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Dream Buddha by Guiding Teacher Tim Burkett

Last night I dreamed I was a butterfly flitting from flower to flower, flitting from plant to plant.

Or is it now that I am a butterfly dreaming I am Chuang-tzu, flitting from sentence to sentence, flitting from word to word?

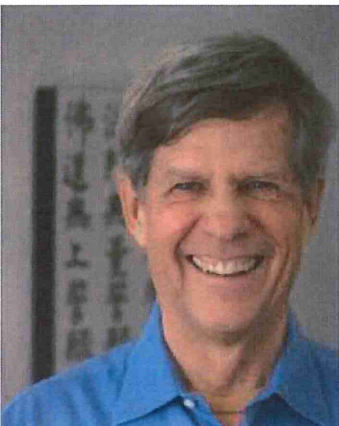
—Chuang-tzu, Taoist philosopher and poet, 4th century BCE

We don't talk much about dreams in Zen. But even Buddha believed in the power of dreams to move us toward awakening.

I once had a dream that I was underwater. I'm struggling, I can't reach the surface, and I drown. Other times, I dream I'm buried alive. After death, I always feel wonderful and completely free of all my worries and concerns.

There is a certain type of dream that can cut us free of our obsessive thoughts. In dreamtime, an archetypal guide may appear to offer help. We don't know where the guide comes from, whether it's real or imagined. If it's helpful, why do we need to know any more than that? Our interconnectivity is alive; it is active, and we are always in contact with it. It works in mysterious ways. We don't need to understand it.

On several occasions since the death of my root teacher Suzuki Roshi, he has appeared to me and offered guidance, sometimes in night dreams, other times when I am fully awake. Once it happened at the end of a sesshin (traditional retreat) led by Katagiri at MZMC. I lived in Two Harbors then so I was spending the night at the Zen Center before starting home the next morning. I happened to glance at one of Suzuki's books, which had his



picture on the cover. He came out of the picture. His body was not clearly visible, but it was so clearly him. As I looked at him in wonder, he indicated that I should move down to Minneapolis and work with Katagiri.

The next day in Two Harbors, as I told a friend about my experience, I fell into a great and joyous spaciousness in which the small egoic Tim was completely gone. It was pure ecstasy that lasted for several days.

Another time in a night dream, I found myself watching Suzuki build a wall of stones. He told me he needed my help. I said, "But you have lots of people to help you." He seemed to gesture toward all the different stones that he was using to build the wall. They were different sizes and colors. And he said, "Yes, but I also need you." This dream led to the second time that I returned to formal Zen practice after being away.

And then there have been dreams that I have had over the past dozen years, probably six to eight times, in which Suzuki suddenly appears. I say, "Sensei, I thought you were dead!" and he laughs uproariously. That's all he ever does.

Traditionally, Buddhism has always been about waking from the dream of egocentric separation from all life. But Zen master Dogen taught about expressing a dream within the dream. For Dogen, Zen practice was about being fully engaged in the dream we're in, since the ordinary conventional world and the timeless world of quiescence are one and the same. Rather than trying to awaken from the dream of separation, he talked about becoming completely engaged in our dream. When we think of the world as a dream, we can be intimate with each component without being caught by it. Dogen wrote, "Without expressing dreams there are no buddhas."

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Mission:

Our mission is to help people experience a deep and quiet joy—a joy that arises whenever we are fully engaged in the work or play of this moment.

Guiding Teacher:

Tim Burkett

Asst. Guiding Teacher

Ted O'Toole

Dharma Heirs:

Ben Connelly

Guy Gibbon

Wanda Isle

Bussho Lahn

Susan Nelson

Ted O'Toole

Rosemary Taylor

Priests-in-Training:

Ann Bauleke

Stacy Lee King

Mark Turbak

Bill Woywod

Board Members:

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Janet Brown

Karen Davis

Paul Gilsdorf

Jim Niland

Mark Turbak

Wayne Moskowitz

Randy Wedin

Thank You for a Successful Fund Drive!

The MZMC Board sends a heart-felt thanks for your generous donations to the summer fundraising campaign. Our goal was \$15,000, and we exceeded that goal by more than \$2,000! Each gift was doubled by a matching gift, which means that your contributions went even further to sustain the Center. MZMC is here because of your support: volunteer work, membership contributions, program participation, and financial gifts like these.

The Board once again thanks you for your dedicated practice and all that you do to make this community bloom and grow.

Board meetings are on the third Sunday of each month at 11:30 a.m. and open to all.



