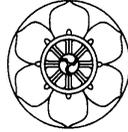


THE EASTERN GATE



Member Newsletter Fall 2016

The Cambridge Zen Center is part of the Kwan Um School of Zen

Zen Master Bon Yeon, Jane Dobisz

from an interview on January 28, 2016 for the KUSZ International Initiative

What was it about Zen Master Seung Sahn that made you become his student?

The first and foremost was his direction, which was very clear. In all of the years that I knew Zen Master Seung Sahn, his whole life energy was only “for all beings.” All of his students who spent any time with him had the privilege of watching him demonstrate that direction in his everyday life. Day in and day out, he never strayed from it. This was the most inspiring and also showed his students what “Zen in action” looks like. I loved how funny he was. Zen Master Seung Sahn had a keen sense of humor and was quick to laugh. At times he was hysterically funny.

Much of his brilliance as a teacher was his way of making complicated Buddhist concepts accessible and also succinct. He put it together in a simple, clear and complete package. I believe that he is one of the all-time greats, the type of teacher this planet will see only once every 500 years. He was kind of like a Zen Master Joju. Very rare indeed. So it was really obvious to stick with him!

What is your opinion regarding the importance of the international mission with the

goal to more closely connect various centers of the Kwan Um School of Zen?

The most obvious reason for the importance of the international teaching is that all beings can benefit from this teaching. It’s not unique



to any one country. There is suffering everywhere, and so it follows there is a need for people to learn how to do this practice to help with that suffering.

One reason why I was drawn to Zen Master Seung Sahn was that he loved bringing people together from many countries. He knew how much we could all learn from one another by opening our minds to different cultures, different languages, different ways that we grew up, and different ways of seeing the world. I got to see a lot of the world traveling with him. I also got to meet a lot of different dharma friends all over the world, which is such an incredible gift. Those are the friends that you cherish forever. It’s pretty wonderful to walk into a Zen center in Spain, Belgium, Cape Town, South Africa, Seoul, Korea, or California or anywhere—and you’re immediately connected with everybody.

I think it’s important for the Kwan Um School of Zen to stay connected as a worldwide school. When Zen Master Seung Sahn was alive, he was that great connector. He was that unifier who traveled to so many countries to teach. As a great storyteller, he shared with his students teaching stories from all those different countries. Now that he is gone, it’s important that we do it ourselves, in whatever ways we can, so we can stick together and to maintain our worldwide sangha.

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Walls

by Beth Walsh

We hear something every day about building walls. It's always somebody else's fault that our lives are miserable. It's those Other People who always screw things up for us, or so we think. It's so common for us to think like this, and you can see how easily it can be taken and multiplied upon.

Usually when I can't find something the first thing that comes to mind is that someone took it, moved it, walked off with it, changed it. And almost always, I have put the thing down somewhere I don't usually put it!

The walls that can give us the most trouble are the ones we make ourselves. They have no doors and no locks. *I'm* the builder and *I also the guard the way*. And these walls can be very hard to pass through. They're invisible but they are extremely durable. I build them and keep reinforcing them. Why? What are these wall for? Walls are for protecting things or ideas we believe are worth protecting or holding on to. Before I run into one of the walls that I have built I almost never know I'm heading right toward it.

A wall can make it difficult even to make a simple request for help.

I can't climb ladders right now because of a damaged ankle, so I have to ask someone else to climb up to adjust lights in the studio. *It's not a complicated problem*. But asking for help might feel embarrassing if I'm guarding my pride. What's pride? What is that? It's an idea about me. Pride could be one of those walls that gets in the way of getting something

done that we normally can take for granted. Getting past this wall may be a struggle that starts with noticing what's in the way. It can be something we're turning away from, or that we avoid. There's a detour sign but it doesn't send us the right way. There may be no right other way to go except to go through it.

