

Emergent Knowledge

Renshin and Taizen Verkuilen

*““Between the Universal Mind and the Personal Mind
is the intuitive-mind, which is dependent upon Universal Mind
for its cause and support and enters into relation with both.
It partakes of the universality of Universal Mind, and shares its purity.
Through the intuitive-mind, the faculty of intuition,
the inconceivable wisdom of Universal Mind is revealed and made realizable.”*
Shakyamuni Buddha in the Lankavatara Sutra

Note to Reader

Familiarity with *Tending the Fire: An Introspective Guide to Zen Awakening* and the basic Yogacara teachings are helpful for understanding the objective of this work.

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INTRODUCTION

*“Human life on earth is conditioned and unfree,
and when people recognize this limitation
and make themselves dependent upon
the harmonious and beneficent forces of the cosmos,
they achieve success.”¹*

I Ching Hexagram #30 Li, The Clinging Fire

In 1975, we headed out of California with years of experience to sort through. We sat in a Coalville, Utah restaurant one morning engaged in our never-ending conversation on Zen practice and teaching methods. Zen found the shores of the West only a few years before, and our interest was even fresher. We discussed how prospects at the beginning of a movement are open to creative forms and innovative ideas. As we ate our eggs and toast, we dreamed of establishing a lay order free of hierarchy, guided by consensus, with emphasis on shared study. Zen practice would bring us together and provide the basis and power for mutual awakening. Over the years we maintained enthusiasm in the face of many unknowns and setbacks. Yet even today, that desire for a lay-led group remains a motivating force, although tempered by the punishing realities of the almost fifty years since the inception of the idea.

There were, however, during that time many positive events, one of the most important of which was Renshin’s meeting the innovative psychotherapist, David Grove. She attended his seminar in 1989 on Metaphor Therapy where she immediately recognized similarities between the methods of Zen practice and his Metaphor Therapy. Renshin noted that Grove’s approach offered a means beyond the limitations of cognitive understanding and coping with an identified problem. She understood that successful implementation of Metaphor Therapy, like Zen practice, resolved the root cause of conditioning, liberating the individual from the afflictive pains associated with it. She learned Metaphor Therapy and applied it in her psychotherapy practice with promising results, prompting her to adapt it as a skillful means for Zen practice that she named Metaphor Awareness.

Both Metaphor Therapy and Metaphor Awareness are facilitator-based techniques requiring a high level of expertise on the part of the facilitator and substantial preparation time for the client/practitioner. Later Grove developed a process called Emergent Knowledge that could be successfully accomplished without a facilitator, while staying true to his basic premises. This process offers a personal skillful means that lay practitioners can easily learn and creatively employ. We combined Emergent Knowledge with Zen Practice yielding a process that contains the means to access and develop the transformative power of Buddhist awakening. Subsequently, we composed a version called Enhanced Emergent Knowledge that describes Emergent Knowledge without using Buddhist terminology. Both versions are contained in this booklet.

Enhanced Emergent Knowledge

By Renshin and Taizen Verkuilen October 2023

Enhanced Emergent Knowledge

[The] key to personal transformation: my life situation can be transformed by reforming what motivates my actions right now, and by making these volitions habitual.²

I. WHAT IS EMERGENT KNOWLEDGE

Emergent Knowledge is an introspective method of studying the self that relies solely on an individual's insight, intuition, and tacit knowledge. The skills required for successful application of Emergent Knowledge are clarity of intention and nonjudgmental attention. Emergent Knowledge offers unlimited potential for beneficial change, subtle and profound. Its systematic approach provides an accessible means to move from coping with afflictive emotions to freedom from them, achieved through the process of transformation. By means of an explicit system of investigation, intuitive information arises and gives form and clarity to a practitioner's problem and its resolution. Generating, developing, and integrating this information need not be a mystery or left to happenstance.

Emergent Knowledge is a psycho-linguistic method of questioning an individual's inner life, accessing information uncontaminated by interpretation from either a facilitator or practitioner. This form of inquiry enables intimate dialogue free of interjections and presuppositions. The pioneering psychotherapist David Grove developed it.³ He discovered that questions that least interfered with a client's experience were in fact the most effective in bringing about meaningful change.

Emergent Knowledge is a user-based method of investigation that neither taints nor distorts information that arises during inquiry, by applying a limited number of precisely worded questions. The process allows facilitators and practitioners to refrain from unconsciously projecting their unresolved issues and interpretations.

Grove's first developments were Metaphor Therapy and Cosmology of Space, but later their essential elements were adapted for the facilitator-free process of Emergent Knowledge. Emergent Knowledge provides a systematic method that can be, after initial training, successfully accomplished without a facilitator. This technique is easy to learn and apply, offering a means to address varied problematic issues. The goal of Emergent Knowledge is to resolve negative dynamics that are repetitive, and that limits one's ability to respond to life situations as one might otherwise prefer.

Emergent Knowledge's precise rules of questioning are a simple reproducible information-centered approach that:

- Helps to foster a state of concentration necessary to observe the response without recourse to analysis
- Avoids contamination of judgment and assumptions
- Resonates with the practitioner's experience

II. THE PURPOSE, FORM, AND METHOD OF EMERGENT KNOWLEDGE

How to Begin

You may use Emergent Knowledge for any problem you might wish to resolve, goal you'd like to achieve, or decision you need to make.

It is best to work with a pencil and paper, as the information is ephemeral and slips away like a dream when we awake from sleep. Begin where you are. Set the intention of the session by asking and answering:

“What do you want?” The outcome will be a “Want Statement.”

For Example: *I want to be able to study without anxiety.*

Repeat the statement three times, silently or out loud. The question series should be done quickly without analysis even though some responses may not make sense. These actions hone intuitive receptiveness and trust in the process.

[1] Now ask yourself: What is the first thing I know about that? Record the response.

[2] And what else? Record response.

[3] And what else? Record response.

[4] And what else? Record response.

[5] And what else? Record response.

[6] And what else? Record response.

[7] And what do I know now that I didn't know before? [WDIKN?] Record response.

The answer to WDIKN? is known as the “Proclamation Statement”.

It is important not to reject or second-guess the responses that comes up, even if you don't understand them. There is time to reflect on the answers after the session is completed.

Below are three individual's records. The first deals with an outer relationship, the second with an internal emotional concern, and third for deepening insight.

“Nancy”

Want Statement: *I want to get along with my co-worker Jim.*

[1] What is the first thing you know about that? *He makes me defensive.*

[2] And what else? *I’m anxious.*

[3] And what else? *I freeze.*

[4] And what else? *He is brash to everyone.*

[5] And what else? *It isn’t just about me.*

[6] And what else? *It’s about who he is.*

[7] And what do I know now that I didn’t know before? **Proclamation Statement:**

I don’t have to like him to work with him. All I have to do is to remember this.

“Bob”

Want Statement: *I want be less anxious about the future.*

[1] What is the first thing you know about that? *I am always anxious.*

[2] And what else? *I’m like my father.*

[3] And what else? *It’s tiring and it doesn’t help.*

[4] And what else? *I can’t know outcomes.*

[5] And what else? *Just do the best I can.*

[6] And what else? *I need to trust myself.*

[7] And what do I know now that I didn’t know before? **Proclamation Statement:**

The only thing I can really do is to take care of whatever situation I’m in, the best I can.

In addition to Emergent Knowledge being used for problem resolution, it can be applied beneficially for gaining insight and deepening understanding. Below is an example.

“Jean”

Want Statement: *I want to understand the meaning of autonomy more deeply.*

[1] What do I know about autonomy? *It’s my relationship to myself.*

[2] And what else? *It means staying centered in my relationship to the world.*

[3] And what else? *I lose connection with it when I worry about what others think.*

[4] And what else? *I’m ineffective when that occurs.*

[5] And what else? *I need to recognize that more quickly.*

[6] And what else? *See what actions I must take to regain balance and the proper relationship to the world.*

[7] And what do I know now that I didn’t know before? **Proclamation Statement:**

My sense of autonomy is dependent on the level of awareness I maintain in my interactions with the world.

The responses to the examples above may seem questionable to you, but they were intimate glimpses for Nancy, Bob, and Jean for their own understanding. The answers are always idiosyncratic. Your work only has to be meaningful to you. When it is, you may change and your relationship to the world can change.

A few weeks after their Emergent Knowledge session, Nancy, Bob, and Jean were asked to write a brief report on any changes they may have experienced.

Nancy reported:

“I didn’t notice any change for the first couple of days back to work. Then I read again the Post Emergent Knowledge Session Process (*outlined below*) and found it very helpful. When I said I didn’t see any changes, there actually were some. The “habit energies” confused me. Then I noticed that I was able to stay steady when they did arise. What I mean by that is, I felt less defensive in his presence even though my stomach still tightened when first encountering him. Knowing that I was able to get past the discomforting feelings, I could think beyond them. What I mean by that is I could be more present in the circumstance, not freeze. The habit energies slowly ebbed to nothing. Also, I was more able to observe how other co-workers react to him. It was obvious many have ill feelings toward Jim. That actually made me feel sorry for him. Anyway, in just over a month or so, the situation is really different in ways I never thought could be possible. I feel more relaxed at work. I actually don’t dislike him, although he can still be irritating. We are not friends outside the office, but feel I am better able to get along with him as a co-worker.”

Bob Reported:

“I feel more relaxed in my body, even when thinking about the future.
I can have thoughts about the future without feeling overwhelmed.
I don’t just start imagining crises all the time.
I feel more comfortable with the unknown when thinking about the future.
I feel more engaged with my life as it is now.
Over all, I do feel less anxious. All I can say about that is, Wow!”

