



Sun Do News

Winter 2019 Edition

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SunDo: My Refuge and Nourishment

By Teresa Lenzen

As I write another essay and reflect on another stage completed, I need to say thank you to the hermit masters of the mountains who developed and preserved the SunDo tradition, to Master Chung San for bringing SunDo down from the mountains of Korea, to Master Hyunmoon Kim for bringing SunDo to the West and developing and supporting the US and International SunDo practice centers and students, to Ron Catabia and Tora Strawderman for their time and efforts to support the US and International SunDo students, and to all the SunDo teachers and instructors all around the world. Thank you to Joel Dunning, for bringing SunDo to Omaha, Nebraska, where I have had the precious opportunity to learn this system. Thank you to Joel and Teresa Dunning for their support of the Omaha SunDo community, in particular with the building of a SunDo practice center in Omaha in 2018. Each person who devotes themselves to SunDo practice has a very positive impact not only on their own lives, but also the lives of many other people.

Dear Members,

For Sundian, Three Treasures are:

Local Sundo Centers: Asia, North America, Europe; Hatancheon, Lower Center, the body

Sundo Retreat Center: Sangtancheon, Higher Center, the mind

Sundology Graduate Program: Joongtancheon, Middle Center, the spirit

Have you orbited these Treasures? If you haven't, it's time to incubate them from the beginning.

-----*Master Hyunmoon Kim*

I began practicing Stage 5: Red with Blue Stripe Belt in September 2017. The themes during this past 15 months have been loss and grief, life changes and transitions, and deeper healing from past trauma.

I was a caregiver for my mother for 11 years. In May 2017, at age 86, she decided to return to the farm where she had lived for decades, to prepare for her final transition. The prior few years were becoming increasingly challenging as more and more of her friends and loved ones died.

I began SunDo practice in 2008, and my practice helped me tremendously throughout my years as a caregiver. My increased commitment and dedication to SunDo practice paralleled the caregiver journey. As I experienced more complex and painful experiences, I turned to SunDo more and more. It took a lot of qi to contain and cope with the frustration and pain of caring for my mother who was declining, and someone I had very early on learned I couldn't count on in a parental capacity. As my mother needed more and more from me in the latter years, it forced me to face the past pain I had compartmentalized and not resolved.

I had been raised to be independent, hardworking, and self-reliant. It was not easy to acknowledge the unmet needs and harmful experiences from my early years. In order to maintain my calm and have enough qi, I gradually and steadily increased my SunDo practice to daily.



Teresa Lenzen, Master Kim, Katie Kerstetter, DJ Horn after promotion at the 2018 winter retreat—*photo by Shirley Walesch*

SunDo became my refuge and a valuable source of nourishment. I was working as a psychotherapist, caring for my mother (helping from a distance after her return to the farm), and trying to maintain balance with my husband and stepson as well. The quiet space of SunDo really helped me through this challenging chapter of my life. I became more honest about how hurt and disappointed I'd been. I came to accept how incredibly difficult the experience was and how hard it was to let others know I was hurting. My way of being self-reliant and just working harder in the face of difficulties was not working anymore.

I gradually learned to reach out for more support. I gradually learned to forgive myself for not being able to solve it all myself and for having carried so much anger for so long. Each SunDo practice helped strengthen my connection to the very deepest part of me.

Practicing SunDo was a great model for me. As I progressed in the postures, I also progressed in being persistent about coming back to my breath and my tancheon outside of SunDo practice – in my daily life activities. I gradually

became more flexible, better able to voice my needs, and more accepting of my pain and vulnerability.

As the deaths and losses multiplied, and as I became less defended, less angry, and more open, my Mom and I grew closer. I became her mother – the emotionally attuned mother *she'd* never had either. The next challenge for me was to cope with the preparation for her death that we both felt approaching.

I also had to realize that I was never going to have her assistance with acknowledging the traumatic experiences from my early years. It was not easy to accept how deeply I had been betrayed and harmed by people I loved and trusted. It was not easy to become the nurturing and emotionally present adult I'd always needed, because that meant I had to be present to *everything* – including the fear, sadness, and pain that at times seemed insurmountable and beyond my capabilities to handle.

The challenging caregiving journey has overall been an enormous gift. Being pushed to my limits has made me more mindful about my choices. In the process, I discovered I can allow myself to put what is most deeply satisfying to me at the top of my to-do list, and that instead of this being a selfish decision, it turns out to be a most nourishing experience – both for myself and my loved ones.

Teresa says, “In this moment, I feel as the Buddha did in Mary Oliver’s poem, ‘The Buddha’s Last Instruction’”:

“Clearly I’m not needed, yet I feel myself turning into something of inexplicable value.”



Memories of summer retreat 2018—*photo by Lucie Lambert*

After summer retreat 2018, I found myself missing the closeness I'd experienced in my first mountain retreat and in connecting more deeply with the SunDo community. I began teaching SunDo in October 2018. SunDo had become such an essential part of my life, I felt it was a natural next step to begin sharing it. Teaching makes me learn about SunDo on a deeper level; it is a blessing to see others learn and benefit from this beautiful system, and it does help create more of a sense of community for me.

