



MIND & LIFE

Mind & Life Podcast Transcript

Zenju Earthlyn Manuel - Identity as Path

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Opening Quote – Zenju Earthlyn Manuel (00:03): *The notion of identity and the teaching of no-self get collapsed and conflated sometimes. So no-self is part of a teaching that includes impermanence, and it includes cause and effect. It's emphasizing our interdependence. So identity is quite different. If we talk about our heritage or our race, that's quite different than talking about no-self. When I began to take on this quest, I kept those things—race, sexuality, gender—as material, to walk this path.*

Intro – Wendy Hasenkamp (00:45): Welcome to Mind & Life. I'm Wendy Hasenkamp. Today, I'm speaking with author, Zen priest, and Buddhist teacher Zenju Earthlyn Manuel. Zenju's work highlights how the various aspects of our identity can become fertilizer for growth on the path of spiritual and personal development. She's also the first African-American woman ordained in the Zen tradition. I spoke with Zenju in person, back at the 2019 Mind & Life Summer Research Institute, where she was faculty with us at the Garrison Institute in New York.

(01:20) In our conversation, Zenju shares about her experience growing up in the Christian Church and the questions it raised for her, and then her unusual path into Buddhism. And then we get into her work around identity, and we talk about identity versus self (and also no-self), the truth of interdependence and cause and effect, and what's known in Buddhism as the two truths, that is relative and absolute truth, and how those frames can help us relate to our identities. Zenju also shares her perspective on bringing together spirituality and social justice. And we end with a discussion of how contemplative science can proceed in its efforts to integrate science and Buddhism.

(02:07) As always, if you'd like to learn more about Zenju's work, there's resources in the show notes for this episode, including this week, a podcast extra. These are additional clips from interviews that don't end up in the show for one reason or another, but we still want to share them with you. In this extra, Zenju talks about the deep meaning behind her rakusu, which is that bib-like garment that Zen teachers wear around their necks, and how it's a representation of her dharma community.

(02:37) I think Zenju's work and perspective is a balm, and hers is a refreshing voice in this time where even the topic of identity often feels fraught. I so enjoyed having this conversation and I hope you enjoy listening to it. It's my pleasure to share with you Zenju Earthlyn Manuel.

Wendy Hasenkamp ([02:58](#)): So I'm here with Sensei Zenju Earthlyn Manuel, thank you so much for joining us.

Zenju Earthlyn Manuel ([03:03](#)): Thank you.

Wendy Hasenkamp ([03:05](#)): Before we get into your work, I'd love to hear a little bit about the path that brought you to where you are today.

Zenju Earthlyn Manuel ([03:11](#)): It's a long one. I did start off as a child being very inquisitive about life and death. My parents made sure we went to church. So church was very prominent in our lives, and I wasn't a type of child or person that believed everything [that] was being said from the pulpit. And I had a lot of questions about what was being said, especially when I would hear maybe certain people were being left out—like, they couldn't be a part of God's world. And when I heard that, it actually hurt my heart. And I was a child, so I didn't know what that meant, but I could feel... when they said that we were the only ones that were going to heaven, I felt very sad about that. Because I knew people who weren't in the church that I loved, my friends and relatives, that it made me really sad. And then at one point I go, "Oh, that's why I should tell them, they got to come to church, and get baptized!" And then I realized that no, that doesn't make sense to me. And I would look around, at all the people walking around in the world. I was in Los Angeles being raised there. And just watching people walk around, I said, "All these people, they're not going to get to go to heaven?" And so I always had questions about that—heaven and hell.

([04:43](#)) I loved the Bible, the things in it that I thought was poetry (which I didn't know was poetry till later), but I really loved reading it, and listening to it. It kind of expanded my life in a way. I didn't see the Bible as some kind of rule book, in the way that was being taught. But I did see it as some deep philosophy. As a child, I didn't have these words for it, but I felt it in myself, and I felt myself being a thinker, philosophizing about it and then wanting to tell everybody about it. It was quite natural for me to want to discuss it. And so I would beg my mother to take me to debates. They had these debates between the different ministers and the different traditions.

Wendy Hasenkamp ([05:32](#)): Oh wow. That's interesting!

Zenju Earthlyn Manuel ([05:34](#)): Isn't it? Yeah. A lot people don't know about that, and they didn't. They don't think they do that anymore, but they did at my church. And that was powerful for me. So I got to hear the contradictions arise, and I got to hear our ministers speak back to what other ministers were saying. So I think it was important. I loved going to the revival meetings, because they were outside and I loved the smell of hay. [*laughter*] And just being outside was just, wow. And, I think that's when I actually for the first time stood up and asked a question. I didn't stand up, actually, I wrote it. They asked us to write it on a piece of paper, your question, and then when they called the question, then you would stand up.

Wendy Hasenkamp ([06:21](#)): Do you remember the question that you wrote?