Jean Reported:

In the weeks since my Emergent Knowledge session on Autonomy, I’ve noticed feeling more confident in social encounters. This was true even in instances of meeting new people, which always made me more nervous than I thought I should be feeling. I guess I’m just more confident in myself. I find I’m much less concerned about what others think of me. It’s not that I don’t care. It’s just that I’m not preoccupied by that. This feels significant to me.

Post Emergent Knowledge Session Process

Emergent Knowledge requires observational skills after a session. The changes need to be noted to gain the full benefit of the process, especially soon after a session is completed. The dynamics we may choose to work on can have long-standing tendencies that frustrate us. There tends to be an energy to their arising that is automatic that doesn't disappear immediately after working on it. These are called "habit energies." It takes keen attention to note the differences. This is difficult because we are used to the dynamic arising and may mistakenly assume the session was unproductive. Attention is needed to notice the subtle difference in our responses.

When it is just the 'habit energy' we find that their arising does not elicit our habitual response to it. It doesn't go to the same place in us. We do not get upset in the usual way. The quicker and more frequently we can observe this, assists in the energy dissipating until it no longer arises.

The stages to work and observe after Proclamation are:

Discerning Differences – There can be an odd sensation of disorientation, that is not unpleasant. It feels curious to be free of the afflictive energy of the problem. Yet, the change is not articulated specifically. It may feel vague and amorphous.

Clarifying Details – We can name and identify how the differences manifest. The residue of the resolved problem is more easily dealt with. Freedom from it becomes the new way of sensing the self.

Acceptance – Requires enough time living the changes to accept they are enduring. One can fully grasp the significance of the transition from the problematic symptom.

Relief & Comfort – Issues forth a recognition of a change of behavior. To be free from the habit energy of the dynamic worked on brings a sense of relief and gratitude.

Naturalness - Living without the discomfort of the original dynamic, sometimes finding it to be difficult to even remember the problem. One can live freed from the boundary of limitations the dynamic created. Naturalness is activated awareness, with unencumbered activity as the outcome.

When working with the process, you may find that the first three responses may come quite easily. The information is not surprising or particularly inspiring. For the most part, it tends to be what we cognitively already know. At step 4 [what David Grove called "the wobble"] there may be a pause before the next response. It is easy to feel that there is no more information available. Hold your nonjudgmental awareness and wait patiently for the response to come. It will. Steps 4, 5, and 6 present the information that offers deeper understanding.

It is essential not to reflect on responses until after Step 7 is completed. In Steps 1—7 reflections will inhibit the smooth flow of the process. The information derived at Step 7 can be used as the “Want Statement” of another Emergent Knowledge round of inquiry, if you intuitively feel the round is incomplete. The deeper you drill down with a series of inquiries, the more meaningful the understanding and subsequent change. When doing more than one round, use the meaning of Proclamation Statement to form the Want Statement of the next round. “Six rounds” is called a series and usually leads to in-depth understanding and change.

The more you work with Emergent Knowledge the easier it will flow, but Step 4 will usually to be a turning point.

A Practice Emergent Knowledge Session

CREATE A WANT STATEMENT [A STATEMENT OF INTENTION]

[1] What is the first thing I know about that? Record response.

[2] And what else? Record response.

[3] And what else? Record response.

[4] And what else? Record response.

[5] And what else? Record response.

[6] And what else? Record response.

[7] WHAT DO I KNOW NOW THAT I DIDN'T KNOW BEFORE? [WDIKN]
[PROCLAMATION STATEMENT] RECORD RESPONSE.

III. DOCUMENTATION OF EMERGENT KNOWLEDGE

All information connected with the Emergent Knowledge session should be documented using the Emergent Knowledge Documentation sheet. Practitioners should carry a notebook so that thoughts and reflections that arise can be recorded and later transferred to the documentation sheet.

I. The required information includes:

1. An identified, observed, and studied problem.
2. A Want Statement (s) based on the problem (or a WDIKN responses in multiple round sessions)
3. Response to each of the six questions
4. Answer(s) to a WDIKN question(s)
5. All intuitions, reflections, and inferences that arise during and after formation of the Proclamation Statement

II. Recording Information

1. Enter information about the problem to be used in the top row boxes.
2. Formulate a Want Statement based on the problem and enter in Round 1 “Want Statement.”
3. Record each response.
4. Enter Round 1 answer to WDIKN. If this is the completion of the session, enter the WDIKN answer in Proclamation.
5. For multiple round sessions, formulate a want statement using the previous Round’s WDIKN. Then repeat items 3 & 4.
6. For multiple round sessions, the Proclamation Statement is the last WDIKN.

Documenting captures ephemeral insights and provides the framework for gauging progress, introspection, and in time, reveals hidden relationships. The thoroughness and accuracy of the documentation of information determines the depth and speed of the assimilation of benefits from the session.

EMERGENT KNOWLEDGE DOCUMENTATION

What is the problem??	How does the problem affect me?	What triggers the problem?			
Round 1 Want Statement	Round 2 Want Statement	Round 3 Want Statement	Round 4 Want Statement	Round 5 Want Statement	Round 6 Want Statement
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
WDIKN	WDIKN	WDIKN	WDIKN	WDIKN	WDIKN
Proclamation	Discerning	Clarifying	Acceptance	Relief and	Naturalness

IV. IMPORTANT POINTS IN EMERGENT KNOWLEDGE

I. Before Emergent Knowledge Questioning

Cultivate a deep and wide understanding of all aspects of the problem that has your attention. Take time to thoroughly grasp the effects of the problem on your life, and only then formulate a Want Statement.

II. During Emergent Knowledge Questioning

Approach Emergent Knowledge sessions with a calm deliberate mind. Cultivate awareness of the intimate spot where the information arises. Ask the questions as described and record the responses without analysis or reflection. Upon completion of the six questions ask and answer the WDIKN question, and write out the Proclamation Statement for that round.

III. Major Points of Understanding after the Emergent Knowledge Session

David Grove's teaching on Emergent Knowledge ended at the writing of the Proclamation Statement. However, in Enhanced Emergent Knowledge, two additional sections have been devised that offer a means to refine the beneficial effects summarized in the Proclamation Statement. They are introspective methods that instruct practitioners to integrate the freedom that results from their resolution.

Each of the stages performs two services:

1. Summarizes the action and effects of the process.
2. Supplies direction for correct orientation. Each label is associated with an expansive introspection and a proper alignment with the process, providing correct guidance in transformation of mental afflictions.

The first section offers a means to integrate the freedom gained from Emergent Knowledge questioning. It is a step-by-step method that directs how to reduce leftover habit energies, remnants of the problem identified in the Want Statement that may continue to arise.

ADDED SECTION 1 - INTEGRATING FREEDOM [BLUE ON DOCUMENTATION SHEET]

1. Discerning Differences focuses on the comparison of the Want Statement to present emotional and intellectual circumstances, and to notice the presence, frequency, and intensity level of habit energies.
2. Clarifying Details: Continues the work of Discerning Differences. The practitioner clearly articulates observed differences, appreciating and enjoying them.

3. Acceptance: Acknowledges the enduring quality of the changes and weakening of habit energies.
4. Relief and Comfort: Practitioners note that habit energies associated with the problem identified in the Want Statement do not arise.

ADDED SECTION 2 - LIVING FREEDOM [RED ON DOCUMENTATION SHEET]

Naturalness: Living freely without memory or encumbrance of the problem described in the Want Statement. Unencumbered activity is the normal state of affairs.

V. RECURRING THEMES IN EMERGENT KNOWLEDGE

Attributes of Emergent Knowledge

1. Provides the foundation for identifying problems that cause emotional affliction and/or mental confusion.
2. Provides the means to clarify the source of environmental triggers of identified problems.
3. The six questions bring the practitioner to a transformation and a psychophysical shift that uproots the problem.
4. Provides an initial awakening that presents the pathway to freedom.
5. The Proclamation Statement captures and summarizes the answers to the Emergent Knowledge six questions.
6. The process gives equal value to rational inquiry and intuitive response.
7. Prepares the practitioner for the integration of freedom and the creation of harmony of the Personal and Universal Aspects of Mind.
8. Removal of obstruction provides a means of healing.
9. With mature experience, the resolution process moves with increased speed.

Emergent Knowledge qualities to be developed and cultivated

1. Do it on your own: Practitioners should develop confidence in their own abilities.
2. Develop a sense of composure: Practitioners should practice with unfaltering calm, not beset by confusion and worries. *[Don't be confused by the confusion.]*
3. Be neither tense nor slack: Being tense impregnates the mind with anxiety; being slack opens the door to torpor.
4. Do not seek a particular emotional feel: Awareness should proceed without requiring a particular "taste"; there is no value in adding or subtracting from an experience.
5. Abandon efforts of only intellectual understanding: *trust intuition and insights.*
6. Establish and cultivate a continuity of awareness: Fully engage with each inquiry and response.
7. Understand, refine, and integrate the essence of the Proclamation Statement.
8. Follow the process to completion: Understand and follow the five-fold elements of mental discipline, concentration, insight, liberation, and living freely.

VI. BACKGROUND MATERIAL OF ENHANCED EMERGENT KNOWLEDGE⁴

Shakyamuni Buddha's teaching can be summarized in one sentence, "I teach the nature of *dukkha* and its cessation." Putting his teaching into practice requires knowledge of what constitutes *dukkha* and how to bring about cessation.

A famous story illustrates the nature of *dukkha* and the correct orientation to its manifestation. A man has been shot with an arrow, and it is very painful for him. It is necessary to remove the arrow from his body order to relieve his pain. It is not necessary to understand who shot the arrow, what wood the arrow was made out of, what bird the feathers came from, or anything else like that to relieve the pain. Similarly, in Emergent Knowledge, it is enough to understand what the problem is, and use that knowledge as a foundation. Interpretation and analysis during the inquiry and response portion of Emergent Knowledge are of no help, offering only adverse interruptions.

