

Dialogues with The Masters



Genpo Merzel Roshi

JANET ATTWOOD: Good morning, everyone. This is Janet Attwood from Dialogues with the Masters calling this morning. I'm honored that we have as our special guest the Zen Master Genpo Merzel Roshi. Dennis Genpo Merzel Roshi is a revolutionary in the tradition of the old Zen Masters who so embodied Buddhist teaching they were able to revitalize and transform it for their own day and age.

Genpo Roshi is working to transmit the essence of the Buddhist teachings in a way that is readily accessible to Westerners and relevant to our everyday life. The core of Genpo Roshi's teaching is the unshakable and contagious certainty that every one of us, regardless of our socio-economic, cultural or religious background can instantly awaken to our true nature, like the great Masters of old--like the historical Buddha himself, whose essential teaching was nothing less than this.

Genpo Roshi combines Zen tradition with the insights of such visionary Western figures as Carl Jung, Fritz Perls and Hal Stone, enabling virtually anyone to realize their true nature, a realization that can further deepen through meditation. Genpo Roshi comes from a long line of Rebbes. Born in Brooklyn, New York, he grew up in Southern California, where he was a high school champion swimmer and All-American water polo player.

He earned a Master's degree in education from the University of Southern California, and was a teacher and lifeguard before becoming ordained as a Zen monk under Zen Master Taizan Maezumi in 1973. Completing formal Koan study in 1979, he became Maezumi Roshi's second Dharma successor in 1980. He received Inka, which is the final seal of approval as a Zen Master from Roshi Glassman in 1996, thereby becoming one of a small group of Westerners recognized as lineage holders in both the Soto and Rinzai Zen traditions.

In 1982, Genpo Sensei began teaching throughout Europe and founded the international group he named The Kanzeon, which means love and compassion. This Sangha is centered in Salt Lake City, Utah, with affiliates all over the world. He is also the president of the White Plum Asanga, the worldwide community comprising all the Dharma heirs of Taizan Maezumi Roshi, their successors, and the many groups they lead.

Genpo Roshi is the author of five books: *Big Mind/Big Heart: Finding Your Way*, *The Eye Never Sleeps*, *Beyond Sanity and Madness*, *24/7 Dharma*, *The Path of the Human Being* and several other DVDs. He is married to Stephanie Young Merzel, co-administrator of Kanzeon Zen Center International, and has two children, Tai Merzel, an aerospace engineer and graduate student at the University of Southern California,

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and Nicole Merzel, a mathematics major at the University of Puget Sound. Good morning, Genpo.

GENPO ROSHI: Good morning. How are you, Janet?

JANET ATTWOOD: How are you?

GENPO ROSHI: I'm well, thank you.

JANET ATTWOOD: Thank you for joining us. It's wonderful to be with you. What does it mean, as you said in your bio, that you come from a long line of Rebbes. What is a Rebbe?

GENPO ROSHI: As I understand it, a Rebbe is a teacher, usually a rabbi; I believe they always are. They teach, usually, other rabbis, so they're more the teacher than let's say a normal rabbi would be.

JANET ATTWOOD: It also says that you studied two forms of Zen, which are called Soto and Rinzai. What are the primary differences of these Zen practices?

GENPO ROSHI: The Soto school is more known, although it's not exclusively a school where the emphasis is on Zen meditation, or what we call zazen. That means the real emphasis is on just sitting. In Japanese it's called shikan-taza. The Rinzai School emphasizes what's called Koan studies. Koan studies are types of questions: can be riddles, can be puzzles in a question form, or like a poem.

It could be a statement or a dialogue between a Master and his disciples, and you cannot answer these questions with your rational, dualistic mind, your discriminating mind. You must transcend it. You must go beyond the discriminating mind and find that place of unity-consciousness or oneness in order to go through the koan--pass through the koan.

JANET ATTWOOD: Does the saying, "What is the sound of one hand clapping?" come from the Rinzai tradition?

GENPO ROSHI: That's probably the most famous. The koans come from both traditions, and also, before the two traditions even separated, which was sometime after the Chinese Sixth Patriarch. The koans go all the way back to the life of Sakyamuni Buddha, the first Buddha. They were compiled, however, over those years, and then in the Rinzai school, made into a form of study.

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JANET ATTWOOD: What is the difference between Zen, other forms of Buddhist meditation, and other forms of meditation, for that matter?

