thinking brain. This is where concentration-meditation training is essential. We need to develop the ability to stay intelligently, compassionately awake, present in the face of anything. The next time they experience violent emotional reactivity, ask them to slow the process down and recognize a choice point. With enough concentration-meditation and emotional koan practice, they will, through experience, know the truth of this teaching.*

<sup>40</sup> **Facilitator’s Note:** *Point out that they may become aware of their negative reaction as it arises, in the middle of it, or afterwards. Whenever they become aware, follow the koan process.*

When we are finally truly compassionately awake, violent anger, shame, disconnection, jealousy, envy, and all other negative emotional reactions become optional. We are free at last.

*Are you choosing to be the puppet or the puppet master of your emotions?  
You can only make a conscious compassionate choice when the lamp  
of your precious ego is burning with the clear light of pure awareness.*

**~ Do Shin Roshi  
(21<sup>st</sup> century, United States)**

*Let your  
Intelligence begin to rule  
Whenever you sit with others  
Using this sane idea:  
Leave all your cocked guns in a field  
Far from us,  
One of those damn things  
Might go off.*

**~ Hafiz  
(14<sup>th</sup> century, Persia)**

**Facilitator: Ring the bell, sit two minutes with the Know/No Koan, and then read:**

***Thirteenth Koan: Select a recurring negative habitual reaction from your daily life and transform it into a conscious, compassionate response.***

**Facilitator:** This will become your emotional koan.

Drop deeply into and stay present in *Clear Deep Heart-Mind*.

Visualize a recurring pattern in your life where you habitually react with violent anger, shame, or disconnection or some other negative habitual emotional reaction. Choose something very specific that will

happen again soon, in the very near future. Describe the situation.<sup>41</sup>

Feel and recognize your physical and emotional contraction. Concisely describe it. Where is it in your body? What does it feel like? How does it affect you?

Release your physical contraction. Breathe deeply into it, allowing it to soften. Feel into and listen to the information in your deeper feelings: What are you afraid of? What are you feeling sad about? What do you deeply care about?

What can and will you do, what really needs to happen in this specific circumstance? If you do not know what to do, drop deeper into *Clear Deep Heart-Mind*; ask yourself again what needs to be done.

Now rehearse your koan. Slowly and carefully describe exactly what you will do. How will you consciously respond with wisdom, compassion, and skillful means? How might those involved respond to your new response? How would you consciously respond to their response?

When will you do this?

Congratulations! You now have your emotional koan. When you meet this situation in your life, the reaction and contraction are now your wake-up call. Remember this truth and consciously respond. Do you realize, if you can consciously respond to this situation, you can consciously respond to all similar situations? What is the significance of this for you?

**Keep working with this pattern of reactivity and develop consistency in your ability to recognize the pattern when it arises.**<sup>42</sup>

**Explanation:** This is the practice of Zen, the marriage of wisdom and compassion - the wisdom to stay present in *Clear Deep Heart-Mind* while compassionately responding to circumstances that arise.

This wisdom is the ability to remain nonreactive so you can see what's really happening. Compassion is expressed in choosing a response from the information contained within the deeper feelings. Our

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<sup>41</sup> **Facilitator's Note:** If they are having trouble selecting a situation or answering the questions used to set up the emotional koan, be silent and give them extra time to do so. At appropriate times, ask questions. If at all possible, avoid giving advice to help them choose their emotional koan. However, sharing your personal koan might be helpful. **Do not, at this time, do any psychotherapy.** Mondo is an awareness, intervention practice.

<sup>42</sup> **Facilitator's Note:** Now that you have finished the Mondo Zen koan process, you could engage in a dialogue with the person's immature reactive younger self in relationship with the mature conscious self. Have the youngster speak directly to the newly awakened mature one who responds until they come to an understanding. Jun Po shares: "For instance, my little one, who was called Denny, rides on my left shoulder. I vow to never abandon Denny again or allow him to drive our hysterical-historical shadow bus. Denny loves the idea and will remind me it is my job, not his."

immature emotional reactivity prevents both of these things. Our insight and transformation practices set us free to choose.

This koan realization enlightens and transforms your philosophical and emotional understanding. You now know the truth that all violent or other troublesome emotional reactions can be transformed. After you have changed your understanding and begun developing the ability to remain in meditative awareness, you can find the information in your deeper feelings and respond. Your habitual emotional problems have become exciting opportunities. In this way, we use our psychological suffering to find freedom! Our angst has truly become our liberation! From now on, conscious, compassionate responses can replace ignorant, habitual reactions.

It is not necessary to know all of the details of how you established an immature, ignorant reaction. However, it is necessary to recognize your negative reactions and be aware of the deeper feelings that serve to get you to the subconscious information. We have found that the violence of reactive anger is the easiest to see. The violence of shame directed inwardly is more subtle and difficult to see, sometimes because it can so quickly transform into anger or disconnection. The violence of disconnection affecting relationships can be the most difficult to see. We also know that you can't resolve what you can't see. You can't transform what lies outside of your conscious awareness. If you are not aware, ask those closest to you – they know.

Psychotherapy, shadow processing or trauma work, etc., can be helpful to bring issues into your awareness.<sup>43</sup> Once you see it, congratulations! You can now make it into an emotional koan. The result is "Real reincarnation, Mondo style." With enough concentration-meditation practice and by actively engaging these Mondo Zen Emotional Awareness Intervention Koans, you can be liberated.

**Facilitator:** Now after this Mondo Zen experience, slowly and carefully articulate what you have experienced. What do you understand? What have you learned? What have you realized? How do you feel as a result of this insight?