Cessation is accomplished using the Emergent Knowledge skillful means with six inquiries about a Want Statement, documenting the responses, and answering the WDIKN question that results in the formation of the Proclamation Statement.

Emergent Knowledge questioning assumes the nature of the universe is a hologram described in ancient Indian lore as Indra's Net.

Far away in the heavenly abode of the great god Indra, there is a wonderful net that has been hung by some cunning artificer in such a manner that it stretches out infinitely in all directions. In accordance with the extravagant tastes of the deities, the artificer has hung a single glittering jewel in each eye of the net, and since the net itself is infinite in all dimensions, the jewels are infinite in number. There hang the jewels, glittering like stars of the first magnitude, a wonderful sight to behold. If we arbitrarily select one of the jewels for inspection and look closely at it, we will discover that in its polished surface there are reflected all the other jewels in the net, infinite in number. Not only that, but each of the jewels reflected in this one jewel is also reflecting all the other jewels, so that there is an infinite reflecting process occurring.

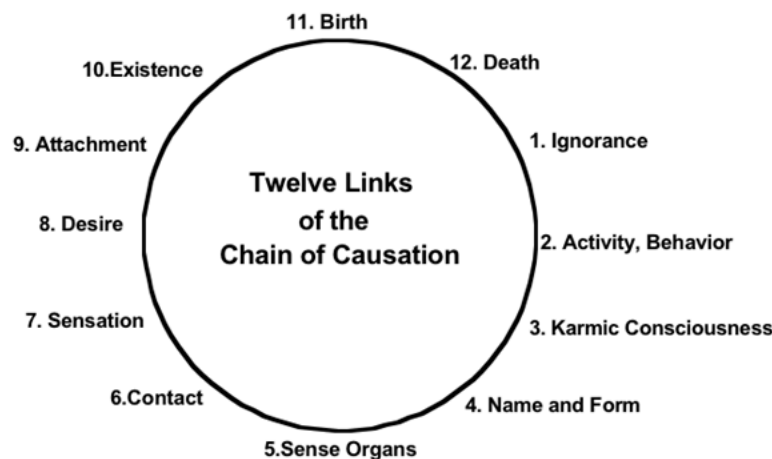
Adhering to the Want Statement and not attempting interpretation or analysis during inquiry/response is equivalent to studying one jewel of Indra's Net. In comprehending one jewel, one relates to all others. This method realizes the one rank of the infinite cosmic network. In doing, a shortcut means is established, avoiding trying to position the infinite number of pieces of the net

into a coherent whole. Instead, one piece is grasped, and intuitive connection with the intricate totality of the net's makeup becomes the new norm of experience.

The following information briefly notes the high points of the process of awakening from the beginning where a life problem is first noticed, through to Naturalness where the conditioned state causing the problem has been resolved, the habit energies no longer manifest, and an unencumbered mind of balance and harmony is achieved.

WHAT IS YOUR PROBLEM?

The Twelve Links is the foundational principle of Buddhist instruction illustrating the cyclical nature of a life unconsciously constrained by causes and conditions. Without conscious intervention, the Twelve Links arises and operates automatically, repeating itself again and again. From the first link of Ignorance culminating in the 11th and 12th of Birth and Death, the functioning of the Twelve Links reveals a dizzying array of mental and emotional states that emerge, exist for a time, and inevitably pass on. Though the phenomena may come to an end, the underlying conditions of the Twelve Links are more basic and continue to exist, with no discernible beginning or end.



The practice of Zazen witnesses the mechanical process of the Twelve Links of the Chain of Causation. A cause triggers the first link of Ignorance (storehouse consciousness), producing pleasant and afflictive outcomes in the second link of Behavior. This goes on and on without stopping unless something is done to intervene. Zazen practice provides knowledge of the mental states produced by Ignorance and its influence on Activity and Behavior. This emerging awareness uncovers the deep truth regarding the operation of the first two links. Observation, coupled with a fundamental awareness, replaces the previously unconscious action of the Twelve Links with an ability to perceive the action of conditioned states. Experiential truth of the nature of conditioned states and their connection with afflictions and awakening moderates the uncertainty and perplexity of ingrained reactive responses.

Of the three kinds of dukkha (physical pain, impermanence as the nature of reality, and conditioned states), we are interested in conditioned states and the afflictive emotions and mental confusion that arise from them. They express themselves automatically with negative emotional tones that are often considered “normal,” because they have existed within us for most or all of our conscious life. Conditioned states leave a painful wake, one of reactive response and disharmony. No amount of well-intended willful action seems to have any permanent effect at alleviating their dynamics, let alone the root cause. Understanding what conditioned states are helps in forming a correct view of our existential dilemma. Zen practice becomes infused with energy, clarity, and direction when coupled with firsthand experience about the form and function of conditioned states.

WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO ABOUT IT?

AND HOW ARE YOU GOING TO DO IT?

“A skill-in-means creates awareness of the Earth-centered buddha-fields. Following the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas’ intuitional guidance, skill-in-means are formulated, developed, and followed. Intuition’s open dialogue facilitates the dynamic interplay of thinking. We may not immediately understand all sides of the opportunities that are presented, but in all of our pursuits dwells a secret force that is guarding us and helping us to live.” Teaching of the 5th Benefactor Mukta of the Flower Ornament Sutra⁵

The Want Statement

The Want Statement is formulated with the knowledge of a conditioned state. The ability to create a Want Statement is based on knowledge of the problem, what it feels like, what are its effects, and what triggers it. It is also beneficial, but not essential, to know where the physical form of the conditioned state is located within the body. Once these factors are known, the next stage is feasible: formation of a Want Statement, a statement of intention to resolve the conditioned state.

“[Using the Want Statement as your guide], the responses you receive will most likely not be in complete sentences. It may be just a single word or a phrase, a memory, a felt sense, or an image. Pay close attention and follow where it leads. See what else comes up about it.”

The Six Inquiries: intuitive understanding arises within each inquiry/response

“This is the process by which we open the conversation with the Universal Aspect of Mind. It takes time to establish trust and rapport to speak that language fluently again.”

The first three inquiry/responses reveal the personal side of the issue; the second three the universal. They should be accomplished without recourse to reflection in any form. Ask the question and document the result. Any other activity will stand in the way of intuitive interaction.

“The difficulty with intuitive knowing is that our intellectual center, from which we primarily operate, doesn’t understand how the information arises. And initially we may have no real clarity as to its meaning. Then we have the tendency to reject the information.”

Transformation and Psychophysical Shift

“Hold whatever arises gently. Watch out for opinions that might minimize your appreciation of what is given. Please don’t reject the “myriad things” that are coming to awaken you.”

The conditioned state is uprooted, resulting in a psychophysical change of being. The awakening has all the capabilities of Buddhahood in nascent forms.

“A moment of awakening is always accompanied by gratitude.”

The Proclamation Statement {What do I know now that I didn’t know before?}

“Openness is the channel that sets up the rapport to that which we are questioning. It is a very creative state. Turning moments are also possible through activities or events. They are experiences that awaken us to deep intimacy with our life.”

The Proclamation Statement summarizes the changes brought about by the six inquiry/responses and the Transformation and Psychophysical Shift. It contains information on the awakening uncovered in Transformation. Choosing to commit to following the Bodhisattva path is made after the Proclamation Statement is completed.

INTEGRATING AWAKENING

“Studying the Dharma is a practice that requires our participation at many levels of experience. What we understand in an intuitive way needs to be integrated. The process of integration thoroughly digests what we have understood intuitively. The mutual refinement is a dance between the Personal and Universal Aspects of Mind.”

Discerning Differences

When the physical or mental remnants of the conditioned state appear, they are experienced as rootless and ephemeral.

The state of being before and after Transformation is compared and the differences noted. Distinctions are recognized between resolved conditioned state and its leftover habit energies.

Clarifying Details

At this stage, the mind-set of freedom unifies itself with the intuitive information.

The practitioner clearly articulates observed differences, appreciating and enjoying them as freedom, while drawing upon them for reflection. The frequency and intensity of habit energies are closely observed.

Acceptance

Acceptance is grounded in the practitioner's trust and confidence in the validity and durability of change.

Practitioners have trust and confidence in the changes, and are able to fully grasp the significance of the transition from the problematic symptom to freedom from affliction and confusion. Habit energies rarely arise and are easily dismissed.

Relief and Comfort

Relief and Comfort is a breakthrough to a change of behavior.

The practitioner relates to the world fully in both its Personal and Universal aspects, conscious of the non-arising of habit energies. Concordant activity of Personal and Universal Aspects of Mind results in balance and harmony.

Naturalness

Abiding in naturalness, one is truly ordinary.

Emergent Knowledge and Zen Practice

by Renshin and Taizen Verkuilen

INTRODUCTION TO EMERGENT KNOWLEDGE AND ZEN PRACTICE

The synthesis of Emergent Knowledge and Zen practice grew out of Renshin's insight into Metaphor Therapy. Two sections of Yogacara teachings – refinement and integration of Thusness and living freely – were added to Grove's original conception to complete the adaptation of Emergent Knowledge for Zen practitioners. These additions changed Emergent Knowledge into a process of inquiry-response dialogue closely matching Zen's traditional teaching means.

The following six sections will explore how the methods of Emergent Knowledge are similar to Zen's traditional process of awakening, review the background principles of Emergent Knowledge, and describe how to apply and document its practice.