I can see now how my SunDo practice has been changing and growing my body, mind, and spirit. Though I am the same person I was, I am a refined and better person – more accepting of myself and my limitations, more patient and flexible, and more trusting of the process of life. My need to be in control and the drive to achieve things in life have softened. My ability to connect with others is better. I have a better understanding of the impact of loss on our human lives. I am deeply appreciative of each person in my life, and I do better now at expressing this. The urgency imparted by death has led to a crisp understanding of the value of

being as fully present as I can, to each moment of my life.

I am also not as fearful of death (though much work remains here). This is one of the things for which I am most grateful to SunDo. I do not want to lose my loved ones, nor do I wish to decline and die myself, but I am gradually finding more peace around accepting this part of life.

I do my best in my SunDo practice to take full, mindful breaths, and the inhales and exhales are a preparation for both living and dying. I do my best, work hard without straining, and then I let it go. I keep my mind quiet and calm, free from judgments or commentary. I notice my flaws and defects without being overly critical or rejecting of myself. I hope to be able to face aging, debility, and death in this way – without fear, and maintaining a peaceful curiosity and calm.

In the meantime, I keep practicing SunDo, with the hope that when the time comes, I will be able to face the death of my dearest ones and myself with grace and equanimity, centered in my connection with the Tao. I am hopeful that in the end I can look back on my life feeling satisfied and complete.

---Teresa Lenzen

Calling All SunDo Instructors!

All SunDo Instructors, Teachers, and Associate Masters need to renew their certification at the 2019 summer 5-day retreat. You will need to arrive earlier than usual on Tuesday for training, and must participate in the full 5-day retreat. More information will be sent to you later.

International Sun Do Association

Grand Master

Hyunmoon Kim

Masters

Ron Catabia

Tora Strawderman

Teachers

Lucie Lambert

Virginia Platt

Betsy Forrest

Senior Instructors

David Delbrook

Al Passacantando

Anne Lee

Ginger Hobbs

Betsy Barstow

Hank Babcock

Brian Quirk

Maria Kim

Pauline White

Christine Ucich

Instructors

Diane Matta

Rich Kramer

Jerry Geier

Kwong Lip Pang

Lucy Young

Bob Felekey

Stephen Holmes

Barbara McCandless

Heidemarie Holmes

Kim Hedegaard

Roy Bushman

Don Zickefoose

Joel Dunning

Theresa Dunning

Stanley Szczabrowski

Instructor Trainees

Alexander Wolf

Sharon Kamenka

Sharon Meigs

Teresa Lenzen

Elizabeth Culligan

Patrick Studley

Karl Pátek Sr.

Karl Pátek Jr

Yoon Kok Weng

Florin Serbanescu

Andreea Serbanescu

Progress on the New Building

Our contractor, Kingdom Construction, has almost finished the work in Phase 1 of the new building project. Due to an early winter this year in Vermont, the contractor will have to finish the final tasks this coming spring. We are beginning the planning process for Phase 2, which we may complete in smaller steps as we raise more funds. We will need to raise \$50,000 to finish the ceiling, install electricity and plumbing, and start the kitchen. Check out the photos below!



The cupola and roof—*photo by Ron Walesch*



The siding has just been finished—*photo by Kingdom Construction*



The back of the building as seen from the road—*photo by Master Kim*



The future dining hall—*photo by Master Kim*



View from above—*photo by Master Kim*

A Message from Master Kim

Dear members,

I am happy to announce that the Sundo Center in Vermont is just finishing the first phase of the building project: cupola, roof, doors, windows, siding, and deck for the front porch. Because of these changes, we can now move forward on making the retreat center a year-round space. Since we are expanding, we need members to help with the work of managing the retreat center. As the first step, I have invited other members to assume positions for various functions.

Altogether,

Associate Director of the Retreat Center

This new position will oversee the work of the other positions and make decisions when I am not available.

Betsy Forrest
bforest777@gmail.com

Retreat Coordinator

Virginia will retain her current responsibilities of planning for, managing, and co-leading retreats.

Virginia Platt
octagonalview@gmail.com

Administration Coordinator

This new position will maintain a spreadsheet of all members of our organization and track members' retreat attendance and all payments made for retreats and regular membership fees.

Shirley Walesch
shirwil7@gmail.com

Building Project Coordinator

Ron and John will continue to manage the new building project.

Ron Walesch
ronmicw@aol.com
John Mallery
johnmallery8@gmail.com

Gardening Coordinator

Sharon will continue to plant and take care of the vegetable garden and landscaping.

Sharon Meigs
weedyandseedy@gmail.com

Program Coordinator

This new position will plan and execute the program for retreats.

Christine Ucich
ucich989@comcast.net

I also propose a work weekend during the Memorial Day Retreat. The main job for this weekend is staining both the new building and the meditation hall.

A tentative team for the job:

The New Building--Virginia Platt, Rich Kramer
The Meditation Hall--Shirley Walesch, Christine Ucich

Extra volunteers will help with each building.