*Those who practice only in silence cannot establish their freedom when entering into activity.  
When they engage in worldly activities, their satori will disappear completely.*

*~ Master Hakuin  
(18<sup>th</sup> century, Japan)*

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<sup>43</sup> **Facilitator's Note:** Have them seek qualified professionals if you sense they need therapeutic help to identify these areas when appropriate.

Remember, this is a life *practice*. You may not succeed at first in catching the arising energy and transforming it into a compassionate response. You may not even become aware until you start to react negatively or see the impact of your negative reactions or feel the regret of your reactions or see the need to make amends. But even these realizations are great opportunities to take responsibility for your actions and their impact, return to your concentration-meditation practice, and deepen your insight into your habitual negative patterns.

Once you clearly understand your emotional koan, then, when appropriate, share your realization and new understanding with those with whom you have reacted negatively. This is especially useful within close, intimate relationships. You could start the conversation by saying, “I have learned something about myself and my emotional reactivity. I have chosen to make more conscious changes in my behavior and I would like to share this with you. May I share this with you?”

Then ask, “Please help me understand the impact my reactivity has had on you.” Compassionately take care of any negative impact you may have had.

**Facilitator:** In close relationships, your family and friends, it is possible to have whoever pushes your reaction buttons become your ally. You can ask for their assistance if and when they see your reaction begin. It is simple – you can have them call you by your name with a particular tone of voice which now can become another signifier for calling *Clear Deep Heart-Mind*. Or just have them use two fingers to point to their own eyes a few times and then to point to your eyes a few times. We have named this technique the *Secret Handshake*. These are your new wake-up calls. Now let’s practice a few rounds.

Keep practicing. Get support. This is the path of Awakening.

*Come, come, whoever you are.  
Wanderer, worshiper, lover of leaving  
Ours is not a caravan of despair.  
Come, it does not matter  
If you’ve broken  
Your vow a thousand times.  
Still, come, and yet again come!*

**~ Master Rumi  
(13<sup>th</sup> century, Persia)**

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*Emotional contractions are numberless.  
Now you can choose to make each reactive contraction an Emotional Koan.  
Your angst becomes your liberation! Dharma gates are numberless!*

*~ Doshin Roshi  
(21st century, America)*

### **Articulate Your Understanding: Review Mondo Zen Koans 11, 12, and 13.**

11. What are the deeper feelings that lie beneath violent anger, shame, and disconnection?
12. Now that you know the deeper feelings beneath these violent emotive reactions, can anyone or anything ever make you violently angry, shame you, or make you disconnect/dissociate?
13. Select a recurring negative habitual reaction from your daily life and transform it into a conscious, compassionate response.

## **Emotional Philosophical Reorientation**

### **The Truth about “Negative” Emotions**

Let us be sure to understand what we just experienced. The root of the problem is not our superficial negative emotional reactions but our beliefs. We actually believe that someone or something else is responsible for our emotional reactions. It is our ignorance of our deeper feelings and failure to understand the information within these feelings that causes our reactive suffering.

To say, “You make me angry,” is simply untrue. There is deeper feeling truth - we are feeling fear, sadness, and concern and not knowing this, we react superficially and ignorantly with violence. We are intervening, attempting to control the world and relieve discomfort. With this new understanding, anger expressed as violence is just one possible response to fear and not a very good one. After we change our understanding and develop our meditative stability of mind, we can then choose to alleviate our suffering as well as the suffering of others.

Remember, Zen is the marriage of wisdom and compassion, and this compassion includes you.

An Awakened Mind - one abiding in *Clear Deep Heart-Mind* - experiences **anger** not as a violent reaction but as *intense clarity of mind and deep concern*. An Awakened Mind experiences **shame** as a

false belief that I am inadequate, worthless, and invalid. An Awakened Mind hears and differentiates **shame** (I am worthless) from guilt (I did something wrong. Guilt is experienced as a wake-up call, an integrity check, exposing something I have done for which I will take responsibility.) An Awakened Mind experiences **disconnection** for what it is — a missed opportunity to respond, to connect, to communicate, or to resolve a situation. An Awakened Mind experiences fear not as a reaction of fight, flight, or freeze but as excitement and opportunity.

Eventually, with *Clear Deep Heart-Mind* realization, philosophical reorientation and emotional koan practice, violent anger, shame, jealousy, envy, disconnection and other pain-filled or pain-denying emotional reactions to feeling become optional. Having experienced this freedom, why would we ever make those choices? When the phone rings, we answer it, get the message from the immediate feeling as it arises, choose our response with wisdom, hang up the phone, and take compassionate action through skillful means.

*Siddhartha Gautama taught that there is an end to suffering, including psychological suffering. Mondo Zen practice is this realization, this teaching, this liberation, this Dharma!*

*With each moment's arising flash  
Of our normal feelings and thoughts,  
We will simultaneously recognize within us  
A field of pure awareness, wisdom,  
compassion and skillful means.*

***From Awakened One's Vow  
~ Master Torei  
(18<sup>th</sup> century, Japan)***

## No/Know Kata, an Emotional Transformation Embodiment Practice

When we face situations in our lives and emotion arises, there is also a physical reaction, a habitual contraction signaling us to fight, flee, or freeze. When we retrain ourselves to recognize and interrupt that contraction, we discover we have other options.

When we become aware of our contraction and emotional reactivity as they arise, we can consciously intervene, stop, release the contraction, drop into *Clear Deep Heart-Mind*, and choose a different, more intelligent, compassionate response.