SECTION 1 Observing the Critical Phrase: Master Ta-hui's "Short-cut" Method of Koan Introspection

This section offers a description of Ta-hui Tsung-kao's [1089-1163] traditional koan introspection called "observing the critical phrase" [*k'an-hua* Chinese]. His adaptation of early koan introspection methods rekindled Rinzai Zen practice with an originality that continues into the present time. Learning Ta-hui's shortcut method removes unnecessary efforts from the process of awakening, focusing practitioners' minds on what is essential. This recounting of the rejuvenation of 12th century Rinzai Zen is included because of the many equivalencies it has with Emergent Knowledge and our modern circumstances.

SECTION 2 A Description of Emergent Knowledge

The principles of Emergent Knowledge as formulated by David Grove are described along with the basic method of application used in psychotherapy practice. Additions will be made in later chapters that combine it with the Zen process of awakening.

SECTION 3 Commonalities and Contrasts between Observing the Critical Phrase and Emergent Knowledge

The common areas of Master Ta-hui's "shortcut" method and Zen adapted Emergent Knowledge are compared and studied as to how their distinct methodologies arrive at the same objective of awakening.

SECTION 4 The Three Sources of Knowledge: Guiding Principles of Zen Practice

Chinese Zen Master Tsung-mi recounts how the Indian masters of Buddhism declared that Zen practice requires three sources of knowledge – the sutras, the unmediated direct perception of Zazen, and wide-ranging inferential reasoning and introspection. All three are necessary to ensure success in understanding and applying the process of awakening.

SECTION 5 The Nonduality – Resolution Sequence Symbol

The Nonduality – Resolution Sequence Symbol consolidates and expresses in graphical form Tsung-mi's three sources of knowledge. It can be used with any method of Zen practice because the symbol is a universal representation of the process of awakening.

SECTION 6 The Emergent Knowledge Summary Symbol

The Emergent Knowledge / Nonduality – Resolution Sequence Symbol offers a one-page sheet that summarizes the application of Emergent Knowledge. It is a map that contains the principles of Yogacara Buddhism and the Resolution Sequence along with basic directions to implement Emergent Knowledge's method of inquiry.

The 21st century innovation of Emergent Knowledge has similar features of Ta-hui's 12th century modifications of koan practice. They both promise a short-cut method to access awakening through an all-inclusive systematic process. Knowledge of Ta-hui's originality in responding to the creative needs of his time provides helpful guidance and perspective for devising a 21st century skillful means. Section 1 will review Ta-hui's work before Section 2 offers an accounting of Emergent Knowledge.

SECTION 1
OBSERVING THE CRITICAL PHRASE:
MASTER TA-HUI'S "SHORT-CUT" METHOD OF KOAN INTROSPECTION⁶

*"Thousands and ten-thousands of times during the twenty-four hours of the day,
don't allow yourself to waste time: day by day, in your daily venue of activities, know
you are complete and radiant and not the least different from Shakyamuni and
Bodhidharma."*⁷

Zen Master Ta-hui

Nine hundred years ago an old Chinese Zen monk decided to retire to his hometown to spend his last years. Despite his best efforts he had been unable to achieve the goals he set for himself in his youth, leaving him dissatisfied. Just before he left the monastery, a turn of luck came his way. A young colleague counseled him to make one final try with Master Ta-hui who taught a newly improvised short-cut form of koan introspection. The old monk took his advice, sought out and accepted Ta-hui's teaching. This time the old monk's efforts had an effective tool. Ta-hui's short-cut method opened access to sudden awakening and profound realization.

The use of koan introspection became wide spread during the Chinese Sung Dynasty [960-1279]. Teachers of the 10th and 11th centuries compiled collections of stories of the great Zen masters of the T'ang dynasty using them to highlight essential Zen teachings. Each koan depicts a Zen Master's enlightened mind, and is a guide capable of bringing a student to awakening. Scholars suggest two reasons that brought about the formulation and growth of the various forms of koan introspection during Sung Dynasty:

- To provide skillful means appropriate for the needs of the students of that time
- Methods of koan introspection were a natural development out of the creative flowering of Sung Dynasty Zen practice.

Ta-hui was a 12th-century Chinese Zen master, a Dharma holder of the Lin-chi school. He was instrumental in adapting the use of the koan collections, moving their use away from emphasis on discussion and discursive thinking. Ta-hui insisted that the koan's purpose was "to open the eyes of the patch-robed monks of the world," not to act as a literary agent or puzzle.⁸ Observing the critical phrase refuted intellectual understanding as the pinnacle of practice, thus supporting its removal as an obstacle to awakening. To resolve the critical phrase Ta-hui advised,

*"If you want to understand the principle of the short-cut, you must in one fell swoop
break through this one thought – then and only then will you comprehend birth and
death. Then and only then will it will be called accessing awakening...You need
only to lay down, all at once, the mind full of deluded thoughts and inverted thinking,*

the mind of logical discrimination, the mind that loves life and hates death, the mind of knowledge and views, interpretation and comprehension, and the mind that rejoices in stillness and turns from disturbance.”⁹

Only the critical phrase and the direct path to awakening are left after jettisoning the unneeded reflections, mental habits, and deluded thoughts.

Ta-hui trained practitioners to focus on the principal topic or most essential element of the koan case. He declared observing the critical phrase a short-cut leading to sudden awakening. This form of observation identified and centered introspection on the critical phrase rather than attempting to grasp the entire koan at once. Observing the critical phrase helped keep attention on the immediate moment, locked into the unfolding of the immediate moment. Koan introspection emerged following Ta-hui's creative alteration as a honed contemplative tool for realizing our innate ability to awaken.

Ta-hui recognized ordinary life as the ideal venue for the practice of observing the critical phrase. He taught that observing the critical phrase is best practiced amid the typical responsibilities, encounters, uncertainties, and afflictions of ordinary life. Monastery life offers a controlled lifestyle exempt from the cares of family, employment, and earning a living. A layperson's place in the world furnishes learning opportunities a monk's life cannot provide. Lay practitioners who adopt observing the critical phrase recognize its transformative nature as well as its ability to remove barriers to intuitive insight. The critical phrase consists of “live words” that leads to awakening, in contrast to “dead words” that lead only to intellectual understanding. Repeated introspection of the critical phrase catalyzes awareness of awakening enabling the growth of the accompanying liberating tension of “doubt.” The force of doubt intensifies samadhi insight to the degree that ultimately brings about the realization of Thusness.

Ta-hui taught the way of the critical phrase as a deliberate and diligent engagement with the process of awakening rather than an attempt to “storm the ramparts.” Sudden awakening shows up in an instant, but subsequent gradual cultivation penetrates the body and mind, slowly developing the nascent Thusness.

SECTION 2

A DESCRIPTION OF EMERGENT KNOWLEDGE

“Don’t ignore intuitive tickles lest they reappear as sledgehammers.”
Tenzing Norbu in Gay Hendricks’ *“The First Rule of Ten”*

Given the proven value of Ta-hui’s observing the critical phrase, why do we need new ways to accomplish breakthrough? Many Sanghas use koans, but not all students benefit from that particular path of awakening. Practitioners, especially lay adherents, would greatly profit if another breakthrough alternative existed, a method that by intended design follows in exact harmony with a practitioner’s particular path of awakening. Emergent Knowledge is like that; it is a process that begins with an identified conditioned state, followed by an unambiguous method that never deviates from a practitioner’s immediate need.

Many contemporary Zen practitioners are in the same position of the old monk mentioned in the previous section; transformation eludes them despite their conscientious sincerity. Study and practice often times do not yield the full results they most earnestly seek. Like in Ta-hui’s time, innovation is necessary. Our culture of college, family life, literacy, scientific education, and corporate employment necessitates adaptation of traditional teaching methods. These new forms must supply increased flexibility to cultivate the dynamic process of Zen Buddhist awakening for lay practitioners within their demanding fast-paced lives.

Emergent Knowledge is an introspective method of studying the self that relies solely on an individual’s insight, intuition, tacit knowledge, and inherent purity. It is a process compatible with Zen study. The skills necessary for Zen practice are the same as those required for Emergent Knowledge: clarity of intention and nonjudgmental attention. Emergent Knowledge offers unlimited potential for beneficial change, both subtle and profound. Its systematic approach provides an accessible means to move from coping with afflictive emotions associated with conditioned states, to freedom from them achieved through the process of transformation. By means of an explicit system of investigation known as Clean Language, intuitive information arises and gives form and clarity to a practitioner’s engagement with the process of awakening. Generating, developing, and integrating this information need not be a mystery or left to happenstance.

Clean Language is a psycho-linguistic method of questioning an individual’s inner life, accessing information uncontaminated by interpretation from either the facilitator or practitioner. This form of inquiry enables intimate dialogue free of interjection of assumptions and presuppositions. The pioneering psychotherapist David Grove developed it in the 1980’s. He discovered that questions that least interfered with a client’s experience were in fact the most effective in bringing about meaningful change. Clean Language is a user-based method of investigation that neither taints nor

distorts information arising during questioning. Grove subsequently fine-tuned Clean Language into a limited number of precisely worded questions for use with Emergent Knowledge. The process allowed the role of the facilitators and practitioners to stay “clean,” and not unconsciously project their unresolved issues and interpretations.

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Clean Language was first used in Grove’s Metaphor Therapy and Cosmology of Space, but later its essential elements were adapted for his facilitator-free process of Emergent Knowledge. Emergent Knowledge amended for Zen practice offers the means to approach problems or goals practitioners would like to resolve or achieve. Emergent Knowledge’s “clean” precise rules of questioning are a simple reproducible information-centered approach that:

- Helps to foster a state of concentration necessary to observe the response without recourse to analysis
- Avoids contamination of the practitioner’s experience
- Resonates with practitioner’s experience
- Assists in the transformation of psychophysical imagery into words or the other way around
- Establishes and cultivates an open and intimate dialogue between the Personal and Universal Aspects of Mind

The typical Emergent Knowledge session contains these steps:

I. A conditioned state is identified and observed. Practitioners become familiar with what triggers it, as well as the thoughts, feelings, and reactive responses associated with it.¹⁰

It is essential to become thoroughly acquainted with the all aspects of the conditioned state. Becoming conversant with the way it manifests provides a firm foundation for clean questioning, and later aids when making “before and after” comparisons.

