

Ango Art Practice Spring 2021 Faith in Mind

Maezumi Rōshi writes: The famous *Hsin hsin ming* (Jap: *Shin jin mei*) is known as the first Zen poem. It is credited to Seng-ts'an, the third Chinese Zen Ancestor. It consists of 146 four-word lines, directly and vividly expressing the Zen spirit in a simple, compact form.

The title Faith in Mind has been translated in many ways in English such as: Trusting In Mind, Trust in the Heart, On Believing in Mind, Trust Mind, Truthful Mind, Truthful Heart. This is the heart-mind which is always ready and perfect, implying that there is no need to further "perfect" it. In Dogen's fascicle Ten Directions he expresses: '*A sincere heart, just one, is simply the ten directions crystal clear.*'

The characters for the title Faith in Mind, *Hsin-hsin Ming* (Wade Giles) may be explained in the following way:

信

Hsin means "belief" or "faith." This is not the faith in the ordinary sense, it is a belief that comes from firsthand experience, a faith which arise out of supreme knowledge and wisdom of enlightenment. This "believing" is an affirmation that all existence or reality is essentially the Buddha mind, which is our true nature. *Hsin* is the conviction that at the bottom of all phenomena lies the One Mind, the Buddha mind, which is one with our real nature, the Buddha-nature.

心

Hsin literally means "heart." It means mind, not the deluded mind of the ignorant but the Buddha-mind. *Hsin* is the mind that merges with the all-encompassing One Mind.

銘

Ming

Literally means "inscription." It means written expression or record. *Ming* also means warnings or admonitions.

For this Art Practice: We often think of faith in terms of having faith 'in' someone or something, which is one aspect. Consider also the simple, pure experience of faith itself; the firsthand, bodymind affirming experience of faith or trust, not necessarily 'in' something, but rather as *having* faith or *being* faith itself. What is this, when it's not an abstract or conceptual idea but something that is present within you?

Take a few minutes to settle into yourself. As you bring your attention to your breath, your environment (the place where you are), the 'things' that surround you (objects, people, sky,

trees, horizons, buildings) and your relationships with them – i.e. how you directly experience them – invoke *faith*. Then allow the creative impulse to express *this* in your chosen medium.* Creatively express your changing experiences of faith as you bring yourself into relationship (simple sensory contact without names and stories) with these different aspects of your inner and outer world (as mentioned above).

Study, see and express clearly how, “*All these forms are buddha sutras*” and “*the entire world of the ten directions is the radiant light of the self.*”

* Begin simply with one medium. You may stay with it the entire Ango to get some depth and facility. As your process continues if you are called to use other mediums allow yourself to organically evolve. Don't move by force or complaint. Participate in Hojin Sensei's weekly Art Sessions to give your art practice a boost.