Bloom and Grow

Join Us This Fall at MZMC



Mindfulness in Daily Life: How do we bring awareness to our lives?

with Ben Connelly on Wednesdays, September 6 – October 11, 7:15 – 8:45 pm

Fall Morning Study Group: An Invitation to Continue Studying our Taoist Roots

with Wanda Isle on every other Tuesday morning September 12 – November 21, 7:30 – 9:00 am

Beginner's Mind Retreat

with Ted O'Toole on Saturday, September 16, 1 – 4 pm

Cha-Do: The Way of Tea

Traditional Japanese tea ceremony on Sunday, September 17, 3:30 pm

Retreat at Hokyoji Zen Practice Community, Eitzen MN

with Susan Nelson and Tim Burkett

Full retreat Tuesday, September 19, at 7 pm – Sunday, September 24, at noon; two days Friday at 7 pm – Sunday at noon. Full days 5:45 am – 9:00 pm

Awakening to Flowers with designer Pamela Marie

Saturday, October 7, 1 – 4:30 pm

Sitting with Sutras: A Contemplative Afternoon

with Bussho Lahn on Saturday, October 28, 2017, 12 – 3 pm

One-Day Retreat

with Wanda Isle on October 14, 8 am – 5 pm

For more information on programs see: <http://www.mnzencenter.org>

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After all, the dream is what we have. It's what is. Are we going to deny it or ignore it? We can try to do that—or we can just fully express the dream that we are in without being captured by it.

In many ways, Dogen's view seems to align with the teachings of Chuang-tzu, who, after dreaming about being a butterfly, pondered the question: Am I a man who dreamed he was a butterfly? Or am I a butterfly, dreaming now that I am a man? Chuang-tzu had a spiritual friend in the form of a butterfly. It asked him, "Am I you; or are you me?" Spiritual friends point to our togetherness.

Deepening Practice with Fall Practice Period

Tim Burkett and Bussho Lahn to lead fall practice period using Tim's core teacher's book *Not Always So*. Once Suzuki Roshi was asked by someone, "How much ego do you need?" Suzuki said, "Just enough so that you don't step in front of a bus."

Buddhism began to put down roots in the West in 1959 when a Zen priest named Shunryu Suzuki landed in California. As word of a true Zen master spread in the world of San Francisco bohemia, students gathered around the monk to learn the practice of zazen. Through the students trained at San Francisco Zen Center and the classic books, *Zen Mind, Beginner's Mind* and *Not Always So*, the teachings of Suzuki Roshi permeate American Buddhism to this day.

Tim Burkett, our guiding teacher, was one of those first students of Suzuki Roshi, and his memories and stories of Suzuki's teachings are some of his favorite additions to dharma talks and teachings.

This fall, to help mark the occasion of the 15th year anniversary of its publication, we'll be offering a practice period centered on *Not Always So*, a collection of Suzuki Roshi's dharma talks.

Practice Periods are part of traditional Buddhism, and trace their origins back to the historical Buddha. Nuns and monks would take time during the monsoon season to devote themselves to intensified meditation, study, and community building. We honor this tradition twice yearly with two seven-week practice periods that help those of us with busy lives

The Zen poet Basho, who lived in the 17th century, had a spiritual friend in human form named Doi. One time, when the two had been physically separate for a long time, Basho reached out to Doi through a letter. We don't know if Doi ever received it, probably not. But he didn't have to receive it; the words were symbols of their togetherness, their undividedness from each other and all of life. In his letter to Doi, Basho wrote: "You are the butterfly, and I the dreaming heart of Chuang-tzu."

(Excerpted from *Nothing Holy About It: The Zen of Being Just Who You Are* by Tim Burkett.)



steep ourselves in a practice.

Practice Period participants attend the eight weekly meetings (Wednesday evenings from 7:15 – 8:45 p.m. OR Thursday mornings from 7:30 – 9:00 a.m.), commit to daily meditation practice, attend meditation weekly at MZMC, attend at least two days of retreat and one work practice day, read the assigned text(s), and have weekly meetings with an assigned practice partner.

In a recent dharma talk at MZMC, Tim said, "The late Dr. Huston Smith, who was a mentor of mine, said that walnuts have a shell and they have a kernel. Religions are the same. They have an essence, but then they have a protective coating. I think it's a sad commentary on our human condition that we spend so much time caring for the protective coating and so little time cracking it open to taste the essence: the interconnectedness of all life and the love and compassion that arise out of this. But here at MZMC we can enjoy tasting the meat of the nut together."

Suzuki Roshi was certainly a master of cracking open the shell of his own tradition to allow sincere Westerners to taste something essential; something beyond time, culture, and outward forms... something universally human.

We invite you to consider doing an intensive seven-week immersion into Zen practice with us in the fall, so we can appreciate the tastiness of the nut's meat together.

See details at: <http://mnzencenter.org/classes.php>

Mindfulness at Work: Strategies for a Busy Life A One-Day Workshop with Tim Burkett

We live in an era of great possibilities, but the price of pushing ourselves to achieve can be a life clouded by stress and tension. Meditation and mindfulness give us tools to return to our original stillness, and allow us relief from an out-of-control mind that constantly rushes forward into the future or rewinds back to the past.

We have seen increased interest at the Center from many who wish to weave meditation into their busy lives. In response, Tim will offer a one-day workshop for business professionals on October 20 at St. Thomas Opus School of Business. Offering this workshop is one way we can help introduce the healing power of meditation to the Twin Cities' business community.

Tim will use material from Google's successful *Search Inside Yourself* program. He will help participants integrate inner life with work life to enhance personal development. He will discuss the foundational role mindfulness and meditation play in this process. It is possible to deeply enjoy your work and your life! For more information call the office or go to: <http://www.mnzencenter.org/events>



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