II. Formulation of a “want statement” based on awareness of the effects of a conditioned state or a spiritual issue.

The want statement is a “this moment” manifestation of a practitioner’s Natural Koan. The want statement can take two forms:

- “I want to be free from...?” [a conditioned state that results in an afflictive emotion (*klesha*)]
- “I want to learn more about...?” [a desire for expanded knowledge about an insight]

Here are three examples:

I want to be free of nervousness in public speaking.

I want to understand spiritual authority.

I want to understand the meaning of autonomy more deeply.

III. Emergent Knowledge Questioning

Read the want statement slowly three times to focus attention. [The answers to the questions should be done without analysis. It is important not to reject or second-guess the response that comes up, even if you don't understand the response. There is time to reflect on the answers after the session is completed.]

1. Now ask yourself: *What is the first thing I know about that?* Record the response.
2. And what else? Record response.
3. And what else? Record response.
4. And what else? Record response.
5. And what else? Record response.
6. And what else? Record response.
7. And what do I know now that I didn't know before? [WDIKN] Record response.

IV. The Proclamation Statement

The Proclamation Statement captures the information generated by the six questions, “proclaiming” the nature of the transformational change of being. The answer to the seventh question of “What do I know now that I did not know before? [WDIKN?] summarizes the changes effected by the six intuitional responses.

1. The Proclamation Statement gives equal value to rational inquiry and the intuitive response.
2. Its content is the foundation for the integration of freedom.
3. The Proclamation Statement defines the beginning of Reconstruction [the path of the Bodhisattva]
 - a. Refinement of commitment to the process of awakening
 - b. Eradication of leftover habit energies
 - c. Set the stage for naturalizing the creative interplay of the Personal and Universal Aspects of Mind.
4. When mature practice is achieved, the resolution process moves with increased speed.

SECTION 3
COMMONALITIES AND CONTRASTS BETWEEN
OBSERVING THE CRITICAL PHRASE AND EMERGENT KNOWLEDGE

“Effortless knowledge arises from the Universal Mind, bestowed like a gift.”

Flower Ornament Sutra

In Buddhist terms, the intent of Grove’s method is almost identical to the first of the three legs of Yogacara Buddhism’s process of awakening – resolving conditioned states. Emergent Knowledge was adapted for Zen practice by adding the second and third legs of integrating and living the freedom of Thusness. These additions expanded Grove’s system resulting in a skillful means similar in function and outcome to Ta-hui’s observing the critical phrase. The following describes their shared and contrasting features.

I. How the critical phrase and the want statement are applied

In observing the critical phrase, a fragment of a case is chosen that captures the heart of the story’s meaning. The teacher chooses the case and critical phrase based on the disciple’s need of the moment. For example, the Eleventh Case of the *Blue Cliff Record* – Huang Po’s *Gobbler of Dregs* – states:

Huang Po, instructing the community said, “All of you are gobblers of dregs, if you go around this way where will you have Today? Do you know that there are no teachers of Ch’an in all of China?”

At that time a monk came forward and said, “Then what about those in various places who order followers and lead communities?”

Huang Po said, I do not say there is no Ch’an; it’s just that there are no teachers.”¹¹

In this example the teacher may instruct the disciple to use “*there are no teachers*” as the critical phrase and the practitioner incorporates it into their daily practice. The phrase becomes the foundation of the thinking, reflection, analysis, and relationship, guiding the maturation of the disciple’s spiritual vision. The teacher’s role is to validate transformation but otherwise remain apart from judgment or interpretation.

In Emergent Knowledge, the practitioner writes a want statement that sets the intention of the session. The wording of the want statement contains the conditioned state and the desired outcome. The want statement is used to formulate the first Clean Language inquiry. For example: a want statement may be, “*I want to understand the meaning of autonomy more deeply.*” The questioning of the session then goes on. After the session the want statement and sense of change produced by the questioning are used as the foundations for the “before and after” comparisons.

Critical phrase introspection and Emergent Knowledge inquiry share the common feature of taking a small bite of the apple, not trying to swallow the whole apple at once. Ta-hui identifies one main topic of the koan and works with it; Emergent Knowledge singles out the conditioned state presently under observation and formulates the initiating want statement.

The assignment of the critical phrase and developing the want statement both recognize and cultivate the dawning of the Universal Aspect of Mind within the Personal Aspect. Traces of the Universal Mind are sought and found, verifying and expanding the understanding of the fecund relationship of the conditioned state (the mundane) and awakening (the sacred). This action is described as bringing the Universal to the Personal, the first and second awakenings. After sudden awakening, the Universal and Personal Aspects of Mind interact with fewer obstructions; this situation is described as bringing the Personal to the Universal, the third and fourth awakenings. Daily life attention with the critical phrase or want statement reveals their complementary transformative activity.

II. Repeated introspection of the critical phrase or questioning the want statement produces sudden awakening, the natural outcome of observation/inquiry.

Application of the methods of observing the critical phrase and the questioning of the want statement develops continuity of awareness. The Informal Mind of sitting (meditation in stillness) combined with the Formal Mind of right mindfulness (meditation in movement) helps to establish and cultivate a continuity of awareness in both areas.¹²

III. Both observing the critical phrase and Emergent Knowledge produce creative tension that undermines habitual rational processes.

A penetrating insight cuts through confusion, doubt, and insecurity, opening the road to the sought after sudden awakening. Confused states of mind are uprooted and the source and power of compulsive habits are identified and eliminated.

IV. Accessing and employing intuitive information uncontaminated by interpretation

In observing the critical phrase, the teacher assigns the case and phrase and then steps away allowing the disciple to find their own way, trusting in their inherent wisdom. This avoids corrupting the process with any attempt at helping with misguided interpretation.

In Emergent Knowledge practitioners define the want statement and ask the questions. *This method remains pure and unadulterated if the practitioners maintain the unity of the inquiry-response process by not analyzing the intuitive non-conceptual information as it arises from within the Universal Aspect of Mind.*

V. Ta-hui called the critical phrase a short-cut to sudden awakening. Emergent Knowledge quickly resolves conditioned states, its version of sudden awakening.

Both methods can be named short-cuts for a number of reasons, chief of which is cutting out the need for a lengthy and difficult education to acquire expertise in Buddhist concepts and practice techniques. Special knowledge and expertise are not necessary but can be learned and employed if so desired. Practitioners need only to learn the basics of sudden awakening by the use of the critical phrase and clean language questions, and cultivating them step-by-step after breakthrough.

VI. Kyogai – a demonstrable truth

And finally, there is kyogai, the way in which a koan affects your consciousness—in other words, the effect that it has on your life. This is ultimately where it counts.

Because no matter how many hundreds of koans you pass through, if they do not change the way you relate to the rest of the world, then they are nothing but intellectual exercises. —John Daido Loori

What is Kyogai?

- Kyogai is the real-life affirmation of transformative change.
- Both observing the critical phrase and Emergent Knowledge remove karmic barriers to effecting and living the changes.

After removal of obstructions by the use of observing the critical phrase or Emergent Knowledge, practitioners realize these changes in their kyogai:

- Reduction of self-consciousness, capable of appropriately responding without hesitancy
- Has the ability to demonstrate understanding without resorting to explanations
- Growth in kyogai shows in fluency in behavior
- Kyogai means oneness with the incipient moment
- It is authentic activity itself, devoid of emotional bondage

SECTION 4
THE THREE SOURCES OF KNOWLEDGE:
GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF ZEN PRACTICE

*“Indian Masters always held to three sources of knowledge.
Of the three, most Chan lineages have direct perception and inference.
They must seal them with the third source, the sutras.”¹³*

Zen Master Tsung-mi

The Indian Masters share the common assertion that three sources of knowledge are needed within Buddhist practice. Zen lineages generally teach Inference and Direct Perception, but often lack the anchoring experience of the Sutras. This situation is commonplace in Western Zen training facilities. Practitioners receive instruction in meditation techniques, but their efforts are often left ungrounded from the basic principles contained in the Sutras. The Three Sources must coincide in order for experience to be whole and complete. In other words, Inference and Direct Perception in meditation must be validated using the recognized standards of the Sutras. Then certainty arises becoming the foundation for subsequent insights by reducing the chance of erroneous conclusions.

The following simile of fire illustrates the nature of the three sources and the three ways we relate to them.

1. First, a practitioner gains knowledge of fire – that is learning of the teachings, the authoritative Buddha’s Word contained in the Sutras.
2. Second, seeing smoke caused by the fire – infers the reality of teachings through the application of reason.
3. Then, seeing the fire – experiencing the living reality of the teachings: Direct Perception.

What follows are brief descriptions of the three sources of knowledge:

I. The Sutras

The teachings of Shakyamuni Buddha were captured in the Sutras and preserved for our use. They are known as “Buddha’s Word” because they express the authoritative explanations of the teachings. They serve as models by which to discern the false and correct. Some sutras express provisional teachings while others teach how to experience wisdom. We must rely on their complementary wholeness to understand the complete meaning of Buddha’s teachings.