When I was training in audio and video editing I had to learn to use both a Mac and a PC at the same time. All I knew about PCs was how to do word processing. I had just



Boston University Theology Class August 2016.

started using a Mac a few months before that. I was in class 40 hours a week using Adobe Creative Suite on both a Mac and a PC, trying to get it all down. I often caught myself thinking, "I am going to lose my mind."

One day while doing my homework, horribly stuck, I had a very clear thought: "You can't do this. You will never be able to do this. Just forget about it." Then I thought, "That's true. Maybe I should quit."

I started to look at these thoughts. I was shocked at how quickly I agreed with them. It was the first time I had ever caught myself red-handed doing that and it made me wonder about the way I relate to my own thinking,

how I relate to other walls that I might create when I'm challenged. I decided I would pay more attention and attempt to *challenge all of them*. If I noticed I was afraid of stepping outside of a comfort zone then I would at least examine it to try to learn something.

We talk about breaking down the wall of self in our Zen practice, becoming infinite in time and space. Then anything is no problem. What is this?

Try, try, try for 10,000 years non-stop. Never let those personal walls and barriers hold you back from doing what is necessary to save all beings from suffering. Noticing the walls I have, and that I keep constructing more of them, is an important step in understanding the parts of my daily life that I am not completely conscious of. I may try to look for this small "I" that I protect, asking "What is this?" The more I ask "What am I?" and the more I examine this idea of a separate being, something with a separate self-nature, the more clearly I see don't-know.

One time during the Christmas season I was working in a store. I have worked in a lot of stores in my time and seen plenty of long lines of Christmas shoppers, so I was used to it. But I had a new employee working with me whom I was training on the cash register. Depending on your perspective, that's a good time to be training as a cashier, or it's also a really horrible time to be training. My coworker Auks was not used to anything like this. He was terrified. I could see it in his face and I felt sorry for him. But I knew what to

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Boots Only Going Straight and Breaking Apart at the Seams

by Andrew Wood

The American naturalist and philosopher Henry David Thoreau quipped that when you go out walking, you “should go forth, in the spirit of undying adventure, never to return.” Never to return? What did he mean? Inspired by great pilgrims past and present, I set out for eight days of walking meditation from Seoul to Mu Sang Sa hoping to discover for myself what Thoreau meant.

Embarking from the Cambridge Zen Center in search of Korea’s ancient dharma, I quickly encountered Korea’s modern sangha: the restaurant-worker sangha waiting patiently as I decoded menus, Seoul city’s suburban sprawl sangha bustling about, the agrarian sangha in the south getting a hopeful jump on spring, and eventually the gray-robed sangha greeting me at Musangsa.

It was, “the coldest week of the year” they told me in Seoul as I left the cozy guesthouse on the city’s north side. Could I show up for every step to witness little “i” freezing and thawing into big “I.” How much could “i” put down, “never to return?” “Walking beneath bitter, January skies through Gangnam and continuing south, the temperature plummeted to freezing, zero degrees Celsius. “Zero! Perfect!” That’s where Zen Master Seung Sahn taught us to return. As the days unfolded, winter kept going and wind chills fell far into the negatives, but my spirits would not. With compass in hand, “only go south, don’t know,” I thought. With each step, keeping a clear direction, just walking, I continued on. South through city after city, with boots only going straight and breaking apart at the seams. Trying to keep a clear direction with-

out a fixed view on the destination, I sauntered on, skirting the western flanks of mighty Gyeryong Mountain and eventually on to Gyeryong City.

A 130-plus mile pilgrimage to a temple is not unlike what we experience regularly in the dharma hall during walking meditation. The mind, intent on survival, pulls us to and fro. Observing the billowing clouds as they

takes countless hours of practice to touch the rich abundance of each moment as it actually is; yet it can happen in an instant.

