



Wind Bell: Teachings from the San Francisco Zen Center - 1968-2001

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In the 1960s, the San Francisco Zen Center established itself as a focal point for the study and practice of Zen Buddhism. Lectures and talks given at the center and compiled for this collection cover such topics as applying Zen to family life ('Karma, Dharma, and Diapers'), to other disciplines ('Facing the Darkness in Buddhism and Psychotherapy'), and to artistic creation ('Creation in an Instant').

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

From its simple mimeographed beginnings 40 years ago, the San Francisco Zen Center's subscription magazine, *Wind Bell*, has matured to celebrate its great reach in this first-ever, handsome treasury. It is ably edited by Wenger (*Branching Streams Flow in the Darkness*), the San Francisco Zen Center's Dean of Buddhist Studies and Zen Center Publications. He has crafted an open door for the curious, the nostalgic and the devoted to see the seminal work of this Zen center, arguably the foremost in America, in a city whose Zen history can be traced back more than a century. After Gretel Ehrlich's sweeping, clarifying foreword, the first section contains four selections from *Wind Bell*'s "one consistent touchstone": founder Suzuki Roshi's lectures. The second section embodies the center's dharma as expressed through its former abbots, abbesses and teachers. Section three features visiting teachers such as Robert Thurman, the first ordained American-Tibetan Buddhist monk, and the venerable Vietnamese spiritual leader Thich Nhat Hahn. Section four explores elements of traditional practice, including dharma transmission, while the final section, "Everyday Zen," embraces the commonplace sublimeness of child-rearing, cooking, painting, the lessons of trees and much more. Through graceful, quiet design, this book's ample illustrations reveal the places and faces of Buddhism's American foundation. This simple, rich book captures Zen's durable and ephemeral strength.

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From Library Journal

The San Francisco Zen Center is one of the most important Zen institutions in the United States. For years, its newsletter, *Wind Bell*, has contained some of the most profound and useful writings available on Zen practice. In this first, welcome collection of those writings, Wenger, the center's dean, presents the teachings of both monks and laity and essays on topics as diverse as *Zazen* (sitting meditation) and apple crisp (which includes a recipe as well as a brief account of life in a Zen monastery). Opening with four talks by the center's founding abbot, (Shunryu) Suzuki Roshi, the book also features articles by various Zen teachers associated with the center, including "Four Views of Love" and "Buddha's Miraculous Power"; talks by several visiting Americans, including Robert Thurman; works on traditional practice like Dharma (teachings of the Buddha) transmission; and other wonderful essays applying insights from Zen to everyday life. This insightful anthology demonstrates the range and depth of Zen teachings in this country and is highly recommended. [For a recent history of the center, especially the abuses of former abbot Richard Baker, readers are directed to Michael Downing's *Shoes Outside the Door*, LJ 10/1/01. Ed.] David Bourquin, California State Univ., San Bernardino

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Review

"Michael Wenger's anthology covers the smell and taste of life at the San Francisco Zen Center. The selections from famous teachers and ordinary students touch on almost every aspect of Zen life and practice."

—Robert Bella, coauthor of *The Good Society*

"This book presents the varied Zen Center communities viscerally and clearly. Suzuki Roshi's wonderful

lectures, the talks by his disciples, the growing and shared understanding of practice and the honest effort and the high-standards of this seminal Sangha are clearly revealed. *Wind Bell* is a vital record of what making American Zen is."

—Peter Coyote, author of *Sleeping Where I Fall: A Chronicle*

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