GENPO ROSHI: Zen emphasizes more a sitting, which we'd call just being totally in the present or in the moment, where you're not seeking. That's what we call shikan-taza, just sitting. You're more in the present moment and just sitting with complete awareness. Some other forms of meditation will, maybe, use mantras or visualizations. In Zen, we might use these things, but the main emphasis is either just sitting or the koan study.

JANET ATTWOOD: What about other forms of meditation? What is the difference, would you say, the main difference between Zen and other forms, like transcendental meditation? They are completely different, yes? Do you know about that type of meditation?

GENPO ROSHI: In some of the other forms of meditation, the main purpose is really finding that peace and quietness. In Zen, it's also discovering your true nature and realizing who you are. There's a little more emphasis on realization. Now, in the Rinzai school the realization, the koans, are used to attain that, or to reach that. In the Soto school, the very sitting itself, being completely present and not seeking, not having any goal, not having any aim in your practice, is the realization manifesting.

JANET ATTWOOD: Thank you. I've always wondered what the difference is between those types of meditation. How does Zen affect one's life, and what is the purpose of Zen?

GENPO ROSHI: Frankly, if Zen does not affect one's life and if it does not change one's character into becoming more awakened, having more wisdom, and more love and compassion in one's life, then frankly, it's not really Zen. The whole point of Zen is to manifest it in your everyday life with more loving compassion. Sometimes we think of compassion as only a form of yin compassion, the feminine compassion, where we're more kind and considerate.

That's very much true, but the other side, the yang compassion, or masculine compassion like tough love, is also compassion, and it has to be balanced. We have to find that balance in our life so that we're responding to life's situations, which are ever changing. The circumstances, who we're with, the positions we're in are constantly changing, and it's being responsible, responding in the present moment, to life's situations, which are constantly in flux.

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JANET ATTWOOD: Can you tell us a little more about how you became a Zen Master? I think it's amazing that here you were famous for water polo in Southern California, and now you're one of the world's greatest Zen Masters. How did that all come to pass?

GENPO ROSHI: It's kind of interesting because I did not have any interest, really, in Buddhism or Zen. In fact, I hadn't even heard of Zen until around 1970, when somebody mentioned the word to me. In 1971, I was kind of discouraged. I was in a kind of despair in a relationship that I was involved in, living with a woman. I decided to go to the desert, just get some space, and try to think about my life.

I actually went out there with two friends, and they went off hiking. While they were hiking, I climbed this mountain in the Mojave Desert in California. I climbed this mountain, and I was sitting up on this mountain, and I was contemplating my life. I had a sudden realization, awakening, whatever we might call it, where I actually dropped the self and became one with the universe, one with the cosmos.

There was no distinction between myself any longer and everything else. It was so profound, it woke me up. It was like an awakening out of a deep, deep dream or sleep, and everything made absolute sense in that moment and from then on. Everything that I thought was all so important, so crucial, so critical, all the small stuff—like the saying in that book *Don't Sweat the Small Stuff... And It's All Small Stuff*—became so clear to me.

What was most important was not only waking up, but really helping others experience this awakening, this enlightenment. From that moment on, my life completely changed 180 degrees. It was as if, up to that moment, I had been going full tilt ahead, full Steam, 100 miles an hour. My life was like most of our lives, about finding security, finding fame, finding position, making money, getting ahead in the world. All of a sudden, what was really important was knowing who I am and helping others realize that.

JANET ATTWOOD: Then you came to Zen. In helping others realize that as well, you could have gone to many paths. Why did you pick Zen?

GENPO ROSHI: This is true, I could have. At first, of course, I didn't know that much about Zen, but the friend who I was with had studied Zen in college. He had a PhD in psychology. He mentioned Zen to me, and then he gave me my first book on any of this, which was the book by Herman Hesse, *Siddhartha*. I read that. Then I started to read everything I could about mystical experiences or spiritual awakening.

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I read Christian mystics, Jewish mystics, Buddhist practitioners, Zen Masters, and the one that really resonated with me was Zen. Eventually I found my Zen Master, my teacher, about a year later.

JANET ATTWOOD: What would you say is the hardest thing about become a Zen student? A better way to put that would be is there any special prerequisite to becoming a Zen student?

GENPO ROSHI: I think its really either the wish to really understand life, the meaning and purpose of life, or most of us, most people, do come to Zen just wanting to improve their lives, to have a richer, more meaningful existence, and seeing that it's not just about survival, it's not just about making money or finding security. Of course, all of those things are absolutely necessary in life, but people want to grow deeper, have a deeper understanding, a deeper realization, and be a more loving, compassionate person.