As I walked I drew encouragement from the Tibetan master Mingyur Rinpoche, whom recently returned from a four-year street retreat where he walked extensively throughout India and the Himalayas. It took thousands of miles, sickness, and a near-death

experience before waking up in the hospital with the light of ultimate insight beaming from his brow. What more encouragement do we need to grasp the urgency of our situation, put in that little extra, and stretch beyond our comfort zone? So we practice walking, what Buddha said to be one of the four noble postures. Whether it be a pilgrimage, on retreat, or a walk to the corner store, we all practice walking, waking up to each sense door, feeling each warm-socked step on the cold, concrete highway—or heated, hardwood floor. We walk, each sense door opening to the bird sounds, onslaught of thoughts, or

aroma of incense dust and alter flowers. Cold is just cold. Car horn is just car horn. Thinking is just thinking. If all of them are don’t know, then no problem.

Each seemingly mundane day offers itself to practice and it seems our practice is to offer ourselves in return. The guesthouse in Bukchong, the donut shop in Gongju, the office at Gyeryong Mountain National Park that helped me print out maps, the restaurant in Yeosan that wouldn’t let me pay for my meal—these were the pilgrimage sights of the living dharma. The sprawling suburbs of

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Anthony Jenkins, Andrew Wood & Kathy Park Poep Sa Nim at Mu Sang Sa.

formed, I walked, noticing thoughts making “I . . .” “Where will I eat? Where will I sleep?” Mind leads to fear, which leads to hindrance. Similarly, when we walk in the dharma hall we observe thoughts such as, “How can I manage this next sitting?” or “OK, only two more sitting periods until dinner.” So, as dharma students, how do we walk, step by step with a moment-by-moment, this-is-it mind, not looking for it somewhere else? Whether it be leaning into the trials and tribulations of a long, icy walk or a 10-minute breeze around the dharma hall, how do we uncover the magic within ourselves instead of thinking it’s elsewhere? It

SANGHADHARMA

Zen Master Bon Yeon, Jane Dobisz

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I'm very excited by our new International Initiative committee, headed by Kathy Park in Korea. This committee is exploring ways to grow the school, expand resources and tap into the diverse talents of our membership.

How can we connect young people today with dharma?

This seems to be a big question nationwide. We are blessed here at Cambridge Zen Center. We had a dharma talk tonight and the room was full of young people. It helps a lot that we are in a town with 108 colleges

and located between MIT and Harvard, so we get a lot of students that come from there. One of the things we do at CZC that works really well is the one-day college retreat. Young people come because they know there will be other young people, and they come because it's short. I think young people are busier than we used to be, as far as all of the demands made upon them.

Right now in the United States and some other countries, there is a big movement of teaching meditation in the elementary schools. Locally, one of our members is doing a meditation program in the Lawrence public

school system using our school's teaching. The kids have meditation cushions and they actually practice sitting together in school. Other schools are using "mindfulness rooms" where kids can go and breathe for a while in place of being punished or being sent to the principal's office for bad behavior. The possibilities are endless. I think we need to meet these young people where they are and teach them the same practice that we have all benefited so greatly from.



Walls

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tell him. He was looking at a line of customers with at least 50 people in it, all waiting for their turn at our register. Auks said to me, "Look at that line, Beth!" And I said "Don't look at the line, Auks. You can wait on only one person at a time. Focus on the one right in front of you and take care of them. Then do the next one. Et cetera."

Auks watched me ring people up and then I stepped aside and let him wait on someone, helping him get through the experience one person at a time. Eventually he could relax a lit-

tle and stop worrying. It took me a while to realize what I had done that day: showing my new coworker how to handle a long line of customers at the busiest time of the year taught me something about my own walls and how I can pass through them. And it can be much less complicated than we think it should be.

I had spent a long time struggling with understanding the first of the four great vows, "Sentient beings are numberless, I vow to save them all."

The wall around the small "I" has a kind of DETOUR sign in front of it that doesn't

send us anywhere. As soon as we choose to avoid passing through that wall we feel lost. We may get deflected away from finding out that the small self we're protecting is not even there. We need to pass through the wall we've made and discover what we can do what we need to do. We can ask for help. We can see how we're holding on. We can see how we get in our own way. We can let go of our small self and become infinite in time and space, get enlightenment and save all beings from suffering.



