



## VILLAGE ZENDO

3 November 2025

Dear Dharma friends,

As we move from fall towards winter and then to spring, we can become keenly aware of the cycles in our lives. As one cycle comes to an end, we can reflect on what we have lost and gained, for better or for worse. As a new cycle begins, we can reflect on what we stand to gain or lose in the time to come. And how can we be free in the midst of these cycles of our lives?

Every year at Village Zendo, we set aside a period of winter and spring for our intensive practice period known as Ango or “peaceful dwelling.” It is a season to go deeply into the changing times and to wake up in the midst of the turning wheel of life and death. We will observe our period of “peaceful dwelling” from 26 December 2025 to 15 March 2026.

This Ango period will be led by our Shuso, Keely Rakushin Garfield. Rakushin began to practice with us in 2010 and is a regular at the zendo on Wednesday evenings. For many years, she has led our yoga practice on retreat. She is a highly regarded choreographer and dancer. She is the director of Spiritual Care and an ordained and board-certified palliative-care chaplain in a hospital. She is also the mother of two young adults and partner of sangha member Jinno Berman. She knows the joys and challenges of practicing in an integrated way in the midst of the changing circumstances of our lives.

We will have two study texts for this Ango – Eihei Dogen’s “Undivided Activity” (*Zenki*, 1242) and “Birth and Death” (*Shoji*, undated). Kaz Tanahashi’s translations are available [here](#). We can explore the contemporary meanings of these works through our collective practice and reflection.

You can also find Rakushin’s Shuso letter [here](#) and the Ango commitment form she prepared for us [here](#). Please reflect on the questions in the commitment form and come up with answers that are appropriate for you. You are welcome to share your commitments with any of the Village Zendo teaching staff.

May our Ango be a time for us to deeply investigate the cycles of birth and death and to share the dynamic activity of our lives with those around us.

Gassho,

Shinryu Roshi