Zenju Earthlyn Manuel ([06:22](#)): Yes. I asked if Cain and Abel were the first people, first men in the world. And, then there was Eve... Then how did they get married? And how did they go from there? To create more children, right? [*laughter*] I wanted to know the rest of the lineage of these great relatives that lived in Eden. And so I wrote it. I wrote it, I think I was about 10, 11, headed toward wanting to be he baptized. And, I didn't know if my question would get chosen because there's a lot of cards. So, it did, it got chosen. He picked it up, he read it and he said, "Oh!" He threw it away. He threw it back in the basket. Because I think he probably thought it was an adult, because I spoke as an adult when I was younger. And that

somebody was being facetious—not a serious question about life. But from a child's perspective, it was a serious question about life. He thought it was somebody trying to poke a hole probably into the story of the beginning of mankind. And so, when he read it I got so excited. I remember this big smile, my heart was going boom boom boom boom. Like, "Oh my God, I'm going to talk!"

[\(07:51\)](#) And my parents didn't even know I wrote it. And I jumped up, I was getting ready, and he threw it into the basket. And I sat down and I just felt... (I mean, I didn't stand up all the way. He didn't know it was me.) My heart sank. And I think probably, something in there probably was beginning of me actually being more inquisitive about, then what is this? What is this that we're doing? And it hurt, I was a kid. So that was, I think a time when I felt like I wanted to have dialogue about religion, and... I didn't know the word spirituality then, but religion, and God, and life and death.

Wendy Hasenkamp [\(08:37\)](#): Yeah, wow. And so then how did you come into Buddhism?

Zenju Earthlyn Manuel [\(08:43\)](#): Buddhism... At first I heard about Buddhism, I was in a shopping mall. *[laughter]* And, so the Soka Gakkai is a lay organization from Japan that was bringing Nichiren Buddhism to communities of despair. So I was in a black community, it was at the shopping mall. (I never get to go into the store, because I was always a problem when I was pulling out what I wanted for the groceries, so my mother would just leave me and my younger sister in the car with my dad.) And so I think I was... Actually my dad had taken a little walk somewhere and left us, and I had gotten out of the car and was standing there, it was summertime. And this person walked up to me, and he's talking to me about Buddhism. And I was like, "That sounds just like what I might want to do." It just sounded interesting; it was something different. And then I never heard about it again. I would hear friends talk about it, and it's this practice called Shakabuku, where they would just talk to strangers in a mall or any place, about the practice. And so at 11, basically I was Shakabuku-ed.

[\(09:58\)](#) And then, let's see. I grew older, and a lot of my friends were in that tradition, the Nichiren Buddhist tradition. And they were Shakabuku-ing. They would always Shakabuku me, Shakabuku me, trying to get me to come. And it just didn't... at that time I was practicing some African religions too. I was searching. I was kind of leaving the Christianity and... I had walked that walk. Not completely—[it was] still in me, but leaving it as a daily practice.

Wendy Hasenkamp [\(10:28\)](#): This was as a teenager?

Zenju Earthlyn Manuel [\(10:30\)](#): Yeah, around teen age. I stayed in the church about... Let's see, when was African...? African religion came in my 20s. I started moving away a little bit from the church, because it felt too restrictive for me, for who I felt myself to be. How was I going to be free and be this kind of Christian? I knew there were different kinds. I did know that, but I wasn't sure about them. Because I didn't know anybody who was anything else.

[\(11:00\)](#) So then 30, these two friends came to me about Shakabuku, another Shakabuku again. And I said, "Here we go with that again." And they said, "You got to come to a meeting." Because that's what you have to do. So I came to a meeting and... Well I could say, I didn't just come—I was hard, it was a push. They said, "Come." Because I wanted to go out to eat, "Let's go someplace and eat." And they said, "But first we're going to the meeting. You have to go to the meeting first."

Wendy Hasenkamp [\(11:30\)](#): Argh, hungry at the meeting! *[laughter]*

Zenju Earthlyn Manuel (11:32): Yeah. So I said, "Okay." I was so hungry, I went to the meeting with them, I was starving! *[laughter]* And, it was interesting. It had an effect on me, in a way that I wouldn't say was good or bad. It was very neutral. It was like I was looking around, I was looking in their faces to see if they had been... you know, drank the Kool-Aid. You know that kind of feeling?

Wendy Hasenkamp (11:56): Yeah.

Zenju Earthlyn Manuel (11:57): And I just kept listening to it. And then they said, "Would you like to join?"

Wendy Hasenkamp (12:04): On your first night?

Zenju Earthlyn Manuel (12:05): On the first night, "Would you like to join?" And I was like, "Uh, hmmm." And they said, "Well, how about for 30 days? Try it for 30 days."

Wendy Hasenkamp (12:15): A trial membership!

Zenju Earthlyn Manuel (12:17): And then I get a refund... *[laughter]*

Wendy Hasenkamp (12:18): Right. Free cancellation.

