

Personal Profile

Feb. 1956 Born in Tagami town, Minamikanbara county, Niigata Prefecture
Mar. 1981 Completed Master's Course of Yokohama National University Faculty of Engineering
Mar. 1981 – Feb. 1984 Trained at Daihonzan Eiheiiji Monastery
Apr. 1984 - Sept.1984 Taught at Tokyo Gakkan Niigata High School as Part-time teacher
Apr. 1984 - Present Residential Priest of Toryuji Temple (Temple No. 24), Niigata Pref.
December 1984 – Present Organized Monthly Zazen Practice (414th Zazen practice session as of May 2019)
Oct. 1987 - Present Probation Officer
Apr. 2001 Opened a Zendo
2001 - Present Annual 3-day Genzo-e session (18th as of this year)
2004 - 2012 Served as Tokuha Fukyoshi (Soto shu Specially Dispatched Teacher) for 5 terms (10 years)
Nov. 2012 – Nov. 2016 Director of Dissemination Division of Daihonzan Eiheiiji
Apr. 2018 - Present Serving as Tokuha Fukyoshi (Soto shu Specially Dispatched Teacher) in his 6th term
April 2018 - Present Taught as the Instructor of Fukyoshi (Missionary) Training Center

Greeting

Hello.

My name is Sensho Watanabe serving Toryuji temple. The temple is located in the central part of Niigata prefecture stretching along the coast of the Sea of Japan, also, known for the production of rice. It's been a privilege to host lectures to share Dharma messages all around Japan on behalf of the head priest of the Two Head Sotoshu monasteries.

Also, I saw a growing number of Zen practitioners visiting Eiheiiji monastery from overseas when I was serving as the director of the dissemination division in Eiheiiji monastery. Then, I was dispatched to lead Zen practice in Milan in Italy. Such experiences reminded me of the growing interest in Zen outside of Japan.

I feel extremely grateful for the opportunity to visit the United States for the first time. Especially, I look forward to visiting the temple founded by my relative, Rev. Kobun Otagawa, who guided Steve Jobs into the world of Zen also meeting all those who cherished friendship with him.

It is my sincere wish that the teachings of Ichibutsu Ryoso (Shakyamuni Buddha, Dogen Zenji and Keizan Zenji) be shared and practiced among the people in the United States.

“How to live Here and Now
– Engagement from the One and Half Person Perspective–”
(Gist of Dharma Message)

Soto shu Tokuha Fukyo
(Specially Dispatched Teacher)
Rev. Sensho Watanabe

With the theme of “How to live Here and Now – Engagement from the One and a Half Person Perspective–,” I’d like to share the value of living and engaging in this life from the One and a Half Person Perspective through the teachings of the Shakyamuni Buddha, Dogen Zenji and Keizan Zenji. To begin with, the Buddha is said to have declared, “At this moment, I and all beings on the earth awaken together.” This declaration shows us the importance of living our life mutually connected with others around us and with our environment. This One and a Half Person Perspective is beyond being caught in either ‘me’ or ‘you’. It is not caught in the first person perspective or the second person perspective. It both acknowledges and accepts ‘me’ and ‘you’ without creating a wall between ‘me’ and ‘you’.

I’d like to share what I saw in the training at Eiheiji monastery while serving as a director of the dissemination division there from 2012 through 2016 and also share my genuine experience of the beauty and wonder of sitting Zazen without creating boundaries between ourselves, others and the environment.

I’d like to share the quote from the Dogen Zenji’s Genjo Koan:

To study the Buddha Way is to study the self.

To study the self is to forget the self.

To forget the self is to be realized by the myriad dharmas,

To be realized by the myriad dharmas is to let the body-mind of oneself and others drop away.

Also, I'd like to share the quotes from Keizan Zenji's *Zazen Yojinki* - Points to keep in mind when practicing zazen and talk about my own experience in relation to this teaching.

Remain always compassionate, and dedicate the limitless virtue of zazen to all living beings.

My hope is to share my experience when I served the 78th Abbot of the Eihei-ji temple, Ekiho Miyazaki Zenji who passed away at the age of 108 in January 2008, and how it taught me about the importance of living a spiritually rich life through the relationship with others from the One and a Half Person Perspective by overcoming our ego-centric view and sentiment.

In the (Japan's national) NHK documentary program "104-year-old Zenji of Eihei-ji Temple" broadcast in 2004, Ekiho Miyazaki Zenji said: "I'm Ekiho Miyazaki. I'm Eihei-ji. I'm one with Eihei-ji. There is nothing like myself that is so important. But this important self is living together with many training monastics, building complex of the Shichido Garan, trees, mountains, rivers, birds, animals and everything in the natural surroundings. Because people and the environments that support them are all this self, to treasure this self is to treasure the Eihei-ji temple." This teaching shows us that the happiness of oneself can be found in co-existing with others eliminating the borders of self and others.

Finally, in introducing a practical aspect of the practice, I'd like to introduce a poem "Putting your shoes together." and conclude my talk by sharing my wish that we cherish each segment of life moment by moment in our everyday life.