Emotional feelings are visceral and in many cases unresolved feelings that are stored in the body. We will now perform a Kata, a physical interruption and transformation of this physical-emotional contraction that we previously experienced as violent anger, shame, or disconnection.

### First round: ANGER

Stand in complete stillness.

Conjure up the feeling in your body of reacting to fear with violent anger.

Slowly bring your hands in front of you and  
begin to make fists as if you were about to fight.

Stop!

Drop into this *Clear Deep Heart-Mind*.

Change directions.

Open the hands and move your palms away from you  
at chest height, fingers extended and  
pointing up as you release the contraction.

Slowly and with absolute clarity and understanding,  
softly shout the word *Know/No*.

*I **know** deeper than this and **no** to the reaction.*

Feel the clear boundary, fear, sadness, and truth of deep caring.

Step forward with palms up and

Ask out loud, "*What next?*"

The fear energy that arises before your anger reaction is sacred.

Violent behavior is a choice.

Make your choice.

## Second Round: SHAME

Return to complete stillness.  
Conjure up the feeling of shame as you feel  
shame's heaviness begin to weigh you down.  
Bend at the waist and look down.  
Become aware of the shame.  
Stop!  
Drop into this *Clear Deep Heart-Mind*.  
Change directions.

Slowly push your palms towards the ground  
slightly behind your hips, as if your palms were pressing your torso forward  
and release the contraction.  
Bring your head up, open and move your chest forward,  
open your eyes wider as you feel your power,  
and release the shame contraction.  
Slowly and with absolute clarity and understanding,  
softly shout the word Know/No.  
*I know deeper than this and no to the reaction.*

Feel the clear boundary and deep caring beneath the shame.  
Shame is the introjection of someone's voice,  
Saying you are worthless.  
You now know better.  
Don't abuse yourself.  
Step forward, turn palms up, and  
Ask out loud, "*What next?*"

### Third Round: DISCONNECTION

Return to complete stillness.  
Conjure up the feeling of checking out, avoiding, and disconnecting.  
Turn yourself (head, body) away towards one side,  
and slightly lean back.  
Stop!  
Drop into this Clear *Deep Heart-Mind*.  
Release the contraction.  
Change directions.

Slowly bring your hands up to your head with  
your palms facing your ears as  
you lean forward into the present moment.  
Open your eyes, feel the power of your presence, and  
face whatever you were avoiding.  
Slowly with absolute clarity and understanding,  
softly shout the words Know/No.  
*I know deeper than this and no to the reaction.*

Feel the clear boundary and deep caring.  
Disconnection, the escape through denial,  
the turning away from what is, was a choice.  
Use the energy and lean back into (your relationship) life.  
Step forward, turn palms up, and  
Ask out loud, "*What next?*"

### Fourth Round: CELEBRATION

Return to complete stillness.  
Feel deeply the freedom of your new choices.  
Smile, throw both hands up above your shoulders, and shout "Swaha!" (Yes!)  
Let this swaha take you right into a round of sacred laughter.  
Swaha...ha, ha, ha, ha, haaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaa...  
Celebrate your new understanding and experience.  
Remember, it's celebrate, not celibate!

## Sacred Laughter

Now let us explore **Sacred Laughter** together. In the past we reacted to fear with violence as anger, shame, disconnection, jealousy, envy, and the like. Now instead, we will practice responding with sacred laughter to release the contraction and the hysterical-historical found in human conditioning.

**First Round** - Remember a recent incident where you reacted to fear with violent anger, shame, or disconnection and laugh with the realization of how foolish and counterproductive these subconscious choices have always been. It was *always* the wrong choice. Admit it. This is amusing. Get the joke! With this laughter, release and let go of any residual tension felt in your physical-emotional body (these two are not separate).

**Second Round** - Close your eyes and imagine a future incident where you would normally react to fear violently with anger or shame or disconnection. Feel the physical contraction. As the feeling arises, recognize the empty clear mind in which this feeling is arising. Feel the concern within that clarity. Stay connected with the feeling. Slowly open your eyes, inhale deeply, and as you begin to exhale, express this not as shame or anger or shutting down but with laughter.

Experience the difficulty and strangeness of responding with laughter instead of reacting habitually. This is practice in the face of insult. Release the physical emotional contraction. Observe the quality of your consciousness during and after the process. Enjoy yourself! Get the joke! No one has ever shamed you, made you angry, or made you disappear. You have *subconsciously chosen* shame, anger, or disconnection.

**Third Round** - Laugh from the depth of your being for no reason other than joy. Start with a subtle smile connected to your realization of the fearless core of your being, and let it build and release all residual tension naturally and completely.

Demonstrate the release of the physical-emotional contraction, choosing laughter as the alternative expression. Understanding is incomplete until the physical-emotional contraction is released. Emotion is visceral.

**Intention:** To practice a skillful method that transforms negative reactions into positive, enjoyable responses. ***Feeling is just information!*** Feeling is sensing, and sensing brings information. This information deserves a conscious response, not a habitual negative emotional reaction. We do not need to react habitually, foolishly, violently, or immaturely. We do not need to repress these wonderful, rich energies. We need neither fear nor deny them. We can use them to hurt or to liberate, to be violent or loving. Through this practice, ***our angst becomes our liberation!***

Facilitator reads poem:

**Laughter**

*What is laughter? What is laughter?  
It is God waking up! O it is God waking up!  
It is the sun poking its sweet head out  
From behind a cloud  
You have been carrying too long,  
Veiling your eyes and heart.*

*It is Light breaking ground for a great Structure  
That is your Real body - called Truth.*

*It is happiness applauding itself and then taking flight  
To embrace everyone and everything in this world.*

*Laughter is the polestar  
Held in the sky by our Beloved,  
Who eternally says,*

*"Yes, dear ones, come this way,  
Come this way towards me and Love!*

*Come with your tender mouths moving  
And your beautiful tongues conducting songs  
And with your movements - your magic movements  
Of hands and feet and glands and cells - Dancing!*

*Know that to God's Eye,  
All movement is a Wondrous Language,  
And Music - such exquisite, wild Music!"*

*O what is laughter, Hafiz?  
What is this precious love and laughter  
Budding in our hearts?*

*It is the glorious sound  
Of a soul waking up!*

*~ Hafiz*

*(14<sup>th</sup> century, Persia)*

## Compassionate Tears

**Facilitator:** Now let's explore compassionate tears together. Compassionate tears are for unresolved sadness or grief.

