

Rev. Kosen Gregory Snyder, Sensei

3041 Broadway at 121st Street, AD 520
New York, NY 10027
gsnyder@uts.columbia.edu

ORDINATIONS AND EDUCATION

Tradition: Soto Zen Buddhism
Lineage: Shunryu Suzuki

Koshin-ji (Boundless Heart Temple), Brooklyn, NY
Shiho (Dharma Transmission), 2016

Koshin-ji (Boundless Heart Temple), Brooklyn, NY
Shūkke Tōkūdō (Full Priest Ordination), 2009

University of Texas, Austin
B.A., 1997

TEACHING AND PROFESSIONAL EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE

Union Theological Seminary

Senior Director of Buddhist Studies

- Envision, create, implement and oversee the curricular work of the M.Div. in Buddhism and Interreligious Engagement (BIE) and the public programming for the Thich Nhat Hanh Program for Engaged Buddhism (TNHEB).
- Reimagined and implemented Buddhist curriculum within a multidenominational Christian seminary.
- In collaboration with the Academic Dean, envisioned, created and launched the M.Div. BIE.
- With the Director of Field-based Education, established connections with field sites in the areas of prison, community organizing, higher education chaplaincy and interfaith agencies.
- With the Development office, worked with my existing network of donors to fund the launch of Buddhist Studies at Union.
- Created and launched the TNHEB, which will house the inward and outward facing educational program around engaged Buddhism at Union.
- Built an Advisory Board, consisting of scholars, monastics and lay teachers focused chaplaincy, scholarship, social justice and support of the program.
- Planned, implemented and taught yearly course offerings for the M.Div. program.
- With President's office and communications department, successfully executed public events, including the award of the Union Medal to Thich Nhat Hanh.
- Successfully recruited students for the M.Div. BIE before the program was formally launched and continue to do so both regionally and nationally.
- Establish relationships with monastics, Buddhist teachers and centers across the country and world to build awareness and support for our program.
- Taught the following courses:
 - Socially Engaged Buddhism, 2016 Ongoing
 - Introduction to Buddhist Meditation Practices, 2016 Ongoing
 - Buddhist Religious Thought, 2017 Ongoing
 - Comparative Buddhist-Christian Liberation Theologies
 - Zen Texts, 2017 Ongoing

Koshin-ji, Brooklyn, NY

Senior Dharma Teacher

- Oversee educational, ritual and training curricula for a community of over 300 practitioners, including Zen Buddhist priests and lay practitioners.
- Meet monthly in *dokusan* (one-on-one practice discussion) with over 50 Zen students under my direct practice supervision.
- Lead ongoing weekly spiritual cultivation, ritual training and sutra study groups with 24 senior students who in turn guide the community.
- Design and lead meditation retreats ranging from one day to three weeks in length.
- Offer weekly dharma talks to the sangha.
- Among others, taught the following courses in this role:
 - Saṃdhinirmocana Sūtra*, 2016-17
 - Yogācāra Texts, 2015-17
 - Tathāgatagarbha Theory and the *Fo Xing Lun*, 2015-16
 - Undoing Patriarchy, 2012-Present
 - Undoing Whiteness and Oppression, 2012-Present
 - Dogen's *Shōbōgenzō*, 2008-Present

Survey of the *Book of Serenity*, 2008-Present
Introduction to Buddhist Ethics, 2008-Present

Koshin-ji, Brooklyn, NY

Post-Shuso Assistant Dharma Teacher

- Assisted former Guiding Teacher, Soshin Teah Strozer, with all teaching duties.
- Held role of Tanto (Head of Practice) and oversaw Zen curriculum and all ritual practices for the whole of the Zen community.
- Founded and administered Awake Youth Project programming, BZC's in-school youth program.
- Among others, taught the following courses in this role:
 - Hōkyō Zammai* and the Teaching of Suchness, 2011-13
 - The Bodhisattva Pāramitās, 2010-15
 - Awake Youth Project Course: Meditation and Emotional Intelligence, 2010-13
 - Awake Youth Project Course: Transforming Anger into Fierce Love, 2010-13
 - Satipatṭhāna Sutta*, 2009-14
 - Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta*, 2009-14
 - Introduction to Zen Buddhism, 2008-14
 - Heart Sutra*, 2008-14
 - Hsin Hsin Ming* & Early Chan Writings, 2006-10
 - Introduction to Zen Meditation, 2005-14

Zenkei-ji, Austin, TX

Director of Education and Initiate Instructor

- Designed and implemented all educational programming for Austin Zen Center.
- Among others, taught the following courses in this role:
 - Nagarjuna's *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*, 2001-03
 - Travis Country Correctional Complex Weekly Meditation Course, 2000-02
 - Introduction to Zen Meditation, 1998-03

