

Yaza 2005

by Ven. Anzan Hoshin roshi
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From morning to night, the arising of each moment is the vanishing of everything that has gone before and the emergence of your life as it is. From morning to night, the arising of each moment is the radiance of Experiencing shining as each and every moment, each and every experience. Sitting up straight, we learn to align ourselves with this vast activity by releasing all of the ways in which we hold ourselves back from reality. From morning to night, each moment is an opportunity to practise what has been realized and transmitted by the Lineage of Buddhas and Awakened Ancestors.

And from night to morning, the arising of each moment is that self-same radiance.

Most people are asleep all through the day, let alone at night. In our Lineage, many important things have happened during the night. Siddhartha Gautama sat up straight beneath the spreading branches of the pipal tree. All through the night . . . all through the night, he sat, opening radically past every movement and structure of attention. In the morning, when he saw the shining of the Morning Star, he fell open past himself, past all beings, past all worlds, and was completely beyond reference point. That morning, Siddhartha Gautama fell away, and the Buddha Sakyamuni looked out at the morning.

It is said that Huike travelled deep into the snowy mountains to see the Indian monk Bodhidharma, who dwelled in a cave near the Shaolin temple. In that cave, Bodhidharma sat day and night. Huike stood in the snow outside all through the night, waiting for an opportunity to meet the master's mind — to meet his own mind.

It is said that the Fifth Chinese Ancestor, Hongren, formally transmitted the Dharma to the Sixth Ancestor, Huineng, at midnight.

At Rujing's monastery, Tiantong, zazen often went late into the night, and sometime into the early morning. Rujing would stride up and down and around the rows of seated monks, striking those who allowed themselves to collapse. On one occasion, he struck a monk sitting near a young Japanese monk named Dogen. Striking the monk, Rujing said, "Zazen is dropping through the body-mind." Hearing this, Dogen's body and mind fell away into the Luminosity that is radiant as all bodies and minds, all beings, all worlds.

And so now we once more establish the body-mind in zazen all through the night in celebration and commemoration of those who have sat, those who have practised, those who have realized the transmission mind-to-mind and whole bodily of who and what everything is. This, then, ladies and gentlemen, is a party . . . without pyjamas. A party in which we celebrate this moment . . . and this moment . . . and this moment . . . all through the night.

From morning to night and from night to morning, each colour, form and sound, each drop of sweat on this warm summer night, is an opportunity.

Please, tonight, enjoy yourselves.