

Title: Conversations

Subtitle: Za-Zen

Second Subtitle: Re: Za-Zen

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URL: https://www.wizanda.com/modules/newbb/viewtopic.php?topic_id=29

Oh My Zan,

A long post...

We have had the delightful opportunity to discuss this in private and I know outward in our talks with others, so I am keeping that promise today.

Yes, I am a practitioner of zazen and have been for more than 15 years. I am reminded of this humbly when I visit with the monks who visit our area and practice it so well. Yet I do not give up. I learn by their example and continue on.

When I was teaching Martial Arts and had 12 hours a day to devote to such a practice, I live in this state.

Yet as the world called me to outside responsibilities, raising 10 children, I had to put my spiritual practices and meditation priorities outside of my spiritual practice to report. I am down to a mere hour a day at this time. This seems to me a challenge, though every moment is an opportunity to enter the correct state and I choose what I can, knowing one day I can choose differently once again.

Here is my story...I began the practice sitting for long periods of time.

My mind was undisciplined and wandering thoughts seemed to rule my practice. I began to happen. I did not give up or give in.

I showed great tenacity every day of the week. Many others shook their heads at me or my dedication to such a practice.

I took the sitting to Tai Chi walking and would walk around and around the training floor for hours. To test my focus and alertness my Master Teacher carried a bamboo stick just out of the blue come up and attempt to strike practicing students with the stick. My eyes had closed or I was daydreaming. I do not remember. Never again. It turns out. I hated to be struck! Yes, it does leave a mark both outwardly and inwardly. Well! It was a lesson not to be easily forgotten.

From the training floor my Master sent me to the woods, which I adored. I began practicing by daylight and later by moonlight. Later as a teacher I practiced this way. As my practice continued, my senses awakened to even deeper levels. One day it was just the way. The natural way. It has remained with me, and I have never since.

Please consider meditation in your daily lives...
It makes such a difference.

Love and Gratitude,
suzyq