JANET ATTWOOD: I actually never even was interested in it, because I had heard so many times that Zen meditation is not for everyone, that it's very tough to learn, that it requires a huge amount of concentration and contemplation abilities. What would you say about this? Is it true?

GENPO ROSHI: With the traditional training, like the training that I went through—and those who were training in the '70s and '80s and '90s, in fact, that I was training alongside—this was quite true. We sat a lot. We did a lot of meditation, hours and hours daily. Many days of the month we would go into retreat with, maybe, as many as 10 hours of zazen Zen meditation a day.

It was quite vigorous and quite strong. What I have worked out, or realized, which I call the Big Mind/Big Heart Process really makes Zen accessible to anyone and everyone. In fact, when I conduct retreats—like right now I'm in Miami Beach conducting a six-day retreat—there are people from all walks of life; people who have families, who obviously have jobs, careers.

The Big Mind Process really makes the practice not limited to people who want to leave the world, go into a monastery, go into a Zen Center, and leave it all behind and just practice. It really is bringing it into the world and making it accessible to everyone and anyone who wishes to live a better life, a richer life, a more fulfilled life.

JANET ATTWOOD: You said 'anyone and everyone.' It's appropriate for worldly people, and not just those who have a desire to be a monk? Is that correct?

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GENPO ROSHI: Absolutely. In fact, in 1994 I realized that I had to bring this into the world more. Up until then, my teaching for 20 years was more to people who really could afford the time to do these long retreats and get really deeply into it. Then in '94, I realized I had to bring this out to the world. It took me five years to discover how to do that.

I had to discover how to do it in a way that makes it really accessible to the average person, to normal people, who just wish to enrich their lives and be there in a more compassionate and loving way with wisdom and kindness in their lives. I would say that what the Big Mind does, and what my life's work right now is, is so anyone can practice Zen, and they don't have to become a monk or go to a monastery.

JANET ATTWOOD: You've mentioned Big Mind twice. When I was reading, I said you're the author of five books and one is called *Big Mind/Big Heart: Finding Your Way*. Big Mind is a technique, a Zen technique, that you have brought to the world. Is that correct?

GENPO ROSHI: That's correct. In 1983 and '84—and I had to study Western psychology, really, since the mid to late '60s—I found or discovered a way to merge or bring together the Eastern tradition and [tape break 19:40-19:46]. I borrowed a technique called Voice Dialogue. I had trained, in 1983 and '84, with Hal and Sidra Stone, the founders of Voice Dialogue.

They were both psychotherapists. I trained with them for about a year, several times a week. Then, I explored and experimented with Voice Dialogue in the Zen tradition. In '99—it took me 16 years—I came upon or realized that by using the Voice Dialogue technique, we could actually have Zen experiences that, up until then, were an experience that might come about by chance after years and years of practice.

Or, like myself, you stumble on it in the middle of the desert. I knew it could happen very spontaneously and naturally, but most often people had to work for years and years and years before they had what we call a teisho experience, or a glimpse into reality, or satori, sometimes it's called. I found that anyone, very easily and very directly, immediately, could have this experience just by simply inquiring into certain aspects of mind or self. That's what I've been actually teaching now for the past eight years.

JANET ATTWOOD: Can you actually show people how to do it over the phone? Is that possible?

GENPO ROSHI: It is possible, and I'm happy to do that. Let me explain a little bit before I actually show, so people have a little idea of what we're going to be doing. As I

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mentioned earlier, the koans are about going beyond our discriminating or dualistic mind. The way we normally perceive things, which is our ordinary consciousness, is that we see things in terms of me and you, the world and myself. I'm always separating things into terms of good or bad, right or wrong.

With this mind, I evaluate, I may judge, I may be critical. There's always myself and others. I don't see others as myself, and I don't see myself as others. This state of consciousness is where we come from 24/7. Every once in a while, in somebody's life, they may have an experience of moving out of this dualistic mind. We call that a fugue experience, a mystical experience, or some other word, a glimpse of some other reality.

What I'm going to do with the listener is I'm going to build a triangle, let's say; let's call it a triangle. With this triangle, let's say one side of the triangle is our dualistic mind, our discriminating mind, the mind of this apparent reality that we live in that we call reality. That's the right side. The other side of the triangle, on the left, is going to be what I call the transcendent, or a Big Mind, experience where we go beyond the self.