Staley Szczabrowski, a master painter, will supervise this project.

Thank you, Sundians, and I look forward to seeing you at the Summer Retreat.

Master Hyunmmon Kim

Director of Sundo Retreat Center
Executive Director of International Sundo Association



Lots of light in the new building—photo by Ron Walesch

Mechelle Discovers SunDo

By Mechelle Keller

I was first exposed to the Eastern arts in 1976 when I attended college at Bemidji State University in Bemidji, Minnesota. I participated in a Tai Chi class offered by Tai Chi Master, Sifu Robert Larsen, as part of the theater program. We worked with breath and energy daily, with Fridays dedicated to massage education. This work culminated in a theatrical production after a year of study.

In 1978 I moved to Omaha, Nebraska. I studied Tai Chi, and took a basic Chinese Medicine class with Kung Fu and Tai Chi Master, Sifu Pete Starr. He also treated me with acupuncture and acupressure. Pete introduced me to the concept of “walking from one-point”; focusing breath and forward movement from the lower tancheon.

I began studying Taoist Yin yoga with Joel Dunning in 2003 at a local Omaha health club after having studied another form of yoga there with a different teacher. When I started, I had a lot of scar tissue in my right ankle from multiple serious sprains and was unable to sit with my feet tucked under my buttocks. I realized there was something restorative in this form of yoga because I was able to do so after about three months of study. Joel also treated me with acupuncture and Chinese herbs. I studied with Joel for several years, but fell off when my work schedule changed.

In March of 2016 my husband died unexpectedly, and I was really struggling. I knew I had to get back to acupuncture and Yin Yoga because it would center me. Joel was also teaching a weekly SunDo QiGong class and I started attending those, as well.

In June of 2016 Joel’s business hosted a three-day SunDo retreat in Griswold, Iowa, that I was able to attend. The format and schedule allowed me to attend classes while grieving. I was really able to focus on restoring deep breathing, which I realized I had not been doing.

During the past two years, I have found that my SunDo practice helps to keep me centered and helps my mind stay more peaceful. I have completed half of the required training to be a Yin Yoga instructor and have been teaching for the past year. I have also been certified in Vibrational Sound Therapy. I am certain that my SunDo study has helped me focus, allowing me to move into this new phase of my life.

--*Mechelle Keller*

Violin Toes

By Christine Ucich

Rounded with sharp nails,
ten roots grow from these.
Curling and pulling Qi from the
earth.

We have a body,
but breath is what we use.

Finely tuning each inhale and
exhale,
like the strings of a priceless violin.

Christine wrote this poem during Rich Kramer’s poetry workshop at the winter retreat.

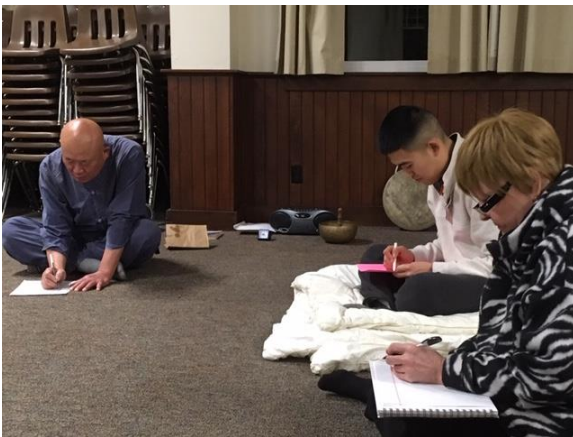
Winter Retreat 2019



The winter retreat group—photo by Master Kim



East Haven SunDo members: Ben Shanbrom, Eric Ciolino, Suzanne Terrace, Christine Ucich, Liz Culligan—photo by Christine Ucich



Poetry writing workshop participants: Master Kim, Kevin Zhou, and Pauline White—photo by Christine Ucich



A meditation in the woods—photo by Shirley Walesch



A sing-along—photo by Master Kim

Promotions

Won Ki Dan Boup Level III (Blue belt)
Teresa Lenzen, Nebraska

Keon Kon Dan Boup (Yellow belt)
Katie Kerstetter, Virginia
Kristie Horn, Nebraska

Jung Ki Dan Boup II (White/yellow belt)
DJ Horn, W. Hartford



Retreat Schedule

Spring Retreat 2019
May 24-27

Summer Retreat 2019
9-day retreat: July 26-August 4
5-day retreat: July 30-August 4
3-day retreat: August 1-4

Fall Retreat 2019
October 11-14

All retreats begin at 4:00 PM on the first day
and end at noon on the last day.

For more information see
<http://www.sun.do.org/retreats/>.

The Sun Do News welcomes stories,
articles poems, photos, and announcements.
Please send your contribution to Betsy Forrest
as an email attachment, if possible, at
bforrest777@gmail.com.

Website:

www.sundo.org

Visit the Sun Do website for information on Sun
Do history, retreat dates and registration, and
much more.

You may also e-mail questions to us through the
website.

Find us on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/Sundo.Healing/>

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