Boots Only Going Straight and Breaking Apart at the Seams

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Suwon and the commercial blitzkrieg of Gangnam; the blistering, arctic winds of Osan, the barking dogs on Route 697: these were the Zen masters and great sutras of my walking meditation.

Despite the romantic notion, there was little that was easy or beautiful about walking all that way in the heart of winter. Those that have walked them know the roads and sky are a dusty gray. My legs and feet hurt most of the way. But with practice, saying "Yes. Yes" to the Zen master in each moment

changes a person. When we practice this enough, maybe we're no longer the person we were before. Maybe the idea of who we are disappears entirely. Maybe Thoreau was on to something after all.

SANGHANOTES

The very hot summer days have suddenly turned cool, providing welcome relief. Here at CZC many auspicious changes have occurred. We are delighted to announce that Barry Briggs JDPSN is now our co-guiding teacher along with our longtime guiding teacher, Jane Dobisz, Zen Master Bon Yeon. We have all benefited from Barry's inspiring dharma talks, interviews, retreats, workshops, dharma-teacher-in-training training program, and informal dharma teacher get-togethers, but also from his steady presence at daily practice and his readiness to teach us. He led a practice forms workshop along with Bo-Mi Choi and Seon Joon Young; a chanting workshop with Bo-Mi as well; and a well-attended Zen poetry workshop. Seon Joon also taught an enlightening iconography workshop, and Jennifer Magrone led a sensitivity training session to help us all live together in harmony. We look forward to Barry's oxherding workshop coming soon in September, and an ethics policy workshop in October.

We are launching a new and improved website that has adaptability to phone screens, simplified yet clear information and an elegant display. Barry, Bo-Mi and Mark Uehling have been devoted to this project and others have contributed. We are also moving toward more online registrations for retreats and other activities, plus a revamped and more readable weekly announcements, thanks to Mark Uehling's and Jim Kopcienski's hard work and web expertise.

A glowing new Kwan Seum Bosal statue was welcomed on June 26 with a lovely eyes-opening ceremony per-



May YMJJ led by Zen Master Wu Kwang..



April YMJJ led by Zen Master Bon Shim.



September YMJJ led by Barry Briggs, JDPSN.

formed by Barry, replacing our long-serving Buddha on the altar. Although androgynous, the bodhisattva has a more feminine appearance, especially after her mustache and beard were professionally removed! Our interview room has also undergone extensive renovation through removing the unused fireplace, to newly installed track lighting and a fresh coat of paint, a new carpet and soft lamp lighting—all creating a more intimate and inviting space.

Our long-awaited accessibility project is soon to be finished. A spacious, accessible bathroom with a wider entry way was installed where once was a tiny bathroom and closet. Soon an automated lift will be installed on the 199 side of the building, enabling wheelchair access. This is a project we have dreamed of for more than 30 years. It is finally coming to fruition in large part thanks to our many generous donors. One of the apartments received a much-needed new kitchen and bathroom and another a shower. The River Street house received an electrical upgrade. New robe pegs were installed that will allow our members who have taken precepts and all residents to have their own peg. New shelves were built for our reorganized tool room.

The staff has also undergone changes, with Tracy Dolge stepping down as kitchen master after 10 years of service. Thank you for all your hard work and keeping on top of all things in the kitchen, tirelessly keeping it running efficiently and smoothly through all seasons. Tracy patiently reminded us time and time again to

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SANGHANOTES

Continued from page 5

avoid leaving the oily pans on the stove—which invites families of mice to join us—and to put away sharp knives after use so that no one will be injured. The hardest job of all was supervising the residents, who sometimes forgot to do their cooking or cleaning jobs! We are grateful for Tracy's many years of service. We give a big thanks to Billy Bialecki and Andy Wood for carrying on seamlessly during the summer, and to Kyung Ha Strange-Lee, who is our new kitchen master.