I'm going to talk to these different voices, and then we're going to move to the apex of the triangle, to the point at the top of the triangle, which also is the entire triangle. If you think of this triangle, sitting in this triangle is oneself, who we are. We're going to then move to that apex, which transcends and includes both the dual and the non-dual, and then see that this whole perception is the reality, not just one or the other.

What I'd like to do—and I can do it with you if you don't mind, Janet—is I'll ask you to speak, and then the listeners can go along. What I would suggest with the listeners is to really put themselves into it and really explore doing it, not just listening to you or to me, okay? The first voice that I'm going to ask to speak to is this. Let's just start with the simplest voice. Let me speak to the self, to Janet, okay? Let me speak to her. You are the self.

JANET ATTWOOD: Janet.

GENPO ROSHI: You're Janet, the self, or whoever the listener is. Tell me a little bit about how you see the world.

JANET ATTWOOD: How I see the world?

GENPO ROSHI: Yes. Maybe I add one more aspect to this, just to make it quicker and simpler for everybody. I'm speaking to the dualistic mind of Janet, of the self, the dualistic mind. That makes it easier.

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JANET ATTWOOD: If I'm a dualistic mind, which is the discriminating mind, the dualistic mind would be one who judges.

GENPO ROSHI: Let me interrupt, Janet. I want you to speak as 'I, the dualistic mind.'

JANET ATTWOOD: I am the dualistic mind, I judge, and I don't always trust. I am just kind of always looking for imperfections. I don't love all the time. I see a lot of differences in the world.

GENPO ROSHI: As the dualistic mind, you kind of break things up into opposites, am I right?

JANET ATTWOOD: Exactly.

GENPO ROSHI: Give me some of these pairs of opposites that you break things up into.

JANET ATTWOOD: That's very easy. I see everything as right or wrong, good or bad, less or more.

GENPO ROSHI: Excellent. Self and others, right? Okay. This is the dualistic mind speaking. What I'm now going to do is move us all to the other side of the triangle. I would like now to speak to the non-dualistic mind, please. I'm going to give you another name, Big Mind. You are the non-dualistic mind, or Big Mind. Let me speak to this voice. Just shift. Now, you've made the shift. Who am I speaking to?

JANET ATTWOOD: You're speaking to Janet, Big Mind.

GENPO ROSHI: Janet, Big Mind. All right. I would like you to look and see just how big and vast you are.

JANET ATTWOOD: I'm eternal. I am the ocean. I'm bigger than that.

GENPO ROSHI: Very good. Now, you're also the non-dual, so tell me, as the non-dual, big mind, more about you.

JANET ATTWOOD: As non-dual, big mind, I see everything in terms of myself. Everyone is as dear to me as myself is.

GENPO ROSHI: Keep going.

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JANET ATTWOOD: Everywhere I am and everywhere I go, there's nothing but harmony, love, evenness, trust and goodness.

GENPO ROSHI: What are all things to you as Big Mind?

JANET ATTWOOD: One.

GENPO ROSHI: That's right. Keep going. There's more you can say.

JANET ATTWOOD: Everything is one. When I look out, there is no out-looking, because everything just is myself.

GENPO ROSHI: That's right. Everything's me, myself. What now is not there that was there with the dualistic mind?

JANET ATTWOOD: The separation.

GENPO ROSHI: That's right. Keep going.

JANET ATTWOOD: There is no separation, because there's only unity here. There are no differences, which was totally there. There are no opposites. There's no right or wrong, good or bad, less or more.

GENPO ROSHI: Good. That's right. Do you experience fear or anxiety in this state?

JANET ATTWOOD: No, none of that. When I'm Big Mind, I'm just void of anything that I would call negative. I would be void of anything that didn't feel good. How's that?

GENPO ROSHI: Tell me about your state of being right now. What are you experiencing in your body at this moment as Big Mind, non-dual?

JANET ATTWOOD: I'm just dropping into a really centered state of calmness.

GENPO ROSHI: Would you say this is a very meditative state?

JANET ATTWOOD: I would say it's very even, which is a meditative state. I do feel very even inside. There's this happiness, as well, there. It's just like a glow. It's very soft and subtle.

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GENPO ROSHI: When you look at the self—the dualistic—what would you say about that, looking over to the other side of that base of the triangle, the self, the dualistic mind?

JANET ATTWOOD: It's funny, because when you said, "When you look over there, what would you say?" when I looked over there, it was like I loved it. I just loved it for some reason.