Lie on your back or on your side or in a fetal position or any position you choose. Change your position if you feel the need to during this exercise. Deepen and soften your breath. Scan your body. With unresolved sadness and grief, there is a contraction held in the body. Can you feel the contraction of this sadness, this grief somewhere? Perhaps in your eyes, your heart, your gut, your throat? If you do not feel sadness in a particular locus, then just work with the sense of sadness.

Compassionately breathe into and soften to release the contraction. As you release the contraction, gently start to cry. Let the tears come. Let them flow...what is this about? What are you releasing? What memories come to mind? Let the tears wash away the contraction; let them do their job. Be gentle and compassionate with yourself. Let the tears and sadness flow. Stay heart-centered in a meditative mind throughout this practice. Send yourself love. If you have lost someone dear, send them your love as well. You will always remember them. Release the contraction. Return to love. Compassion begins at home.

Now slowly return to silence. Scan your body again and see if the contraction is released or softened. If not, no shame, no blame ... next time. Is there something you have learned, something you let go of, something you dissolved with this conscious release?

Now just lie there, soften and deepen your breath, and enjoy the silence.

**Facilitator reads poem:** *(next page)*

### ***Birdwings***

*Your grief for what you've lost  
holds a mirror up to where  
you're bravely working.*

*Expecting the worst,  
you look and instead,  
here's the joyful face  
you've been wanting to see.*

*Your hand opens and closes  
and opens and closes.  
If it were always a fist  
or always stretched open,  
you would be paralyzed.*

*Your deepest presence is in every small  
contracting and expanding -  
the two as beautifully  
balanced and coordinated  
as birdwings.*

**~ Rumi  
(13<sup>th</sup> century, Persia)**

## Reacting vs. Responding: Changing your Cognitive Process

1. Circumstances arise
2. Sensing excitement begins; interest
3. Body-memory and habitual memory follow
4. Physical-emotional feeling arises

or

### Reactivity

- Unconscious habitual contraction/reaction
- Information is blocked
- Ignorance prevails

#### **REACT *mindlessly by habit***

- Subconscious, conditioned, habitual reaction

### Mondo Koan Awareness Intervention

- Recognize the contraction; release the contraction
- Drop into *Clear Deep Heart-Mind*
- Genuine fearless concern is experienced
- Information is understood
- Wisdom and Compassion prevail

#### **RESPOND *mindfully through skill***

- Conscious, intelligent, compassionate response

## KEY CONCEPTS

***Properly understood and experienced, our angst becomes our liberation.***

Vulnerability is our greatest strength. It is our open heart which, in truth, can never be broken.

We require a free, rich, honest, disciplined emotional body. It's not about denying feeling. It's about staying conscious in the face of feeling.

There must be an Empty Mind in which sensing arises, for sensing to occur. This Empty Mind is not disturbed by arising content, regardless of the content.

Mondo Zen provides tools and skill practices that allow us to choose our responses to emotion. This process accelerates and facilitates the completion of psychotherapy.

Pain is inevitable. Grief and sadness are inevitable. Suffering is optional.

Uninformed, unrealized, we remain entangled in suffering mind, confused mind, angry mind, shamed mind, depressed mind, jealous mind, envious mind, muddled mind, twisted mind—*Samsara*. We falsely believe ourselves to *be* this Samsara. Because we believe it, it becomes so. The Buddha said, "With our beliefs we create our world." This is the delusion that can confuse us for an entire lifetime. This is the human melodrama. From *Clear Deep Heart-Mind*, how interesting!

***Anger, shame, and disconnection do not require violence.***

***Anger, shame, and disconnection do not demand violence.***

***Anger, shame, and disconnection begin with the  
focused clarity of non-violent awareness.***

***~ Jun Po Roshi***

Consider this ringing phone analogy: emotional feelings are telephone calls bringing information. Answer the phone when it rings. Do not refuse to answer the phone (depression). Do not drag the phone around jumping up and down shouting, "The phone is ringing" (anxiety). Do not hit someone with the phone (anger) or blame yourself for its ringing (shame). Do not run away from the phone or get so intoxicated, medicated, busy, or stressed that you cannot hear it ringing (disconnection, denial). Answer the phone! Experience your deeper feelings; get the message, the information in the feelings, and then hang up the phone. Understand and choose your response. Stop *mindlessly, subconsciously reacting* to the phone's ringing. Use your new insight and *respond* mindfully when the phone rings.

Anxiety and depression, correctly understood, are good news. Congratulations! You are finally in a crisis. Answer the phone. What is the cause? What can you do now that's different? What might you need to compassionately accept?

An emotionally immature mind requires discipline - not the discipline of denial, but the discipline of truly feeling and listening consciously, understanding and responding to the information found within our deeper authentic feelings.