Sampling of Meditation Retreat Teaching

"Rolling Retreat for Racial Justice," Meditation Retreat to and from March for Racial Justice
September, 2017, Washington, DC

"Our Path of Disappointment and Devotion" One-day Zen Meditation Retreat
June, 2017, Brooklyn, NY

"The Whole of Life is What We Do," One-day Zen Meditation Retreat
April, 2017, Brooklyn, NY

"Rolling Retreat for the People's Climate Mobilization," Meditation Retreat to and from the People's
Climate Mobilization.
April, 2017, Washington, DC

"Dogen's Practice/Realization," Seven-day Zen Meditation Retreat
December, 2016, Brooklyn, NY

"The Six Bodhisattva Pāramitā Practices," Seven-day Zen Meditation Retreat
December, 2015, Brooklyn, NY

"Sit for \$15: A Meditation Occupation," Early morning meditation retreat and walking mediation to
downtown Brooklyn where meditators joined a larger coalition to use meditation retreat as a way to block the
intersection of Flatbush & Fulton for the \$15 minimum wage.
April, 2015, Brooklyn, NY

Sampling of Public Dharma Talks

Our Path of Devotion and Disappointment: <http://s3.amazonaws.com/BZCAudio/2017-06-17-Dharma-GregSnyder-OurPathOfDevotionAndDisappointment.mp3>

Grass, Trees and Lands: The Ecological Crisis and Dogen's Self-Fulfilling and Receiving Samadhi. <http://s3.amazonaws.com/BZCAudio/2017-06-03-Dharma-GregSnyder-GrassTreesAndLands.mp3>

The Role of Sangha: <http://s3.amazonaws.com/BZCAudio/2016-12-17-Dharma-GregSnyder-TheRoleOfSanghaInOurPractice.mp3>

Engaged Buddhism – Dharma as Community Practice: <http://s3.amazonaws.com/BZCAudio/2016-10-29-Dharma-GregSnyder-EngagedBuddhism.mp3>

What is Practice? Boundless Grass and a Forest of Thorns: <http://s3.amazonaws.com/BZCAudio/2016-09-17-Dharma-GregSnyder-WhatIsPractice.mp3>

RESIDENTIAL TRAINING AND MINISTRY EXPERIENCE

| | |
|-------------------------------|----------------|
| Brooklyn Zen Center | 2005 – Present |
| Tassajara Zen Mountain Center | 2011 |
| Austin Zen Center | 1999 – 2004 |

Brooklyn Zen Center, Koshin-ji, 2005 – Present

Zen Priest, 2008 – Present

In addition to duties of specific roles (listed below):

- Responsible for general care and guidance of the sangha.
- Is available for consultation and mediation for those who so request.
- Has the flexibility and availability to give their full attention to individuals in crisis.
- Offers ongoing classes for Zen students.
- Leads meditation retreats.

Tanto (Head of Practice) 2008 – 2014

- Directs spiritual training at Brooklyn Zen Center, upholding and maintaining the forms and liturgy of Zen practice.
- In consultation with other elders, designs and implements Brooklyn Zen Center's training curriculum.
- Convenes and chairs the Practice, Ryo and Curriculum Committees.
- Coordinates the training of Zen students and assigns them to appropriate duties.
- Maintains continuity and consistency of Brooklyn Zen Center forms and rituals.
- All ceremonies are the final responsibility of the Tanto, such as ordinations, funerals, memorials.
- Oversees all practice roles directly by providing guidance, feedback, and training: ino, tenzo, work leader, shika, jisha, anja.
- Trains and oversees all mediation instructors.

Jisha (Attendant to Abbot) 2007 – 11

- Coordinated all aspects of Abbot's schedule and relations with the sangha on her behalf.
- Accompany Abbot in all formal ceremonial duties.

Ino (Head of Meditation Hall) 2005 – 07

- Attend and support zazen and all other formal practice events.
- Train, schedule, and supervise the Doan Ryo (ceremony sound group).
- Organize all meditation sittings, monitor participation with the Registrar, plan schedules with Senior Dharma Teacher, and assign jobs and seating.
- Manage ceremonies under direction of the Tanto and Senior Dharma Teacher.
- Schedule: instruction of zazen, zendo forms, introductory afternoons, and beginners' sittings using approved list of instructors.

Austin Zen Center, Zenkei-ji, 1997 – 2004

Director of Education, 2002 – 2004

Jisha (Attendant to Abbot), 2001 – 04

Duties same as above.

Director of Development, 2001 – 2002

Ino (Head of Meditation Hall), 2000

Duties same as above

PUBLICATIONS

Book in Progress: Carvalhaes, C and Snyder, G. Fire and Silence: Christian–Buddhist Articulations of Liberation (Working Title).

Book in Progress: Into the Scars of the Burning: Reflections on Zen and Social Justice. (Working Title).