GENPO ROSHI: That's exactly what comes up. Love for the self; how about all selves?

JANET ATTWOOD: There's just an understanding, a deep understanding, that everything's as it should be. All is okay, and there's just this sweetness of love there for everything.

GENPO ROSHI: Would you say that this 'okayness,' as we say in Zen, everything is just perfect 'as is,' complete, whole?

JANET ATTWOOD: Absolutely. Yes, there is no question whatsoever that anything should be different. There's a role that the dualistic mind absolutely plays, and it's just playing out its play as it should.

GENPO ROSHI: Exactly.

JANET ATTWOOD: There is no judgment. There's none.

GENPO ROSHI: This is very profound, because up until eight years ago, what you're expressing as Big Mind, non-dual took people years and years and years of study. Here, in just a few minutes, you're expressing exactly how Buddha would express it, how Zen Masters have expressed this reality for centuries.

JANET ATTWOOD: Genpo, I'd also like to share that when you asked me to look over to my dualistic mind, it was as if my consciousness expanded. There was an actual physical experience, as well as mental, where my heart seemed to envelope this whole portion of what we would call 'myself.'

GENPO ROSHI: That's just brilliant. That's beautiful. Now, what I would like to do is keep in mind the image of the triangle. On this one side we had the dualistic mind. Now we're speaking to the non-dual. What I want to do is I'm going to ask to speak now to the apex of the triangle. This apex includes both the dual and the non-dual—where you are now, the non-dual.

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It includes the two, and yet transcends them, goes beyond these two. It includes or embraces the dual and the non-dual, and it moves beyond them. It's the whole triangle now; it's not just the top. It's the entire triangle. Let me speak to the apex, and I'm going to give you the name. I'm going to give you two names: the unique self, Big Heart. May I speak to the apex?

JANET ATTWOOD: I am the unique self, Big Heart.

GENPO ROSHI: Okay. I want you just to be this for a moment, and just see what's coming up for you in your body and your mind.

JANET ATTWOOD: It's immediate. The second I do that, it's actually a visual picture. It's physical, it's visual, it's mental, it's emotional. It's as if everything is involved in this experience where I can visually see this. It's as if there's this energy that's enveloping both the questioning mind—you would call it the dualistic mind—and the transcendent or Big Mind.

There's just this feeling of compassion that envelopes both of them and brings everything into harmony as just this one, beautiful canvas. I don't know how else to put it. The physical experience is actually one of being very tender in my heart, very sweet and very tender in my heart. There's just this love. It's so touching that it makes me feel like I want to cry.

GENPO ROSHI: That's amazing and it's wonderful. I'm constantly amazed at how quickly people like yourself can immediately experience this. Frankly, it took me over 30 years to get to this place of embracing both the dual and the non-dual. We can call the dualistic the ordinary mind, or the mind of 'everydayness,' the mind that goes to work, that goes to the supermarket, that takes care of the children, that drives the kids to school, and all that.

Then there's the transcendent: the mind of the sages, the mind of the great Masters, Christ consciousness, unity consciousness. Then, moving to that apex and embracing the way and the ordinary mind—in Zen we call it ordinary mind—is the way. One side of the triangle is the ordinary mind. The other side of the triangle is the way. At the apex, we are in this Big Heart, unique self, and that is ordinary mind is the way.

That's what I've been trying to share with people. Now, I want to ask you another question. As the unique self, what would you say as this apex, as this unique self? What do you see that maybe you didn't see before?

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JANET ATTWOOD: Here, there is absolutely nothing to say. That's what I didn't say before. Everything just is. Everything just is, and everything is so pure. Really, it's a speechless place sitting here with you right now.

GENPO ROSHI: There's a saying in Zen: Those who know, don't speak; those who speak, don't know. It's talking about this place. There's almost no way to really adequately describe it.

JANET ATTWOOD: It's not so much that; it is that, but it's also that weird takeaway from your experience, because this experience is so full.

GENPO ROSHI: What would you say about the uniqueness of your self now?

JANET ATTWOOD: That's an interesting question, because it doesn't feel that there is any uniqueness. It just feels as if there is just that which is. How can that be unique if that's what we all are?

GENPO ROSHI: From this apex, it's so beautiful because we can see that everyone is absolutely perfect as they are. Everything is absolutely perfect as it is. At the same time, we can see that we all have a lot of work to do. There are always a lot of refinements to do. We can say study is never-ending, because we can always come from a more unconditionally compassionate place.