From *Clear Deep Heart-Mind*, emotional feeling is simply sensing. It is identical to smell or sight or taste or touch or sound. Feeling brings us subconscious information. What is that information? Do not react until you clearly understand. Then respond with compassionate skillful means.

No one has made us violently angry, shamed us, or made us disconnect. We have subconsciously chosen these reactions. When we finally take this to heart, no one can ever make us violently angry, shame us, or "make" us disconnect ever again.

***Deep caring is the root.  
Fear, sadness, and genuine concern are the feelings.  
Violent anger, shame, and disconnection are examples of needless,  
ignorant habitual reactions.  
Your freedom from these reactions is a matter of awareness and choice.***

~ *Jun Po Roshi*

Mondo Zen is the path from egocentric to Buddha-centric (Awareness-centric) living!

Genuine concern is the feeling beneath all of our negative reactions. Fear can be experienced for what it actually is - excitement and opportunity. Shame can be experienced for what it actually is - an escape from responsibility, an internalization and belief of another's judgments, or an ignorant untrue blaming of oneself. Anger can be experienced for what it actually is - intense presence, clarity, and deep concern. Disconnection can be experienced for what it actually is - an escape from connection.

All powerful emotions can call to *Clear Deep Heart-Mind*.

*In Clear Deep Heart-Mind realization, wisdom and compassion override emotional reaction and produces conscious skillful responses.*

*Clear Deep Heart-Mind is Zen: open mind, fearless mind, vast mind, creative mind, unreasonable love mind, laughing mind, get-the-joke mind, **Samadhi!** Our deepest nature is *This*, **Samadhi**.*

Realization of impermanence brings gratitude. Realization of the inevitability of pain brings the end of suffering. Realization of emptiness brings ego transformation.

Zazen Concentration-Meditation practice is fearless presence—This *Clear Deep Heart-Mind*. Our meditation practice never ends.

***Remember, life's design is erotic, not neurotic!***  
***In the end, as in the beginning, it is all about love — unconditional love!***  
***Samadhi!***

***~ Jun Po Roshi***



## HOLLOW BONES ZEN TRAINING ELEMENTS

### FIVE PRACTICE MIRRORS

These Five Training Element practices are our awakening, our genuine insight. Practice *is* realization. Realization *is* practice. Through Concentration-Meditation, new philosophical understanding, emotional koan, physical awareness, and sacred stewardship practices, we awaken. The Five Training Elements stand like mirrors, allowing us to see for ourselves how these core practices transform our lives. We achieve a personal freedom only possible with deep spiritual realization and discipline. Integrated Five Element discipline is our awakening. Our Mondo Zen practice is our Enlightenment!

**Sacred Stewardship:** We accept our intimate interdependency, our oneness with the environment, the universe, and all sentient and non-sentient beings. We embody this realization and lovingly choose to not create any more suffering in the world. We recognize our responsibility (read: response-ability-literally our ability to respond) to be conscious of what we eat, what we buy, what we drive, who makes our clothes ... how we use the earth's resources, starting first with everything within our arm's reach and then expanding globally.

**Philosophical Reorientation:** Through study, dialogue, and practice, we develop a broader and more inclusive philosophy. We become more insightful, and our thinking continues to become more flexible, comprehensive, and clear. We open our minds and hearts. We command a new language, accepting and including the truth of the empty nature of our spirit and deep mind as well as the real intention and meaning of our emotions. This new view is seen and felt in our daily behaviors. We change our perspective from ego-centric to Buddh-centric.

**Emotional Maturity and Integrity:** With new understanding and experience of the true nature and real meaning and mechanics of emotion, we are no longer bound to subconscious reactions. We recognize the energy arising in anger as focused clarity and deep caring not a violent reaction. We experience shame as a false introjected belief, not as a threat to self-value, and hear it as a question challenging our integrity. Instead of subconsciously reacting, we respond consciously and skillfully. We experience disconnection as a confused choice and turn back to relate and communicate. We transform our painful emotional reactions into conscious, compassionate responses. ***Our angst becomes our liberation!*** Mature emotional responses emerge in the same relationships where immature emotional reactions were once the rule. All violent anger, shame or disconnection are now experienced as rich opportunities for transformation and eventually become inconceivable.

**Conscious Embodiment:** Through Qigong, Yoga (pranayama and asana), Tai Chi, dance (preferably Argentinean Tango), and other mindfully practiced physical disciplines, we investigate and become more aware of our embodiment. We locate and release the physical contractions associated with psychological tension, including tension resulting from our unconscious shadows and prior traumatic

experiences. We become more sensitive, healthy, and conscious. We delight in the discovery that *Enlightenment is also visceral!*

**Genuine Insight:** Concentration-Meditation practice is essential. Have I tasted the pure, sweet truth of Buddh-consciousness within myself? Do I consider my personal insight and self-realization adequate? Have I experienced the freedom that is promised and offered by all of the contemplative traditions? Where could the kingdom of heaven really lie if not within me?

## **MEDITATION INSTRUCTION**

Meditation practice in our tradition follows the classical forms of the ancient Sanskrit Dhyana from India, Chinese Chan, and Japanese Zen schools. ZEN is how the Japanese translate the word CHAN, the Chinese pronunciation of the Sanskrit word DHYANA. That originated from the Buddha's home country. Dhyana means effortless, empty compassionate awareness, *Clear Deep Heart-Mind*. Concentration-Meditation leads to the realization and experience of this awareness and compassion. The fruit of this practice is Samadhi, Unreasonable Enjoyment.