Paul Laurey has been meeting the many challenges of being housemaster, often going above and beyond to be helpful in many other ways. Our new head dharma teacher, Mark Uehling, has also jumped in 100 percent, and is not only helping residents and retreatants with their dharma practice but also added his skills to the new website construction and with our online services. Jennie Ullrich has stepped down as guestmaster, and we thank her for preparing countless guest beds and rooms, making countless guest reservations, cancellations and payments, and doing a wonderful job in making our numerous overnight guests feel welcome and comfortable. Thank you to our new guestmaster, Jessica Brotman, for stepping up! Also thanks to Kimball Amram who faithfully mans the Zen store every Thursday night as a service to our guests.

We had two meetings of the „Silver Dragons” (residents over 60 years old) under Abbot Tom's direction to discuss the needs and challenges of



New preceptees, Founder's Day 2016.



Teachers cutting cake at the Founder's Day ceremony.



Zen Master Bon Haeng's cake.

aging in the Zen Center. From these discussions new handrails and better lighting were installed, and those residents are exempt from morning wakeup duty. Retreat accommodations have been implemented making it possible to join retreats for just partial days. Seniors can now let us know when they register that they will start as late as 10 a.m. and finish as early as 4:30 p.m., even on our long-day schedule. We hope this will encourage those with aging bodies to join more retreat days despite the increasing challenges.

Zen Master Bon Haeng (Mark Houghton) our former guiding teacher, was honored at the Founder's Day Ceremony at PZC on August 5 for his work as North American Abbot for many years. Lyrics composed by Mark O'Leary set to the famous "YMCA" dance-a-thon song were performed and danced to by a number of fans including Zen Master Soeng Hyang, providing a lighthearted and joyful moment. A beautifully inscribed cake was later eaten, shown in this newsletter in its full form with the inscription, "Gratitude and Bows for Zen Master Bon Haeng Mark Houghton for years of service and together action. Kwan Um School of Zen."

Resident Andy Wood is back after his extensive retreat time this year, having done both solo and together-action retreats. We appreciate his strong dharma energy. Former resident Anthony Jenkins also did winter Kyol Che at Mu Sang Sa in Korea and extended it with a monthlong solo retreat in Nepal. He just finished two weeks of Kyol Che in Poland and

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SANGHANOTES

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plans to keep traveling, ending up in London as a home base. We do hope to see him again one of these days! Terri Scott has departed for her own apartment after sub-letting Andy's apartment for the year. She is not far and we are always glad to see her at practice. We enjoyed having Thomas Ponniah and Katherine Foo here for the summer. Best of luck to departing resident Emily Levin, starting her doctoral program in neuroscience at Brown University. We look forward to your frequent visits. Austin Ritter completed his nursing degree and found a job in Denver, Colorado. We wish you well in your new endeavors! Longtime sangha member James Najarian won the sixth annual Frost Farm Poetry Prize from among 646 entries for his winning poem, "The Dark Ages." Former resident Hari Pillai married his sweetheart, Alla, on August 12 in New Hampshire. Many present and former residents attended the beautiful traditional Indian ceremony. We welcome new members Emily Rose Hartung, Diane Yan, Elizabeth Henehan and Patrick Horgan. We also welcome returning member Theo Francis and new residents Jessica

Brotman, Peter Thorton, Gordon Keir, Paul Letendre, Billy Bialecki and Sam Judelson in October.

A group of 45 Tufts University freshman and upperclass peer advisors joined us for a morning of meditation and work practice on August 27. Andy Wood, Mark Uehling and Paul Laurey helped them to weed the garden and clean the deck. They also learned about "don't-know mind" and practiced sitting meditation. Seventeen graduate students with their teacher from Boston University Theology School attended an informal chanting and meditation session on August 29, hosted by some of our senior dharma teachers.

