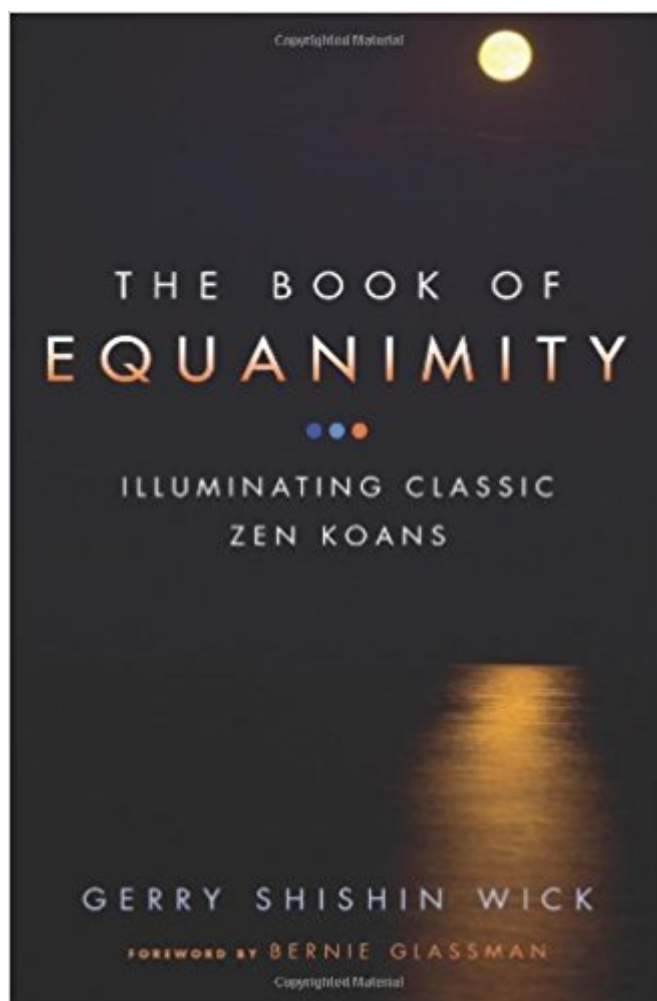


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# The Book Of Equanimity: Illuminating Classic Zen Koans



## Synopsis

The Book of Equanimity contains the first-ever complete English language commentary on one of the most beloved classic collections of Zen teaching stories (koans), making them vividly relevant to spiritual seekers and Zen students in the twenty-first century. Continually emphasizing koans as effective tools to discover and experience the deepest truths of our being, Wick brings the art of the koan to life for those who want to practice wisdom in their daily lives. The koan collection Wick explores here is highly esteemed as both literature and training material in the Zen tradition, in which koan-study is one of two paths a practitioner might take. This collection is used for training in many Zen centers in the Americas and in Europe but has never before been available with commentary from a contemporary Zen master. Wick's Book of Equanimity includes new translations of the preface, main case and verse for each koan, and modern commentaries on the koans by Wick himself.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"This rich and contemporary commentary on the Book of Equanimity takes us through a world of liberating insights. It challenges the reader to look beyond the predictable and obvious to the depth and subtlety of a mind that is truly free." (Joan Halifax, Abbot, Upaya Zen Center)"Wick's pithy commentaries on the Book of Equanimity cut to the quick of the one hundred cases contained in it. A beacon that penetrates through the haze of complications." (John Daido Looi, author of The Zen of Creativity)"Shishin Wick brings to this important work the depth, precision, and the true vision of