Article: “Why We Go for the Gun,” *Lion’s Roar Magazine*, September 2016.

Article: “Waking Up to Whiteness,” Special Issue on Race, Power and White Privilege in American Buddhism in *Buddhadharma Magazine*, Summer 2016.

CONFERENCES, WORKSHOPS AND PRESENTATIONS

“Centering Social Justice in American Expressions of Zen Practice,” Shunryu Suzuki Lineage National Congress, Chicago, IL, September 2017.

“Manifesting a Socially Engaged Zen Center,” workshop for affiliated sangha leadership, Shunryu Suzuki Lineage National Congress, Chicago, IL, September 2017.

“Buddhist Practices of Listening and Bodily Wisdom,” Listening to the Natural World: A Forum of Native Elders and Interreligious Contemplatives, Moab, Utah, March 2017.

“The Role of White Supremacy in Current American Expressions of Buddhist Practice,” Buddhism and Race Conference at Harvard Divinity School, Boston, MA, March 2017.

“Empowerment, Barriers and Governance,” Three facilitated sessions, Social Engagement and Liberation Congress at Nagaloka University, Nagpur, India, October 2016.

“Bringing Social Karma into the Spiritual Discussion: Lessons from Awake Youth Project,” Panel Discussion, Joining the Sacred and the Secular: Understanding the Spiritual Quest of Young People Today at Shinnyo Center, New York, NY, September 2016.

“Entrepreneurial Wisdom for Socially Engaged Sanghas,” Awakened Leadership Conference at Loyola Marymount University, Los Angeles, CA, June 2016.

“Undoing Internalized White Supremacy in Sangha,” Buddhism and Race Conference at Harvard Divinity School, Boston, MA, April 2016

“Challenges Preventing Unity: Contemplative Responses to Histories of Violence” Presentation and facilitated community dialogue, Becoming an Agent of Awakening Forum, Baltimore, NY, October 2015

“The Role of Contemplative Social Action,” Healing Communities Forum at Shinnyo Center, New York, NY, September 2015

“An Engaged Buddhist Response to the Societal Kleśas of Our Time,” Awakening the Light of Dharma Conference at Sarnath International Nyingma Institute, Sarnath, India, September 2015.

“Buddhist Perspectives on Human Unity and Interreligious Dialogue,” The Spiritual Foundations of Human Unity Forum at University of Religions and Denominations, Qom, Iran, June 2015.

“Shunryu Suzuki’s Expression of Dogen’s Practice/Realization in American Soto Zen” Sharing Transformative Spiritual Practices in a Multicultural World Forum at Shinnyo-en Temple, Kyoto, Japan, November 2014.

“Social Messages and Gun Violence – How are we Communicating the Devaluation of Life?” Community Panel and Forum of Anti-Gun Violence Leaders and Voices at Brooklyn Zen Center, New York, NY, February 2014.

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS/AFFILIATIONS & VOLUNTEER SERVICE

| | |
|---|--------------|
| American Buddhist Progressive Alliance Advisory Council and Formational Steering Committee | 2016–Present |
| Soto Zen Buddhist Association Full Member, Affiliated Dharma Teacher | 2016–Present |
| Shunryu Suzuki Lineage Branching Streams Network Full Member, Facilitator | 2010–Present |
| Brooklyn Borough President’s Initiative on Faith-based and Community Partnerships Advisory Council | 2012–Present |
| Global Peace Initiative of Women’s Contemplative Alliance Member, Affiliate Teacher | 2011–Present |
| Brooklyn Zen Center Board Member | 2005–Present |
| Columbia’s Center for International Conflict Resolution Program Associate | 2007-2009 |
| European Programme for Prevention of Deadly Conflict and Genocide Advisor | 2007–2008 |

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Founding President and Executive Director, Brooklyn Zen Center, 2005–Present

- In conjunction with the Board, guided the organization from an initial sitting group to one of the largest Zen Center's in the country.
 - Assure organization has a long-range strategy that realizes its mission and vision and encourages the development of programming within the vision areas of Zen Practice and Social Justice.
 - From 2009 to 2016 oversaw budget expansion from \$19,000 to \$400,000 annually.
 - Personally raised over \$3 million toward organizational bottom line and future projects.
 - Establish working relationships and cooperative arrangements with community groups, educational institutions, and social movements aligned with Buddhist principles.
 - Raise funds through membership, large donors and grants in a fashion that ensures the organization's prosperity, fulfills its mission, and fully meets donor and grantor requirements.
 - Responsible for the recruitment and employment of all personnel.
 - Develop and maintain sound financial practices, prepare budget and ensure BZC operates within its guidelines.
 - Serve on the Board of Directors.
 - Founded, raised funding and administered Awake Youth Project, BZC's ongoing in-school youth program.
-