

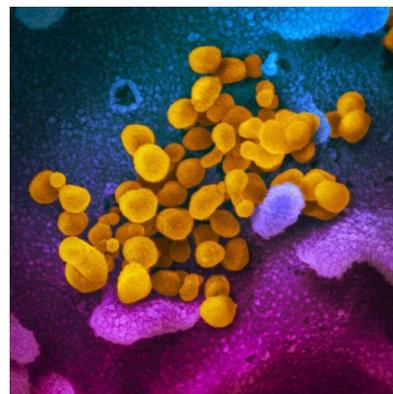


Newsletter 2020 nr. 1
Zen Heart Sangha Nederland
April 28th 2020

Power and control - Michel Sensei

During a recent dharma-talk we spoke about power and control. Many people actually confuse the two and believe that power and control are more or less synonymous. But in many ways they're actually antonymous. They don't have a similar but an opposite meaning. However, because we believe that having power means being in control and that having control is powerful, when we feel powerless we grab for control, and when we feel out of control we feel powerless.

Right now, while the crisis of of the corona pandemic seems to be subsiding, we have to come to terms with the fact that we had almost no control over the outbreak. With the fact that something so small we can't even see it under a normal microscope (you need an electron microscope to see it) can totally disrupt our society and kill hundreds of thousands of human beings, can kill our loved ones, can kill us, can kill Me.



In fact this happens much more often than we are aware of. The 2019 influenza pandemic received very little attention in the media in the Netherlands but caused an estimated half a million deaths worldwide. We are constantly under threat, we are never certain to be safe. We were never in control, we don't have control, we will never be in control. Our lives are vulnerable. Life is like that. People die. That is life.

The only thing that we can actually influence, is our surrender to this, our surrender to vulnerability that is our only real strength. Accepting that I have no control (I don't even know if I will be alive tomorrow) gives me the space to not seek control and to not feel frightened or powerless or angry because there is no control. This is the beginning of relaxation and liberation. In the space that opens when I just rest in vulnerability, and I can open up to this one question that goes straight to the heart of the matter:

Who is this? Who is it that seeks control? Who is it that feels powerless?

Seeking control just solidifies the conviction that there is someone, some ME who needs control and seeks power and gets frightened when there is none. The core of that fear is perhaps not having no

control, but not finding anything substantial that is solidly Me. But this sense of Me being lost, is true liberation. Free from Me, I am open. And then it is clear that there is a wide open, immensely spacious “I” before “Me”. And words and actions arise from there are actually always compassionate and helpful to all beings. Now we can help. This is true power and it is essentially without control, because there is no-one controlling and nothing that needs to be controlled.

Announcements

Zoom meetings on the website

All zoom meetings of the sangha are posted every week on our website, protected with a login code.

Go to www.zenheart.nl and select the "Members" page in the menu.

Click on the link.

Login user name: ZHS Sangha

Password: Gt7YH\$4

Changes to the calendar; Online sesshins

Our first online sesshin has worked splendidly. Different from “normal”, but what is normality these days? Also, we expect that the social distancing measures will not significantly change for the sangha within the next few weeks, so we have decided to adapt our sesshin schedule for May, June and July. The weekly schedule remains as it has been for the past weeks (as is visible on the website). The sesshin schedule on the website has been adapted. The sesshin schedule for May, June and July will be as follows:

Agenda

- Thursday evening May 14th - Sunday afternoon May 17th : Three day Online Sesshin
- Sunday June 7th: Online Zazenkai
- Thursday evening June 25th – Sunday afternoon June 28th: Three day Online Sesshin
- Sunday July 12th: Online Zazenkai.

Colophon

This newsletter from the Zen Heart Sangha will be published three to four times a year. Contact details:

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