II. Inferential Introspection

Inferential thinking is reasoning in the form of deductions, inductions, conjectures, conclusions, speculation, reflection, logic, analysis, interpretation, explanation, and rationalization. Inferential thinking describes principles of the teachings, not the Dharma. Practitioners must be proficient in distinguishing principles and Dharma. Principles are products of conceptual thought; the Dharma arises from within non-conceptual knowing.

III. Direct Perception

Direct Perception is the phenomenal world [Personal] meeting true Dharma nature [Universal]. In Zen, practitioners are introduced and become familiar with this meeting in the practice of Zazen. In Zazen, practice and realization are one. Our body and mind attain balance and harmony with the correct application of the direct perception of Zazen. However, Master Tsung-mi cautions: “If one takes direct perception to be definitive by itself, and does not consult the sutras, how would that individual know how to anchor their experience to the true?”

SECTION 5

THE NONDUALITY – RESOLUTION SEQUENCE SYMBOL

*Without an outer teacher, the Resolution Sequence acts as
an inner guide to minimize missteps and encourage diligence.¹⁴*

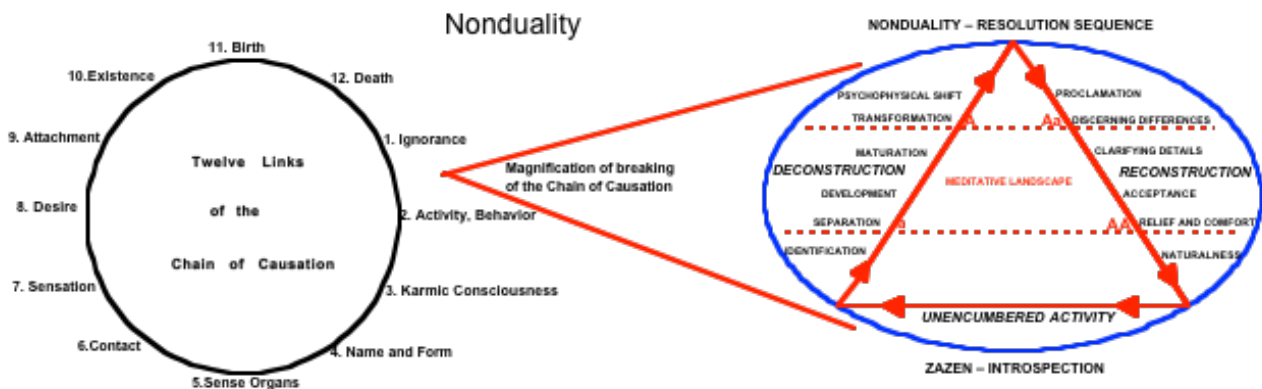
Emergent Knowledge sessions can be conducted without knowledge of the Nonduality – Resolution Sequence Symbol, but using them together enhances the results of the introspective efforts and the accuracy of documentation.

The symbol titled “Nonduality – Resolution Sequence,” graphically displays the process of dynamic change, the wholeness of being, and the wisdom of Nonduality. The purpose of the symbol is to provide support for the development of an individual undertaking Zen practice, and to act as a lifelong guide as one treads the path of awakening. The Nonduality – Resolution Sequence Symbol is like most other symbols; it encapsulates a broad understanding of many concepts and processes into a shorthand yet meaningful visual form. It is an invitation to the practitioner to invest energy in exploring and attaining a wide and deep mastery of Buddhist thought and experience.

Learning and employing the Nonduality – Resolution Sequence Symbol can help keep practitioners on track, even when a close relationship with a teacher is not at hand. The relationships contained within the symbol have the ability to paint a picture that is easily remembered and applicable to many varied internal and external life conditions. The symbol presents an opportunity to grasp the field of study as a whole, acting as a roadmap pointing the way, as well as providing a persistent stimulus against falling into naïve mental states. Resourceful introspection is an active contribution to the process of awakening.

The Three Sources of Knowledge of sutra teachings, direct perception, and inference are embedded in the process symbol.

I. Sutra guidance – symbolized Yogacara Teachings



The process of awakening is symbolized above. The symbol graphically displays the teachings of Yogacara Buddhism along with the inferential introspection of the Resolution Sequence. Both Yogacara and the Resolution Sequence teach a means of transformation of consciousness based on accessing and employing intuitive information uncontaminated by interpretation by either the teacher or disciple. This blended model offers creative means of understanding and fulfilling the process of awakening.

The fundamental Yogacara Buddhist concepts are listed below using distinct descriptors for each: ‘0’ for Twelve Links of the Chain of Causation, ‘1’ for Nonduality, ‘2’ for Dualistic pairs, ‘3’ for the Three Aspects of Awakening, ‘4’ for the Four Awakenings, and ‘8’ for the eight components of Alayavijñāna storehouse consciousness.¹⁵ This method aids in memorizing them, and shows how the symbol captures their relationship and interaction.

‘0’ The reality of the Twelve Links of the Chain of Causation symbolized by the circle and names of the stages

- Conditioned states arise from within Alayavijñāna storehouse consciousness. They manifest as Ignorance, the 1st link of the Chain of Causation, and influence the 2nd link of Activity and Behavior
- A synonym for Ignorance (in the Buddhist sense) is Potentiality from within all forms of conditioning arises
- Though the causes of phenomena inevitably come to an end, the underlying conditions of the Twelve Links are more basic and have no discernible beginning or end.

‘1’ The inclusive ellipse symbolizes Nonduality

- The totality of all physical and mental activities, good and bad, pleasant and distasteful, etc., are contained within the ellipse
- All Activity and Behavior contained within the ellipse can be viewed with Zen-magnified awareness

‘2’ Dualistic pairs are symbolized by the ellipse that requires two focus points in order to draw it.

- All dualistic pairs such as delusion and enlightenment, and conditioned states and awakening, are complementary pairs
- The Personal and Universal Aspects of Mind are a complementary pair that together constitute an individual
- Nonduality is the complementary sum of dualistic pairs
- Daily life reflects the creative interplay of the complementary pair of conditioned states and their associated mental afflictions and awakening.

‘3’ Three Aspects of Awakening – the equilateral triangle depicts the three aspects of awakening

- The activity body of Nirmanakaya (Deconstruction): resolving conditioned states and gaining liberation – intuitive perception
- The reward body of Sambhogakaya (Reconstruction): integrating and refining gained freedom – cultivating and living the changes
- The reality body of Dharmakaya (Unencumbered Activity): living freedom – realization
- The three bodies are inseparable, of equal value, and engage in intimate and unending relations

‘4’ Four Awakenings – awakenings take place where the lines of Meditative Awareness intersect the sides of the triangle

Deconstruction

- Ability to observe the operation of a conditioned state **‘a’**
- Resolution of a conditioned state results in freedom from the confinement of afflictive emotions associated with it, replaced by the liberation of thusness **‘A’**

Reconstruction

- Ability to observe and begin the integration of the changes, and to fully embody the transformative change of being **‘Aa’**
- Recognition that changes are completely integrated making responses to life natural and in accord with the needs of oneself and others. **‘AA’**

‘8’ Alayavijñāna Storehouse Consciousness

Yogacara Buddhism teaches that within the storehouse consciousness an infinite number of possibilities exist in inactive storage, each one capable of becoming conscious. Conditioning associated with the personal and universal character of every being, when triggered brings about a change in conscious behavior and activity, with pleasant or adverse results. Some outcomes can be understood in a personal way, because they can be related to actions or experience of the existing person. The others that cannot be understood personally are rooted in the universal, and the mystery of time clouds their source. Understanding personal conditioned states allows a tie back to this-life experience; the universal conditioning presents a daunting gap; effects are clear and obvious but with no discernible connection within the life experience of the living person.

II. The Direct Perception of Zazen¹⁶

The practice Zazen pictured as the “Meditative Landscape” consists of three components:

1. The fundamental awareness of the Personal Aspect of Mind
2. The response by the Universal Aspect of Mind aroused by the stimulus of willful awareness
3. The complementary relationship of the Personal and Universal Aspects of Mind that manifests as intuitive perception, otherwise known as Prajna, Wisdom, or Thusness.

Shakyamuni Buddha taught in the Lankavatara Sutra that in Buddhist meditation the intuitive mind, also known as the faculty of intuition, arises from the purity of the Universal Aspect of Mind, and acts as the mediator between the Personal and Universal Aspects of Mind.

The essential activity of introspection of the Clean Language questions of Emergent Knowledge cultivates the relationship of the Personal and Universal Aspects of Mind. The five step-by-step statements below summarize how the relationship of the Personal and Universal Aspects matures from a practitioner’s first acknowledgement of the Universal, and develops in time into a dialogue of unobstructed harmony.