You said a beautiful thing. There is the questioning mind over here one side, and that mind that has no questions over on the other side, and sometimes we vacillate between doubt and faith. We see them as two totally separate things, and we think doubt is an impediment of faith. From this place, what do you see about doubt and unconditional faith or trust?

JANET ATTWOOD: Both have their perfect roles that they're playing. One is no greater than the other; actually, they both have their perception in that moment of which it's their turn, as you would say. This is new to me. This is very fun.

GENPO ROSHI: People love this process. As I said, I just did it in Miami Beach yesterday at the Colony Theater. There were 110 people there. They just came away glowing and loving it. Now we're doing a five-day retreat Monday through this Friday. People just love the process, and we can keep going deeper and deeper and deeper. There's no end. There are no parameters. We're just constantly discovering more and more profound ways of sharing this with the world.

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JANET ATTWOOD: You're teaching—and that's what you were just doing in Miami—courses to make Big Mind teachers. Is that correct?

GENPO ROSHI: Yes, both. I'm teaching courses that allow people to actually experience the depth of Zen in a very, very short amount of time. Sometimes we do workshops that are only three or four hours long. Sometimes we do a day, two days, or a week like we're doing now. We also do, twice a year, a whole month where people come from all over the world.

Last year about 95 people came at any one given time, 85 to 95 people at a given time. We learn how to share this with others, how to go deeper, clarify more of our understanding.

JANET ATTWOOD: It's so beautiful. It's for everyone. From my experience, there's no conflict. This beautiful experience would be for everyone. I can see the value; it's so simple, a parent to their older child, or maybe even their younger child.

GENPO ROSHI: I do this with children, and it's just amazing what happens.

JANET ATTWOOD: I would just love to be in a roomful of many, many people and you doing this practice, because there must be so much bliss in the room. That was what my experience is, just dropping into this delicious bliss.

GENPO ROSHI: Recently, Bill Harris and I went to a lockdown facility for young men who are the most abused children from age 13 to 19 in four states: California, Oregon, Washington, and Alaska. These kids come in in chains. It's just so sad. They've been so abused that they actually have to qualify to go there. They have to have been abused in five different ways of abuse: sexual abuse, physical abuse, emotional abuse, psychological abuse.

They come in, and there are 60 kids. They had to sit every other seat. They can't be too close to each other. I was given 45 minutes, and the head of the place said, "All right. Do your thing." In 45 minutes, these kids were in such a state; it was so profound, it blew Bill's and my minds just completely, including the staff who was there. They were there, too. The kids, each one came up afterwards and personally said, "I think you just transformed my life."

They've been writing me ever since. Of course, they want me to come back. The staff said we did more in those 45 minutes than they were able to do in years with these children. It was so rewarding, personally rewarding, to see the transformation of these kids taking

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responsibility for their lives. Another name that I give for that Big Heart place of the unique self is also the Master of Our Own Life.

The one who takes responsibility is not blaming or finding fault with the world. They've actually taken full responsibility and with children, when we do this, that's what happens. They take full responsibility for their lives. I was working with a kid who was actually suicidal recently. I had worked with him before, and so his dad called me and said, "He's really going through a hard time." It was even worse than that.

I spent an hour with him, and he even went home, cleaned up his room, put his meditation cushion back in, took down all these posters, and his dad said he was transformed. It was amazing. We're able to do this in an hour or less, which still blows my mind.

JANET ATTWOOD: It makes so much sense, because what you do is you get rid of all of that separation. Good or bad, right or wrong, and all of that, when you get rid of all of that—not get rid of it but when you show that that is perfect and that everything is perfect, giving them more of that experience, that taste of bliss—that's their true nature. That's everyone's nature. When you show everyone that there is no enemy, that's a huge awakening. Doing that lockdown, how perfect is that?

GENPO ROSHI: I'm sitting here smiling, because you're talking as a Master. You really are. It's just beautiful. I just want to be quiet and listen to you.

JANET ATTWOOD: Everyone can go to your website to find out about your wonderful courses and all your books. We have www.BigMind.org. For everyone here, that's www.BigMind.org. Then, www.Genpo.org to find out more about how you can order Genpo's books, find out about his schedule, be able to participate in one of his incredible seminars, and also to learn how to be a Big Mind facilitator.