*Enough, these few words are enough!  
If not these words, this breath!  
If not this breath, this sitting here!  
This opening to life we have refused again and again, until now!  
Until now!*

*~ David Whyte  
(21<sup>st</sup> century, England)*

## **Heart-Centered Concentration-Meditation**

An ego is a temporary process arising in this field of pure consciousness, "a figment of imagination." When meditation practice is properly understood and practiced, we develop insight into the clear empty nature of our deeper mind; hence, ego-deflation, openness, and compassion occur naturally. The insight within this practice must come from an actual realization, not just an intellectual or speculative understanding. After this profound visceral realization, we can transform our ordinary way of understanding ourselves and our world.

It is critical to have a correct view and understanding before engaging in meditation practice because engaging in practice without a clear understanding can cause ego reinforcement and rigidity ("Zen disease").

Buddhist meditation has three stages: Dharana (concentration), Dhyana (insight realization), and Samadhi (unreasonable enjoyment).

Dharana concentration, the first stage of meditation practice, brings the mind to an experience of absolute silence. There are many concentration practices, such as koans. When we finally realize this pure silence, we experience Dhyana (insight).

Dhyana meditation is the second stage of meditation training. This insight realization is an experiencing of ourselves deeper than our thinking, feeling, and sensing mind. Dhyana is a state of silent non-opinionated, imperturbable, empty, compassionate awareness - *Clear Deep Heart-Mind*.

*Clear Deep Heart-Mind* does not react superficially but sees clearly everything as it is while remaining imperturbable (in equanimity), responding compassionately to our ever-changing circumstances. After this realization and clarification of understanding and with Mondo koan practices, compassion and skillful means naturally follow. The deconstruction of our ego and consummate experience of fearless emptiness effortlessly reveal great compassion. This state (*Clear Deep Heart-Mind*) is not to be confused with dissociation, spiritual bypassing, denial of life experience, or manic bliss.

**Keep in mind:** It is generally necessary to continue a disciplined Dharana/concentration practice in order to stabilize a state of Dhyana/insight.

Samadhi, or unreasonable joy, is the third and final stage. Here we experience the delightful quality of an Awakened ordinary mind. Samadhi is “unreasonable” because it is not caused by any thought, feeling, or sensing experience. Samadhi is “enjoyment” because, within this realization, we experience a subtle state of joy. This joy comes with the recognition of the gift of life. After realizing this, we can consciously and compassionately embrace all of the experiences in our lives, not only the so-called “good,” but also the so-called “bad.” This Samadhi allows us to be fully engaged in life while aware of our True Nature. This realization is the fruit of mature practice.

***Ordinary mind (awakened in Clear Deep Heart-Mind) is the way!***

~ Jun Po Roshi



## **Meditation Form**

Sit with your spine comfortably erect. If on a cushion, sit with your hips elevated slightly higher than your knees, weight on your sit-bones, hips tilted slightly forward. Let your eyes be softly open. Drop your gaze to the floor a few feet in front of you. Blink when necessary.

If you cannot comfortably sit perfectly still for thirty minutes, it is essential that you also look deeply into your psychology to discover what limits you. Your body contractions are telling you something! The healthy body is naturally very comfortable sitting still. Your ego emotionality is interfering.

Place your hands in your lap, thumb tips touching and form the Dhyana mudra (the gesture of meditation) or place your hands palms down on your thighs or knees, thumb and tips of index fingers touching in the Gyan Mudra (the gesture of Self-knowledge). We call this two-hands-on-knees form the ***Mondo Mudra***.

Soften and deepen your breath. Drop your chin. Rest your tongue lightly on the upper palate just behind your teeth. Allow your attention to follow the flow of your breath effortlessly.

## **Know/No Koan**

Following our Rinzai Zen tradition, we begin the concentration “Insight” phase of koan meditation practice with the Chinese Zen master Zhaozhou’s Wu Koan: “Does a dog have Buddha nature?” Zhaozhou answered, “Wu!” (“Mu” for the Japanese, “No” in English). We practice this koan alternating the words *Know* (know your deeper self) and *No* (to distraction).

With your in-breath, silently recite the word KNOW. On your out-breath, silently recite NO. Follow the word into the pure receptive silence within the center of your heart. Every time your mind wanders off with distracting thoughts, feelings, or sensations, firmly and passionately bring it back to the sensation of breath and the heart-centered awareness in which the sensations and the words Know and No arise.

This is concentration (Dharana) and meditation (Dhyana) practice. Do not struggle against or interfere with the arising of feelings or thoughts. Simply return attention to the breath, repeating Know on the in-breath and No on the out-breath. When you find you have wandered away, smile and realize that you are back. This practice is the foundation of your Awakening. Stabilizing your conscious mind, realizing the openness, silence, fearless imperturbability, freedom, and ultimate emptiness of mind is Dhyana, This *Clear Deep Heart-Mind*. Inevitably, this NO! becomes KNOW! and then YES! Samadhi!

## Dharana Practice

**Sitting with Koans:** Dharana practice (one-pointed concentration) during your meditation will help create a new neural map, making it easier for you to drop into *Clear Deep Heart-Mind* during the challenges of life.

Practice the koan dharanas sequentially – 1 per day for at least 20 minutes. After 13 days, use the one-page dharana practice (which follows) to do all 13 koans in one sitting (30 minutes). Afterwards, sit with the koans as needed – all 13 or just the ones you need to remember the most.