1. Recognizing the reality of the Universal Aspect of Mind – the experiential reality of conditioned states
2. Establishing an intuitive engagement with the Universal Aspect of Mind – observation of the relationship of conditioned states and awakening
3. Attaining an open relationship with the Universal Mind – resolution of a conditioned state
4. The Personal and Universal Aspects of Mind intimately communicate refining the Personal Aspect of Mind – the inner dialogue becomes natural and beneficial
5. The Personal and Universal Aspects of Mind act in unobstructed harmony – Unencumbered Activity

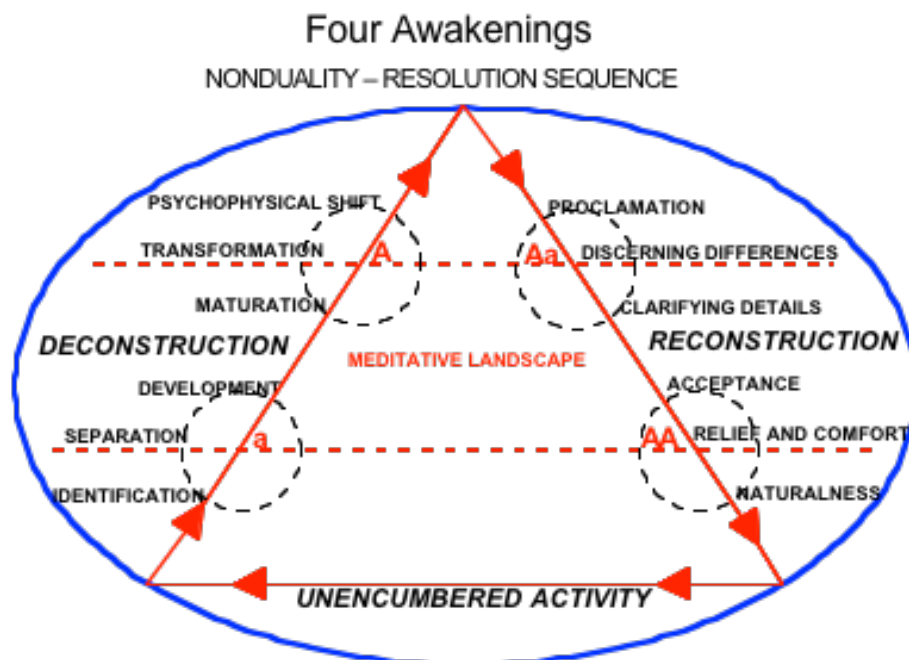
III. Inference and the Resolution Sequence¹⁷

The Resolution Sequence is an expedient to self-discovery, developed using Grove's Metaphor Therapy and the basic principles of Yogacara Buddhism. It provides a detailed description and step-by-step explanation of the process of awakening. The Resolution Sequence is made up of twelve stages that elaborate the three processes of awakening of Deconstruction, Reconstruction, and Unencumbered Activity, detailing and directing the operation of the four awakenings.

Each awakening consists of three elements of the Resolution Sequence – one that prepares the ground, the awakening itself, and the third that validates its occurrence. Following the sequence to completion results in the freedom of Unencumbered Activity and opens the pathway for resolving other life issues.

Deconstruction identifies and resolves conditioned states; Reconstruction focuses on integrating the freedom found in their resolution.

The Resolution Sequence and the embedded practices of reason, reflection, and fundamental awareness connect direct experience with the Sutra's definitive "Buddha's Word." Buddha's Word provides the conceptual understanding that clarifies the truth or falsity of direct experience. Inferences drawn from the Resolution Sequence act as a bridge between Direct Perception and the Sutras.



Awakening ‘a’ Identification – Separation – Development

Awakening ‘a’ is a change of perspective produced within Zazen practice that transforms one’s worldview from “mundane only” to witnessing the sacred. Awakening ‘a’ is the gradual understanding of the reality of conditioned states and how they produce afflictive emotions. The effort to awaken is aroused only when awareness of the Universal Mind has strength and power: awareness of the truth of the Twelve Links of the Chain of Causation, and how its functions provide that power. In the stage of Identification, a growing awareness of one’s existential predicament motivates the practice of Zazen that unveils the Universal Mind. Attaining Separation means accepting the Universal Mind as real. This is a life-changing event, simultaneously providing an observational space between oneself, conditioned states, and their reactive emotional responses.

Awakening ‘A’ Maturation – Transformation – Psychophysical Shift

In Maturation, the conditioned state is impartiality embraced, establishing the creative tension that is the motivating force of Transformation. Awakening ‘A’ launches practitioners into a new world where the stranglehold of the conditioned state is suddenly and permanently uprooted, unburdening them of the mental habits and deep-seated assumptions embedded in the conditioned state. Such breakthroughs generally are sudden events. Feelings of release, openness, and relaxation replace physical and mental constraints. The Universal Aspect of Mind comes compellingly to the forefront, precipitating a change of being.

Awakening ‘Aa’ Proclamation – Discerning Differences – Clarifying Details

The habit energies of an entrenched conditioned state do not completely dissolve at Transformation. Awakening ‘Aa’ is a new perspective that step-by-step discerns the differences between freedom and affliction. When the physical or mental remnants of the conditioned state appear, they are experienced as rootless and ephemeral. These habitual patterns associated with the conditioned states no longer cause afflictive responses. The vestigial habit energies draw attention but without influence or control. The Universal and Personal Minds beneficially interact, refining the attributes of the Personal.

Awakening ‘AA’ Acceptance – Relief and Comfort – Naturalness

Awakening ‘AA’ is a change of behavior. Habit energies dissipate. The Personal and Universal attain unity acting as complements with unobstructed harmony. It is the Middle Way of Buddhism, where the Personal (the mind of discrimination) and Universal (the mind of unity) manifest with equal importance.

Zazen Introspection – Resolution Sequence

The Resolution Sequence puts into words an introspective method that instructs practitioners in working with conditioned states. *Introspective analysis into the operation and resolution of conditioned states naturalizes the inner dialogue between the Personal and Universal Aspects of Mind.* Observation and questioning continue their definitive roles as the chief means of gathering experiential evidence. Acquiring conscious knowledge of conditioned states provides the basis for understanding the

appropriate time and place for willful activities to avoid wasteful efforts. Understanding of the Nonduality – Resolution Sequence Chart is greatly enhanced with familiarity with:

- The complementary interplay of conditioned states and awakening ¹⁸
- The Resolution Sequence developed in *Tending the Fire: An Introspective Guide to Zen Awakening*
- The symbols developed in *Becoming Literate in the Process of Awakening*.

SECTION 6

THE EMERGENT KNOWLEDGE SUMMARY SYMBOL

*“Zen Masters have said that in complete perfect enlightenment
there are eighteen great awakenings and countless minor awakenings.
A Zen proverb says, ‘Those in a hurry do not arrive.’”*

THE TWO ESSENTIALS FOR WORKING WITH CONDITIONED STATES

1. Understands the complementary interplay between conditioned states and awakening (the Personal inquiry and Universal response)
2. Experiences how the relationship of the Personal and Universal Aspects of Mind matures from a beginner’s first acknowledgement of the Universal and develops into a dialogue of unobstructed harmony

EMERGENT KNOWLEDGE SESSIONS

I. PRE-EMERGENT KNOWLEDGE (1ST AWAKENING) ‘a’

Identifies and observes the operation of a conditioned state and creates a want statement

II. EMERGENT KNOWLEDGE (2ND AWAKENING) ‘A’

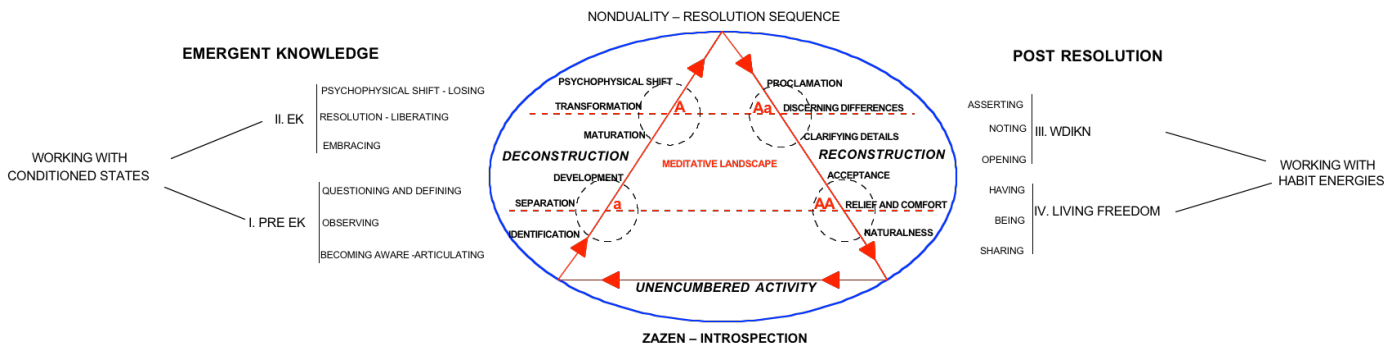
Performs Emergent Knowledge “Clean” questioning

III. WDIKN (3RD AWAKENING) ‘Aa’

Creates “Proclamation” statement by answering, “*What do I know now that I didn’t know before?*” and documents engagement with elements of Reconstruction. Compares “before and after” and notes the intensity and frequency of habit energies. Refinement of the dialogue between the Personal and Universal Aspects of Mind takes place

IV. LIVING FREEDOM (4TH AWAKENING) ‘AA’

Enjoys life and looks for new opportunities



IMPORTANT POINTS IN EMERGENT KNOWLEDGE

I. Pre-Emergent Knowledge Questioning

Cultivate a deep and wide understanding of all aspects of the conditioned state that has your attention. Take a long time to thoroughly grasp the effects of the conditioned state on your life and only then formulate a want statement.

II. Within Emergent Knowledge Questioning

Approach Emergent Knowledge sessions with a calm deliberate mind. Cultivate awareness of the intimate spot where the information arises. Ask the questions as described and record the responses without analysis or reflection.

III. Working with Habit Energies

Answering the WDIKN question begins the growth and integration of the nascent freedom gained in the Emergent Knowledge session. Thoroughly involve yourself in comparing what the Want Statement goal and what actually exists. The effort at discernment and clarification should be given full attention in stillness sitting and moving meditation.

When conditioned states are stimulated, they present themselves as afflictive emotions or cognitive dissonance. After successful Emergent Knowledge sessions, habitual patterns of behavior and reaction persist but the negativity associated with them is greatly reduced or at times altogether dispelled. During Reconstruction, the habit energies leftover from the resolved conditioned state, manifest as distractions rather than reactive responses. Progress in Reconstruction is assessed by the decrease in strength and frequency of the appearance of habit energies connected with the resolved conditioned state. They weaken during Reconstruction through a consistent and steady awareness.