The first time that I, as you know, Genpo, was able to do this, I was speaking in the Mediterranean just about a month ago with Bill Harris, who is the founder of CenterPointe Research University. Bill was also there to give a presentation, and he surprised everyone on the boat, because all he wanted to talk about was Big Mind. He walked everyone through it. It was the same exact experience of just walking into this incredible bliss. I remember him looking out into the room.

He says, "I knew you'd like this, Janet. I knew you'd get this." It wasn't just me, though; I looked around the room, and from that day on the cruise was different. It had a whole different flavor, even though it was already pretty blissful. It just had much more of a

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holistic feeling to it; an acceptance. It was just very, very special, so thank you. Also, when is your next course, and can you just tell us a little bit about that?

GENPO ROSHI: Actually, after this course this week, I'm in Santa Fe at Zen Master Joan Halifax's place. I'm also going to be in Colorado at the Shambhala Mountain Center sometime soon. I'm also doing workshops in Kripalu, back in Massachusetts. People just need to go to the website, and they'll find the whole schedule. I did want to say the book is not yet out in bookstores.

It won't come out in bookstores until end of September, but the book is available online at our website. It includes a CD; it's the book itself with a CD, and the CD walks people through this, just like I did with you. It also then gives them a guided meditation with a voice that I haven't spoken about today. It's called the non-seeking, non-grasping mind. It's a beautiful voice to sit in.

When you sit as the non-seeking, non-grasping mind, then you're really sitting in the now, being rather than becoming. You just sit. That's what we call, traditionally, shikan-taza.

JANET ATTWOOD: Thank you so much for this. It's so wonderful to be able to spend this time with you. It's just truly enlightening.

GENPO ROSHI: Thank you. I wanted to add one thing. You mentioned that cruise where Bill Harris shared this. He also introduced me to another person on that cruise who you know very well, Stewart Emery. He's been a hero of mine since the '70s. He's actually going to bring Big Mind to China in August. He's become someone who has been really taken by this process and says wonderful things about it.

Of course, Ken Wilber, the great philosopher, has helped in so many ways to help me bring Big Mind out into the world. He writes the forward for this book. Hal and Sidra Stone write the introduction for the book. Great people are finding that this might just be something that can really help the world.

JANET ATTWOOD: Stewart was the founder of Actualizations. This is a big deal that Stewart Emery, who is the founder of Actualizations and a dear friend of ours—he has that new book coming out called *Success Built to Last* where he, along with two other wonderful beings, had interviewed over 300 highly successful people who had endured longstanding success—for Stewart to take off on this says quite a lot about this.

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Genpo Merzel Roshi

There's also Bill Harris, because Bill Harris has his own program. Now he's so completely just into Big Mind. You couldn't get better testimonials from them. That says a lot about this.

GENPO ROSHI: Rabbi Zalman Schachter has really taken to it; Father Thomas Keating, a lot of great people.

JANET ATTWOOD: I think now Bill is going to be sharing this with Jack Canfield's Transformational Leadership Council in Mexico, which I and Chris Attwood are members of. We'll be with Bill this week when he'll be sharing it with everyone. This includes people like Dr. John Gray, Marianne Williamson, Reverend Michael Beckwith, and about 70% of the teachers of the movie "The Secret." They will be very wonderful to be with. Now Genpo, I wanted to invite Chris on to just give a little overview of what you shared this morning if I may.

GENPO ROSHI: Absolutely.

JANET ATTWOOD: Chris, are you there?

CHRIS ATTWOOD: Yes. Thank you, Janet. What a wonderful experience to be able to actually listen and experience this beautiful process of awakening in just a few minutes, which is what Genpo Roshi has shared with us today. He talked today a little bit about how he has come from a long tradition of teachers, of Rebbes, rabbis who teach other rabbis.

How appropriate that he is a teacher of teachers now in a different tradition. He told us of two schools, the Soto and Renzai schools of Zen. The Soto emphasizes sitting in meditation, being present in this moment; whereas the Renzai school works with Koans—riddles or questions—that are not resolvable with the dualistic or discriminating mind. They require going beyond that mind in order to resolve the riddle to create a whole-body experience.

In the works that Genpo Roshi is doing today, this is what he's doing really, allowing people in just a few minutes to go beyond that discriminating or dualistic mind, to experience the wholeness, the totality of their own life and their own experience. What he did this morning with Janet, by way of introduction, is to give us all the experience of what he calls Big Heart, or this experience of awakening, which is the experience of the arising of supreme compassion, embracing all things and everyone.

He mentioned that Zen is for the purpose of affecting one's life in a positive way, affecting all of one's life, to be able to have that compassion and awaken that.