the scientist who always stands ready to question everything, never satisfied with platitudes or old standards. He exemplifies the relentless clarity of the teacher challenging us to start afresh in each moment and unabashedly explore in these koans the essence of Zen-and the essence of our lives-in our own words, in the time, culture, and places where we find ourselves." (from the foreword by Bernie Glassman)"Gerry Shishin Wick is a Zen teacher of long experience and uncommon depth of practice. Every student of Zen would do well to read this fine book and anything else he writes." (Robert Jinsen Kennedy, author of *Zen Spirit, Christian Spirit*)"Wick's brilliant book helps us crack the mystery of the legendary Zen koans that have been driving Dharma students crazy or to enlightenment for centuries. I myself have found it very interesting and useful, both for myself and for Dharma students. It is a real contribution to Buddhist literature in the Western world, further opening the treasure trove of this great wisdom tradition." (Lama Surya Das, author of *Awakening the Buddha Within: Tibetan Wisdom for the Western World* and founder of the Dzogchen Center.)"With the sureness of one who knows how to travel the beyond, Zen Master Sheshin Wick guides us through this wonderful Zen classic. Through his eyes and his wise hand, he helps us discover in ourselves a life that is ever abundant with the mystery that flows without ceasing from our own primordial nonexistence." (Reginald Ray, author of *Indestructible Truth*)"The legacy of Taizan Maezumi Roshi's teachings lives on in *The Book of Equanimity: Illuminating Classic Zen Koans* by his student, Gerry Shishin Wick. *The Book of Equanimity* is as central to koan practice in the Soto Zen tradition as the better-known *Blue Cliff Record* is in the Rinzai tradition. The one hundred koans it discusses were first collected and comment upon with short appreciatory verses by Master Wanshi Shokaku in the twelfth century. A hundred years later, Bansho Gyoshu added prefaces. At the beginning of the twenty-first century, Shishin Wick gave a series of talks on each of the hundred cases to Zen students in Colorado, and now with this new publication he offers his commentary and translation to a wider audience. Shishin Wick was trained as a physicist and oceanographer, and his scientific background comes through in his rigorous examination of each case. His poetic sensibility is also evident in the book, such as in his commentary on 'Joshu's Dog,' which describes the noble futility of the bodhisattva vow, by using the image of someone attempting to fill up a well with snow. He draws upon examples ranging from the scholarly (comparisons with other koan collections) to the everyday (a friend's paralyzed dachshund) to show the importance of *The Book of Equanimity* in the Zen tradition and its relevance to the lives of his students and readers." (Buddhadharma)"*The Book of Equanimity* is one of the most brilliant and subtle texts in the Zen tradition. Shishin Wick's commentaries on this timeless series of koans illuminate the ancient wisdom of the east for our modern scientific world. There are few today who could shed this

kind of light for the Western reader in the 21st century." (Dennis Genpo Merzel, Roshi, President of the White Plum Asanga and Kanzeon International)

Gerry Shishin Wick is a dharma heir of Taizan Maezumi. He studied with both Soto and Rinzai Zen masters (as did Maezumi) and for 20 years his understanding of the koans in the Book of Equanimity was examined by Maezumi. A former professor of physics, oceanography, and, later, Buddhism, Wick is a teacher whose unique qualifications make him a particularly appealing author. Bernard (Bernie) Tetsugen Glassman is a dharma heir to Hakuyu Taizan Maezumi. He is the founder of the Peacemaker Circle, the famous Greyston Mandala and the Greyston Bakery (featured on 60 Minutes). He is author of Infinite Circle and, with Jeff Bridges, The Dude and the Zen Master.

This interpretation of a classic collection of Zen koans is well worth reading for the serious Zen student. Wick goes out of his way to make the cultural references clear and to indicate some of the meatiness of these koans in a way accessible to the contemporary Western Zen practitioner.

This is a wonderfully thoughtful and ambitious book that interprets the classic koan collection "Book of Serenity". As a Zen student myself, just getting into the daunting original translation, I am so glad to have this book. It's like having a flashlight in a pitch dark haunted Zen temple. Where before there was only fear and loathing now there is a beam of light. Thank you Shishin! You are a great modern master. Your eyebrows brush eyebrows with old mendicants. Ask old teacher Wang of Nanquan - Each person just eats one stalk of vegetable.

Such great heady food for thought thank you.

Excellent book with illuminating insights into timeless Zen koans.

Very interesting on koans. A background in ZEN would be necessary to follow what is presented. Lots of luck with it.

For those not versed in Koan Practice, it can be very confusing. This book does a very good job at cutting through the maze with a Western slant on the commentaries. Highly recommended.

Just what I was looking for...to mentally take me out of worries and hum drum days.Challenging and it will take me forever (slow reader)to record my favorite quotes...In essence,I'm a happy camper.

There is only positive words for this book. The author do a very good job going in debt in the koans, and make the point easy to comprehend, in many cases adding even more clarity with own words. The explanations are rich and cover different ways of interpreting the material and make it easy to notice what is skillfull and what is unskillfull action and the karmic effect of the action. Im grateful for this book.

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