

# Zen Heart Sangha

Issue 29

Spring 2018 Newsletter

## Special Upcoming Events

### 2018 Meditation Schedule

- Jun. 17 NO THIRD SATURDAY  
Jun. 23 4th Saturday meeting  
Jun. 25 25th ZHS Anniversary celebration  
Jul. 30 Bodhisattva Ceremony  
Sept. 3 NO MEETING (Labor Day)  
Sept. 10 NO MEETING (Rosh Hashanah)  
Oct. 6 NO FIRST SATURDAY  
Oct. 29 Segaki (Hungry Ghosts) Ceremony  
Nov. 12 NO MEETING (Veteran's Day)  
Nov. 26 Bodhisattva Ceremony  
Dec. 1 First Saturday—Rohatsu begins  
Dec. 8 1-day Rohatsu retreat (Home Zendo)  
Dec. 17 Last evening of 2018—celebration

### Retreats

- Oct. 12–14 Fall Retreat at Jikoji  
Dec. 3–8 Rohatsu Commuter Retreat

### Dharma School

- Jun. 30 Sept. 22  
Jul. 13 Nov. 10

### Tea Ceremony Lessons

- May 18 Sept. 14  
Jun. 22 Oct. 19  
Jul. 20 Nov. 16  
Aug. 17

## Technology and Practice

*People have the mistaken impression that mathematics is just equations. In fact, equations are just the boring part of mathematics.*

*—Stephen Hawking*

This newsletter article was due at least a month ago, but perhaps there was a reason that I waited until today, Mar. 14, to write it. It's 'pi' day (3.14!)—and the death day of one of the greatest scientific minds, Stephen Hawking.

I am one of those poor souls to whom he was referring in the above quote. My education in mathematics was stunted at an early age by individuals who believed that 'mathematics is just equations', and because I had no facility for equations, I believed I had no facility for mathematics. It took years for me to realize that there are many different ways to think—abstractly, visually, kinesthetically, aurally—and that 'equations are just the boring part of mathematics' and I actually understood a lot more than I had thought.

Technology has turned out to be a similar situation for me. For years I resisted my husband's attempts to share his technological expertise, restricting my use of computers and devices by refusing to learn how to use them! Just like the quote above, I had the mistaken impression that technology was just about coding and rigid rules, with instructions that made no sense to me and which didn't seem relevant to my daily life. But recently I've realized that those parts of technology are 'the boring parts', and have seen for myself the enormous potential of technology to improve the quality of our lives by increasing connections and making information more accessible.

I have watched my mother—who is technologically challenged both due to age and her physical condition—learn to use an iPad to view photographs of her great-grandchildren...something that she would not do before her illness because it was 'all too complicated' for her! And I have watched my kids at school figure out with ease how to go to root sources for information on their Chromebooks and ferret out 'fake news' with a little training. Most amazingly, I myself have grown 'computer literate' over the last year—something I would never have believed I was capable of even five years ago, and which has made it possible for me to communicate with people all over the world.

So what does this have to do with meditation practice? As always, it is about finding the Middle Way and seeing through the mechanics of a thing to the beauty beneath. It is with our Big Mind that we have the opportunity to reflect on the deeper meaning of mathematics or technology or art or beauty, and in reflection to understand the benefits—and also the hazards—of anything that takes up a lot of space and time in our lives. As humans, we can become addicted to anything—drugs, books, relationships, devices. Our work is always to proceed with clarity and integrity, no matter what is in front of us, and to notice when something is using us rather than the other way around.

*With technological clarity, Misha Shungen*