We had many wonderful retreats so far this year starting in January with our own resident teacher, Barry Briggs JDPSN, and continuing with other Ji Do Poep Sa Nims Carlos Montero, Nancy Hedgpeh and Steve Cohen, plus Zen Master Bon Yeon. We also had Zen Master Bon Shim visit from Poland. She stayed with us for two months, giving us many talks and interviews and her compassionate presence. We

look forward to more retreats with Barry and Terry Cronin, and just heard the good news that Myong An Sunim JDPSN will be traveling all the way from Malaysia to lead our October YMJJ and also participate in our dharma teacher retreat weekend October 15 at PZC. We are truly blessed with so many vibrant teachers sharing their wisdom with us.

We welcome one and all to join in our daily morning and evening practice and retreats, and our many other together action practices, such as work period on Saturday morning; our monthly community cooks program, which cooks a meal for a nearby woman's center; and our Tuesday night vegetarian dinners. Our annual canoe trip down the Ipswich River took place on September 25.

Together action is our most fundamental practice. Wishing you a happy and healthy fall and please keep your practice strong for all beings.



FALL 2016 SCHEDULE

Sept. 15	Dharma talk by Zen Master Bon Yeon	Nov. 11	Dharma talk by Terry Cronin, JDPSN
Sept. 17	Oxherding workshop led by Barry Briggs, JDPSN	Nov. 12–13	Two-day YMJJ led by Terry Cronin, JDPSN
Sept. 22	Dharma talk by Jennifer Magrone, SDT	Nov. 17	Dharma talk by Zen Master Bon Yeon & Barry Briggs, JDPSN
Sept. 29	Dharma talk by Tom Johnson, Abbot	Nov. 24	No Talk – Thanksgiving
Oct. 6	Dharma talk by Myong An Sunim, JDPSN	Dec. 1	Dharma talk by Raimodas Lencevicius
Oct. 8–9	Two-day YMJJ led by Myong An Sunim, JDPSN	Dec. 3	Buddha's Enlightenment Day at PZC
Oct. 13	Dharma talk by Barry Briggs, JDPSN	Dec. 8	Dharma talk by Barry Briggs, JDPSN
Oct. 15–16	Dharma Teacher retreat at PZC	Dec. 11	One-day retreat led by Barry Briggs, JDPSN
Oct. 20	Dharma talk by Tom Johnson, Abbot	Dec. 15	Dharma talk by Tom Johnson, Abbot
Oct. 27	Dharma talk by Zen Master Bon Yeon	Dec. 22	Dharma talk by Lori DiSabato, SDT
Nov. 3	Dharma talk by Ben Gleason, SDT	Dec. 29	Dharma talk by Jean Murphy, SDT
Nov. 5	College retreat led by Zen Master Bon Yeon		



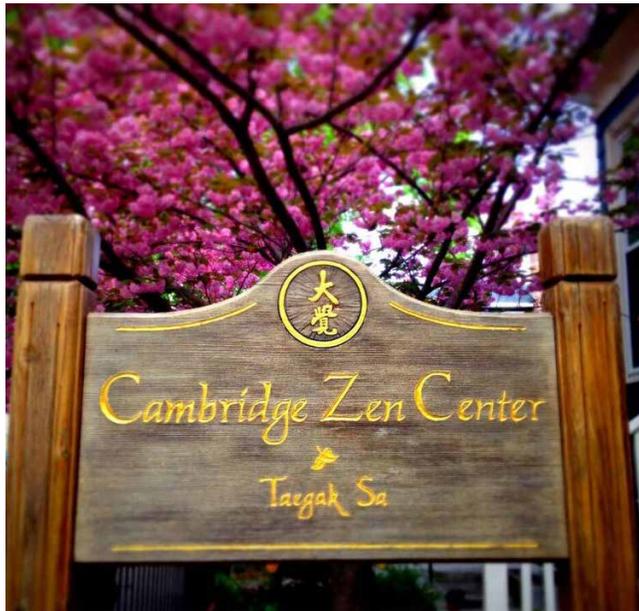
WEEKLYSCHEDULE

Introduction to Formal Practice
Thursday Evenings 7:00pm

Long Sitting & Kong-an Practice
Tuesday Evenings 6:30–9:30pm
Sunday Mornings 9:00–11:30pm