IV. Living Freedom – Realized when freedom becomes your own.

One of the most difficult turnabouts for practitioners is to revere the “nonfabricated voice of nature” that is the relationship of the Personal and Universal Aspects of Mind. The nonfabricated voice speaks clearly, but doubt as to its veracity lies deep within habitual skepticism and unnoticed familiarity. Spiritual benefactor #28 of the Flower Ornament Sutra Ananyagamin counsels:

*“This point is hard for celestial, human and titanic beings, for monks and priests
It cannot be heard or retained or believed in or comprehended by those who are not under
the tutelage of spiritual benefactors, who have not accumulated roots of goodness, who
have not purified their intentions, ... who do not have the eye of wisdom.”*

The outer teacher of observing the critical phrase and/or the inner one of Emergent Knowledge provide the tutelage; the goodness and intention must be developed before starting on the journey; and the eye of wisdom opens with Zazen's capability to give rise to authentic vision.

Appendix

Who was David Grove?

David Grove was born in New Zealand in December 1950. As a counselling psychologist, his early work was influenced by Neural Linguistic Programming, Eriksonian hypnosis, the people-centered approach of Carl Rogers. Working with Vietnam War veterans, he realized that some of them couldn't remember particularly traumatic events, but they would still have feelings about them. While observing very carefully what was happening, he noticed that, "If I didn't force people when they were talking, they would naturally start using metaphors to describe their experience."

Grove also became interested in the use of questions in therapy. He analyzed the questions major therapists like Virginia Satir and Carl Rogers used, and noticed they would often amplify or redefine what their clients said. Grove thought that this 'robbed' the client of some of their experience and so began to look for questions that would be free of any presuppositions. He found that questions which 'interfered' with the client's experience the least were in fact the most effective in bringing about change. A method of inquiry called Clean Language was created as a means of questioning clients' metaphors in a way that neither contaminated nor distorted them.

In the latter years of his life, he continued to work to reduce the influence of the therapist on the client and his study of emergence led to the development of yet another process called Emergent Knowledge.

Grove passed away in January 2008, at age 57 years, leaving a legacy of intellectual vigor, a number of highly effective practical applications, and inspiration for his many students to bring them into the world.

Addendum August 2024

In October 2023 Renshin and I wrote the booklet, *Enhanced Emergent Knowledge*. In many ways, that twelve-page booklet is the culmination of our fifty years together. Shortly after its completion, her cancer metastasized and she succumbed in March 2024.

Our marriage was only possible because we had both understood individually that living committed to the process of awakening was our way of life. Soon after meeting, we understood this about each other. We became engaged and were married within two months. Our life together was fun and exciting in a reflective and reserved manner – and we did cultivate and pursue the process of awakening, meeting and studying with great teachers, and taking what we learned putting it into action in various means, appropriate for the time and place. We produced a number of books, training, manuals, and all sorts of other activities and devices, in our attempt to communicate the importance of the process of awakening, and how others may awaken it in their lives.

In some ways, however, the critical piece was the writing of the *Enhanced Emergent Knowledge* booklet. In it we felt we had communicated our response to Buddha's affirmation, "I have taught one thing and one thing only, *dukkha* and the cessation of *dukkha*."

Much of the inspirational spark underlying this process resulted from Renshin's relationship with the innovative psycho-linguistic therapist, David Grove. He developed Clean Language, Metaphor Therapy, and eventually *Emergent Knowledge*. Elements of these methods were taken up and over a thirty-five-year period, tested and adapted by Renshin into what she termed *Enhanced Emergent Knowledge*. It was "Enhanced" because it contained two Yogacara Buddhist elements added to Grove's unidimensional approach. Its use offers an opportunity to activate and manifest the process of awakening.

The booklet briefly describes the essence of Buddhist wisdom – prajna, intuition – without ever mentioning it, compiling in secular terms, our experience that arose from our studies and practice. The *Enhanced Emergent Knowledge* process poses inquiries that arise from a practitioner's problematic conditioned state, and intimately engages with the intuitional information that immediately results. Six inquiry-responses per round inform the Proclamation Statement that captures the totality of the six awakenings, and sets the stage for the integration of its essence during the Reconstruction phase of the process of awakening.

The central importance of the intuitional activity of inquiry and response was explained without recourse to Buddhist or psychological explanations. Anyone can follow the directions and resolve

an identified problem, transform it into a pathway of freedom, and then live the changes and arrive at balance and freedom in their lives.

We followed a long circuitous path in assembling the Enhanced Emergent Knowledge instruction booklet. But completing it, we felt we had succeeded in being able to communicate our life experience, surrounding the study of the process of awakening with meaningful and coherent facts. I say “we” because I played a part. But it is Renshin’s creative insights that form its heart. She stayed true to her life’s vocation, freely presenting her wisdom for anyone who would wish to follow her pioneering path.

End Notes

- ¹ Richard Wilhelm, Commentary on Hexagram #30, Li, The Clinging Fire, *I Ching* [New York, Bollingen Foundation, 1950 p. 119]
- ² David Loy, *A New Buddhist Path*, [Somerville, MA: Wisdom Publications 2011, p. 137]
- ³ See Appendix for a note on David Grove's life.
- ⁴ Technical, professional, and Buddhist terminology was deliberately left out of the description of the Enhanced Emergent Knowledge process. However, this brief appendix addition was added for Zen practitioners and others of similar mental outlook.
- ⁵ All italics in the background material are statements by Renshin Verkuilen unless otherwise noted.
- ⁶ See Robert Buswell's essay for detailed information on the history, development, and practice of observing the critical phrase. *The "Short-cut" Approach of Kan-hua Meditation: The Evolution of a Practical Subitism in Chinese Ch'an Buddhism*, contained within *Sudden and Gradual: Approaches to Enlightenment in Chinese Thought*, edited by Peter Gregory [Kuroda Institute 1987, pp. 322-378]
- ⁷ Jeffrey Lyle Broughton, *The Letters of Zen Master Dahui Pujue* [New York, Oxford University Press, 2017, p. 133]
- ⁸ Robert Buswell, *The "Short-cut" Approach of Kan-hua Meditation: The Evolution of a Practical Subitism in Chinese Ch'an Buddhism*, contained within *Sudden and Gradual: Approaches to Enlightenment in Chinese Thought*, edited by Peter Gregory [Kuroda Institute 1987, p. 348]
- ⁹ Ibid, p. 349
- ¹⁰ See Dale and Barbara Verkuilen, *Tending the Fire: An Introspective Guide to Zen Awakening* [Madison WI Firethroat Press 2011, pp. 1-18] for information on conditioned states
- ¹¹ Thomas Cleary, *The Blue Cliff Record* [Boston: Shambala, 2000, p. 72]
- ¹² See Dale Verkuilen, *Unfolding the Eightfold Path*, [Madison, WI Firethroat Press, 2014, pp. 27-33 for more information on the Informal Mind of sitting and the Formal Mind of movement.
- ¹³ Jeffrey Lyle Broughton, *Zongmi on Chan*, [New York, Columbia University Press, 2009, p. 113]
- ¹⁴ Dale and Barbara Verkuilen, *Tending the Fire: An Introspective Guide to Zen Awakening* [Madison WI Firethroat Press 2011, p. 40]
- ¹⁵ '8' Yogacara Buddhism defines eight levels of consciousness: sight, sound, taste, touch, smell, consciousness, manas, and Alayavijñāna Storehouse Consciousness. The first seven arise from within and are functions of Alayavijñāna consciousness.
- ¹⁶ The three basic elements of Direct Perception in Zazen are contained in the geometric patterns of the Nonduality Symbol – Resolution Sequence Symbol.

First, with the meditative landscape at its center, the symbol defines the practice of Zazen as fundamental awareness of all the activities of the self. Zazen provides a resourceful way of approaching the unity of inquiry and immediate insight. The faculty of intuition described by the Buddha operates as the mediator between the Personal and Universal Aspects of Mind. The mediating wisdom arises from within the Universal, and is brought to awareness by the mental discipline of Zazen. The enhanced vision of Zazen reveals the truth of the Universal Mind's existence, supplying the information and guidance to form a lucid and accurate depiction of the process of awakening. Engagement in Zazen sets the stage for the revolution of mind that cures

the fundamental misperception of separateness.

Second, the triangle and arrowheads portray the dynamic movement of impermanence. Ongoing awareness of an endless stream of life cycles replaces the notion of the substantial and enduring self. Each fast-moving cycle contains both a unique problem based on the conditioning of the moment and the means to resolve it, and ultimately achieve liberation. Understanding and accepting the reality of the metabolism of this process transforms impermanence from a confining trap to an opportunity for ever- burgeoning freedom.

Third, the ellipse symbolizes the nondual complementary sum of the constant and vital interplay between the Personal and Universal aspects of life. The relationship of the body and mind in Zazen is an accessible example of the complementary interplay of the Personal and Universal Aspects. When sitting, an erect posture results in an aware mind, which in turn promotes an even straighter posture and so forth, in an endless positive feedback loop. Another is the “Clean Language” inquiry-response of Emergent Knowledge. The practitioner recognizes Nonduality to be the complementary activity of the body-mind or the inquiry and response, embracing all of the complexities and ambiguities of dualistic relationships.

¹⁷ See Dale and Barbara Verkuilen, *Tending the Fire: An Introspective Guide to Zen Awakening* [Madison WI Firethroat Press 2011, pp. 41-42] for detailed information about the Resolution Sequence

¹⁸ See Hee-Jin Kim, *Dogen and Meditation and Thinking* [Albany, NY State University of New York 2007 for Dōgen’s teaching on the relationship of conditioned states [delusion] and awakening [enlightenment]