<p>1. Is it possible to just purely listen without an opinion?</p>	<p>Inhale: "Listen" Exhale: " Listen"</p>
<p>2. Where within your body is the center of this deeper listening located?</p>	<p>Inhale: "Where?" Exhale: "Heart" Inhale: "Heart" Exhale: "Compassion"</p>
<p>3. Who are you, who am I, who are we, within this deep, heartfelt listening?</p>	<p>Inhale: "Listen" Exhale: " Listen" Inhale: "Who am I?" Exhale: "I don't know." Inhale: "Who am I?" Exhale: "Not knowing."</p>
<p>4. What is the difference between "I Don't Know" and "Not Knowing"?</p>	<p>Inhale (clench fists): "I don't know." Exhale (open hands): "Not knowing." (5 repetitions)  5 silent rounds of breaths  Inhale: Know Exhale: No</p>

<p>5. What are you like, what am I like, what are we like, at this depth of consciousness?</p>	<p>Inhale Silently  Exhale (FESTIVE SPA):  Fearless (5), Empty (5), Silent (5), Timeless (5), Imperturbable (5), Vast(5), Eternal (5), Still (5), Peaceful (5), Aware (5),  5 silent rounds of breaths; repeat above</p>
<p>6. Express your new insight with a silent gesture of embodied consciousness.</p>	<p>Inhale: "Show me"  Exhale: Express gesture silently</p>
<p>7. Use a signifier and your name to recall <i>Clear Deep Heart-Mind</i>. Respond with This awareness.</p>	<p>Inhale: Call to every signifier (FESTIVE SPA)  Exhale: Answer aloud with body gesture    Inhale: Call to <i>my given name</i>  Exhale: Answer aloud with body gesture</p>
<p>8. Does this <i>Clear Deep Heart-Mind</i> come and go?</p>	<p>Inhale: "Does this <i>Clear Deep Heart-Mind</i> come and go?"    Exhale: "No/Know!"</p>
<p>9. Now that you have experienced <i>Clear Deep Heart-Mind</i>, what must you do to bring this realization forth right now and at any time in your daily life?</p>	<p>Inhale: "Remember"  Exhale: "Choose"</p>
<p>10. What feeling arises when you actually experience this insight and understanding?</p>	<p>Inhale: "What feeling arises?"  Exhale: "Joy"  At the bottom of the exhale  "Samadhi!"</p>

<p>11. What are the deeper feelings that lie beneath violent anger, shame, and disconnection?</p>	<p>Inhale: "Beneath violent anger..." Exhale: "Fear and sadness"</p> <p>Inhale: "Underneath fear and sadness..." Exhale: "Deep caring"</p> <p>Inhale: "Beneath shame..." Exhale: "Fear and sadness"</p> <p>Inhale: "Underneath fear and sadness..." Exhale: "Deep caring"</p> <p>Inhale: "Beneath disconnection..." Exhale: "Fear and sadness"</p> <p>Inhale: "Underneath fear and sadness..." Exhale: "Deep caring"</p>
<p>12. Now that you know the deeper feelings beneath these violent emotive reactions, can anyone or anything ever make you violently angry, shame you, or make you disconnect/dissociate?</p>	<p>Inhale: "Can anyone make me violently angry?" Exhale: "No, I get to choose my response."</p> <p>Inhale: "Can anyone shame me?" Exhale: "No, I get to choose my response."</p> <p>Inhale: Can anyone make me disconnect?" Exhale: "No, I get to choose my response."</p>
<p>13. Select a recurring negative habitual reaction from your daily life and transform it into a conscious, compassionate response.</p>	<p>Pick a recurring habitual pattern and situation coming up soon.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is the negative reaction that arises?</li> <li>• Drop into Clear Deep Heart Mind</li> <li>• What are the feelings underneath the reaction?</li> <li>• What is the information found in each feeling?</li> <li>• How will you respond? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Visualize and practice it</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

## DHARANA PRACTICE: KOANS 1-13

Use this one-page dharana practice to do all 13 koans in one sitting (30 minutes). Afterwards, sit with the koans as needed – all 13 or just the ones you need to remember the most.

Dharanas (1-5)	Dharanas (6-10)	Dharanas (11-13)
Inhale: "Listen" Exhale: " Listen"	Inhale: "Show me" Exhale: Express gesture silently	Inhale: "Beneath violent anger..." Exhale: "Fear and sadness" Inhale: "Underneath fear and sadness..." Exhale: "Deep caring"
Inhale: "Where?" Exhale: "Heart"	Inhale: Call to your given name	Inhale: "Beneath shame..." Exhale: "Fear and sadness"
Inhale: "Heart" Exhale: "Compassion"	Exhale: Answer aloud with body gesture	Inhale: "Underneath fear and sadness..." Exhale: "Deep caring"
Inhale: "Who am I?" Exhale: "I don't know."	Inhale: "Does this Clear Deep Heart-Mind come and go?"	Inhale: "Beneath disconnection..." Exhale: "Fear and sadness"
Inhale: "Who am I?" Exhale: "Not knowing."	Exhale: "No/Know!"	Inhale: "Underneath fear and sadness..." Exhale: "Deep caring"
Inhale (clench fists): "I don't know." Exhale (open hands): "Not knowing."	Inhale: "Remember" Exhale: "Choose"	Inhale: "Can anyone make me violently angry?" Exhale: "No, I get to choose my response."
Inhale silently Exhale (FESTIVE SPA): Fearless Empty Silent Timeless Imperturbable Vast Eternal Still Peaceful Aware	Inhale: "What feeling arises?" Exhale: "joy" At the bottom of the exhale "Samadhi!"	Inhale: "Can anyone shame me?" Exhale: "No, I get to choose my response."
		Inhale: Can anyone make me disconnect?" Exhale: "No, I get to choose my response."
		YOUR EMOTIONAL KOAN ONE WORD OR SHORT PHRASE

## GLOSSARY

**Anger (Violent Anger):** Normally a chosen, violent reaction to fear about a situation and/or person(s). Within *Clear Deep Heart-Mind* realization, anger is experienced as deep caring and intense clarity of mind, not violence.

