

Series 7, Talk 8
Questions for Reflection

Here are some ideas for reflections during the week:

1) First: The NAME, Sanshin Zen Community, though subtle, is radically different from the name of all other monastic training centers which are usually called monasteries or temples. When you think about it, just this makes a huge statement to the Buddhist world. How would you articulate this statement?

2) Second: *Since my body was so worn out, I could not sit or work as much as before. I felt I could not live like Dogen any more, focused on zazen, and I found that, honestly speaking, I did not want to live like him. I felt I needed to create my own style of practice and life as a whole.* What do you think about this and what do you imagine Dogen might have thought about it?

3) Third: By now, the age of 74, Okumura Roshi's vow--to carry on the zazen legacy of his teacher and the writing-translating-teaching legacy of his ancestors--is manifest everywhere in his life. Regarding your own personal vow, how far along are you in articulating and envisioning a life expressing this one main thing--essential you?

4) Fourth: *At Pioneer Valley Zendo we continued to practice in Uchiyama Roshi's style. We had a five-day sesshin every month; during the rest of the month we sat four periods of zazen five days a week and on Sundays we had a one-day sesshin.* Some might consider this rather harsh considering how harsh was their weekday physical work. (They cleared and built up one acre.) What is your opinion?

5) Fifth: *That was the first teaching I received personally from my teacher. He said that he never faces his disciples: he faces the Buddha and walks in that direction as his own practice. And if I want to practice with him as his disciple, I should also face the Buddha and go in the same direction with my own feet.* This teaching style is very unique. What are your thoughts about this hands-off style of Zen training?