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Sometimes it may mean not just the yin—the sweet, compassionate, loving aspect of that quality of love—but also sometimes tough love, of being clear and strong and direct, to bring out both the yin and yang, this Big Heart, as he describes it.

As he took Janet through this experience, he described creating a triangle. On one side is the dualistic mind, the discriminating mind. On the other side is this non-dualistic, or fully unified, mind, a mind that encompasses, that is associated with the experience of unity. Then the apex, which he said actually encompasses the entire triangle, allows both dualistic and non-dualistic to be experienced simultaneously.

What we've experienced this morning is this Big Mind/Big Heart process that makes Zen available to anyone, no matter what their state may be. He described for us even some kids who have been abused, young people from between 14 and 19 being abused in a whole variety of different ways, who had to sit a chair apart from each other. In just 45 minutes, they went through a profound shift or change.

Genpo Roshi shared with us how his training with Hal and Sidra Stone and Voice Dialogue, and the discovery that this Voice Dialogue technique could be combined with the knowledge and experience that he has from his Zen practice, could allow anyone to have this teisho experience, or this glimpse of reality. We listened and shared with Janet as she described the dualistic mind.

That mind experiences opposites of right and wrong, good and bad, self and non-self, of myself separate from the world around me, that experience where fear, anxiety and worry arise. Then Genpo Roshi took Janet into the non-dualistic mind, that mind that sees no differences, which experiences the perfection of everything and every moment, where the experience of opposites disappears.

Janet described that experience as being the experience of peace or of calmness inside. Then Genpo Roshi took her and spoke to that aspect of herself that encompasses both, which encompasses both the non-dualistic and dualistic minds. We all saw that both the dualistic mind and the non-dualistic mind are two aspects of the same reality. In that, Janet described her experience as this supreme compassion.

She had the recognition and experience that both dualistic and non-dualistic play such a valuable and important role, and that each has its value and each is perfect in its own right. I think the amazing thing, for me and for everyone who is listening, is noticing that this experience can be had in just a few minutes. As Genpo Roshi described, for many of us, sometimes we vacillate between doubt and faith.

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We doubt our experience, what's really true, the faith and knowledge that everything is perfect, and everything is unified. Often we see these as opposite things. Here, in just a few minutes, where we may have in the past seen doubt as an impediment, we see that both doubt and faith have their important and useful roles in the realization of what is really true.

Again, for everyone who is listening, this simple and powerful process that we've experienced in just a few minutes, Genpo Roshi has made available in his upcoming book *Big Mind/Big Heart*, which is available at www.BigMind.org and also at www.Genpo.org. Also, Genpo Roshi's schedule is there, and the opportunity to be able to go and spend time with him and to experience this powerful process directly. Janet, I'm really glad that I was here.

JANET ATTWOOD: Me too, Chris. Again, Genpo it's just an honor to be able to spend this time with you. It's an experience. This seems to stay with me throughout the day. It's just wonderful. Thank you for all of the inner homework that you've done in order to be able to create and manifest from inside you Big Mind, which I know is going to serve the world in such a huge way.

For everyone, again, you can purchase Big Mind only right now on one of Genpo's websites. So go and do that. I know that Bill Harris told me that he received your book by mistake. I think you were sending it to Tony Robbins. Is that correct?

GENPO ROSHI: Yes, I was sending it to Tony.

JANET ATTWOOD: It ended up to Bill Harris; Bill called you and said, "I think this came by mistake," and you told him, "There is no mistake." Bill read your book and was astounded by it. That is actually how he first learned Big Mind, from that book. For everyone, if you want to have this experience where you are just perceiving everything in its perfection, actually, in a very real experience that doesn't seem to go away, please purchase Genpo's book today.

Thank you, Genpo. It's wonderful, and I look forward to our time together. I will also give you a call after I get back from Mexico and tell you how Bill's presentation was. I'm sure you'll be interested to know.

GENPO ROSHI: Yes, I'm very interested. Thank you, Janet. This was just my pleasure and my honor.

JANET ATTWOOD: Ours, as well. All love to you. To all of you, thank you so much for joining us this morning for the Dialogues with the Masters call. Next month we have

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Swami Krishnamurti from Bangalore. He is a mango farmer. I actually spent some time with Swamiji in his wonderful town, and stayed at his home, eating his mangos and listening to his incredible knowledge. Look forward to joining us, and have a blessed day. Bye-bye, everyone.