**Anxiety:** A state of angst caused by an ignorant inability or unwillingness to listen deeply, understand, and respond to the information contained within our feelings

**Clear Deep Heart-Mind:** Zen mind, Dhyana meditation mind, pure awareness

**Dana:** The exquisite paradox in Buddhism is that the more we give—and the more we give without seeking something in return—the more abundant we become. By giving, we destroy those acquisitive, grasping, and needy impulses that ultimately lead to further suffering.

**Depression:** A state of angst caused by an ignorant inability or unwillingness to listen deeply, understand, and respond to the information contained within a feeling

**Dhyana:** *Clear Deep Heart-Mind*. This is Zen. This is the second of the three stages of meditative awareness practice: concentration, pure awareness, and unreasonable enjoyment—Dharana, Dhyana and Samadhi.

**Disconnection:** Reacting to arising emotions, i.e., shame, anger, sadness, etc., by disappearing emotionally and or physically.

**Eight-Fold Buddhist Path** (traditional Buddhist practice):

1. Correct view/understanding
2. Precise purpose, thought/feeling
3. Honest speech
4. Compassionate action
5. Conscious livelihood
6. Great effort/determination
7. Deep Concentration–Meditation
8. Liberating Samadhi

**Emotional Koan:** Protocol that transforms negative emotional reactions into compassionate responses.

**Fear:** Excited energy, arising from deep caring, about a situation before we consciously or unconsciously choose a reaction. Within *Clear Deep Heart-Mind*, fear is experienced as excitement and opportunity.

**Five Training Elements** (Hollow Bones Mondo Zen expression of the Eight-Fold Buddhist Path):

1. Sacred stewardship
2. Philosophical reorientation
3. Emotional maturity and integrity
4. Conscious embodiment
5. Genuine insight

**Four Noble Truths of Buddhism:**

1. Suffering
2. Cause of suffering
3. End of suffering
4. Eight-fold path to end suffering

**Guilt:** The useful realization and acceptance of responsibility for an error, a mistake made in ignorance

**Insight:** Direct experience of absolute clear empty mind and its new expression through Mondo emotional koan practice.

**Kleshas:** Three main poisons:

1. Greed
2. Violent Anger
3. Delusion-Ignorance

**Koan:** An enigmatic Zen question, a kind of riddle that can only be answered with a realization experience and then clarified through articulated intellectual understanding. Examples: Is it possible for you to just purely listen? Is there *Clear Deep Heart-Mind*? What is the real feeling that underlies anger? Who are you?

**Meditation:** Three stages - holding the mind in concentration is Dharana; recognizing the mind in which the concentration is taking place, effortless *Clear Deep Heart-Mind*, is Dhyana; and enjoying the truth and freedom of realizing the emptiness and compassion to be found within is Samadhi.

**Mondo:** Zen dialogue (which may be public or private) between a so-called *teacher* and so-called *student*. Our form is designed to elicit, anchor, and clarify a genuine realization experience and requires a high level of commitment and presence from all those involved.

**Shame:** A painful emotional reaction, a confused and false belief regarding one's self-worth

**Spiritual Bypassing:** A tendency to use spiritual ideas and practices to sidestep to avoid facing unresolved emotional issues, psychological wounds, and unfinished developmental tasks. In Mondo Zen, we take great care in knowing when and how to use emotional awareness koans to assist participants and when and how to refer participants for psychotherapy instead.

**Three Marks of Existence, the three core realizations:**

1. Anicca - impermanence (all is burning)
2. Dukkha - physical suffering (sickness, old age and death) and psychological suffering
3. Anatta - selflessness (Dhyana, Clear Deep Heart-Mind)

**Zazen:** Sitting Zen meditation. Za- is the sitting position; Zen is meditative awareness (Dhyana)



*Come, come, whoever you are.  
Wanderer, worshiper, lover of leaving  
Ours is not a caravan of despair.  
Come, it does not matter  
If you've broken  
Your vow a thousand times.  
Still, come, and yet again come!*

**~ Master Rumi  
(13<sup>th</sup> century, Persia)**

## To support your awakening, we encourage you to...

**First:** Join Hollow Bones online programs

- Cyber-Sangha Practice Program
- The Sunday Sangha – free monthly morning service and practice
- Mondo Café – free weekly online meditation and study group

**Second:** Join a local Hollow Bones community committed to practicing meditation, Mondo Zen, offering daisan with priests. It is easier to wake up and grow up together in a sangha.

**Third:** Attend weekend or weeklong retreats. The door is always open. There is nothing that will do more to invigorate this practice than attending a Mondo Zen or silent retreat.

**Fourth:** Train and become a Mondo Zen Facilitator sharing this delight with others. If you want to really embody this dharma, then learn how to teach this dharma.

### For further training:

**Integral Zen:** Doshin Roshi is continuing the work of Hollow Bones integrating emotional koans with shadow work. [www.integralzen.com](http://www.integralzen.com)

### For further education contact us:

Our website: [www.hollowboneszen.org](http://www.hollowboneszen.org)

Email: [admin@hollowboneszen.org](mailto:admin@hollowboneszen.org)



***May all beings be happy.  
May all beings be loved and well fed.  
May all beings awaken and find their ways.  
Especially us!***

***~ Jun Po Roshi***