Midday Sitting
Tuesdays & Thursdays 12:30–1:00pm

Public Dharma Talk with Q & A
Thursday Evenings 7:30–8:30pm



GREAT WAY WELLNESS CENTER
ACUPUNCTURE AND CHINESE HERBAL MEDICINE



Cathy Thomason, MAOM,
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Celebrating ten years in Davis Square.

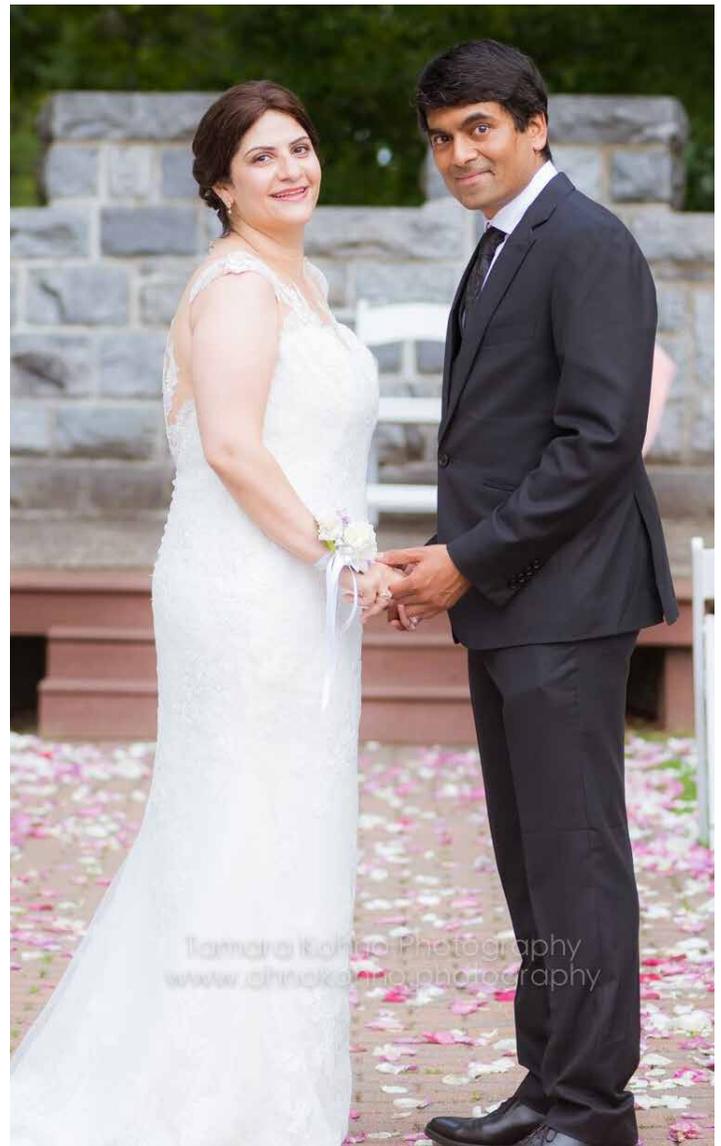
278 Elm St., Ste. 227
Somerville, MA 02144

617-852-0690

DAILY SCHEDULE

Mornings:
(Except Tuesdays)
108 Bows 5:45am
Chanting 6:10am
Sitting 6:30am

Evenings:
(Except Thursdays)
Special Chanting 6:30pm
Chanting 7:00pm
Sitting 7:25pm



Bride and groom, Hari Pillai and Aala, August 12.