Zenju Earthlyn Manuel (12:21): Try it for 30 days. And I was like, "Okay." Just to say it, so we could go and eat, right? *[laughter]* Let me get these beads, and this little book, and we can go and eat. And we did. I went and ate, had my beads... Got home, I had a roommate, and he came to the door. He said, "Where were you?" And I said, "I was at this meeting, Nichiren." I said, "I got these beads, and this book." He said, "Oh, that's where I'm going tonight. I'm going around the corner to this other meeting." I was like, "Oh my God, they got all of us! Oh no, my God!" *[laughter]* So anyway, I stayed for 15 years.

Wendy Hasenkamp (13:05): Wow, that's a lot more than 30 days.

Zenju Earthlyn Manuel (13:08): More than 30 days. Before that though, I did ask a friend to come with me, to make sure I wasn't joining something that would hurt me. Because it just didn't make sense to me too much, but I felt something about it. That it was something I should take for 30 days.

Wendy Hasenkamp (13:27): Yeah. So what about it do you think made you want to stay?

Zenju Earthlyn Manuel (13:32): I began to read, mostly. I got my own books, and I started reading about Buddhism and who the Buddha was. Because I would hear about the word Buddhism and the word Buddha, but it wasn't of interest because I knew God, so I really wasn't interested. But when I read those words, some of the teachings, my heart opened back up from that time when my heart shut down, when I knew everybody wasn't going to heaven, I got very sad and grieved. And when I read Buddhist teachings, my heart opened again, and I could feel the love that I felt I should have been feeling at church. And so I always tell people, I found God in Buddha. That's what I wanted. That's what I wanted to feel—to belong, everyone to be together and part of each other. I knew that that must be true, and it must be a way. And being a child that was mistreated in school, because I went to all white schools mostly. (So, what they called desegregated schools at the time, I was part of the baby boomers that got hit with that.) And so, I needed something that would speak more about everyone, as opposed to this "going to heaven" situation that I didn't understand. So, I think that's what it was. I just heard it. I heard the love. They say God is love—well,

there may not be a "God" in Buddha, but there is love. And so if that is, then God's there, for me. God is there, in Buddhism. Yeah.

[\(15:12\)](#) – *musical interlude* –

Wendy Hasenkamp [\(15:41\)](#): So in Buddhism, we often hear a lot about the self and identity. And these things are often framed as problematic, or things to be moved beyond, or transcended. But in your work, you have embraced identity—things like race, gender, sexuality—as a path towards freedom or peace or liberation. Can you discuss how you view the self and identity?

Zenju Earthlyn Manuel [\(16:08\)](#): I think what happens, let's just bring this out, is that the notion of identity, and the teaching of no-self gets collapsed and conflated sometimes. So it's not necessarily a teaching that comes together. For people in this country because we have so much stuff around identity, it gets collapsed.

Wendy Hasenkamp [\(16:29\)](#): Right. So can you make a clear distinction in between self, at least the Buddhist notion of self, and what we would normally think of as identity?

Zenju Earthlyn Manuel [\(16:35\)](#): Yeah. So, they say there's no self, so let's go right to it. Rather than go all around that one. And so no-self, is part of a teaching that includes two other teachings that are left out. It includes impermanence, and it includes cause and effect. The Nichiren practitioners study cause and effect deeply, along with the Lotus Sutra. So I learned a lot about cause and effect.

Wendy Hasenkamp [\(17:06\)](#): Is that also what is referred to by karma? Or is there...

Zenju Earthlyn Manuel [\(17:09\)](#): Yes, I think karma's in there because there's action. And karma means action. So yes, it's involved. Impermanence, we all know about a lot. Everybody can talk about impermanence. So, no-self is part of that, and they're called the three seals or the three marks, is what they're called. And so no-self in that context just means there's no self in and of itself. It's emphasizing our interdependence, and emphasizing the interrelationship that I yearned for when I was in the Christian church. That "being together." That there's no way—no matter what race or gender or whatever, or even that we're human—that we're separate from a tree. Right? We kind of know this, we've heard these things. So the core teaching of Buddhism is... (of Buddhist teachings I would say, because Buddhism can be a whole other thing too, but Buddhist teachings can be one thing). And that is that the no-self is full of us. It's filled with us. It's not vacant. And the word 'no' doesn't mean vacant. It's talking about no distinction maybe, but not in the sense that we think empty. So people go around trying to not be a self.

Wendy Hasenkamp [\(18:29\)](#): Right. This can be the difficulty with the term emptiness.

Zenju Earthlyn Manuel [\(18:32\)](#): Right. And so that, but empty is full. It's formed, so the Enso...

Wendy Hasenkamp [\(18:37\)](#): And that's the circle...?

Zenju Earthlyn Manuel [\(18:39\)](#): ...that circle that everyone loves and we see, it's so beautiful. One breath, you make it with one breath. And that Enso represents the fullness of emptiness. It's the form of emptiness, the breath. So it's very beautiful to see it in form, emptiness in form. So no-self... So as we're speaking right here, you're interviewing me and I'm the interviewee. Okay. So, those are the conditions right now that

we're dependent upon together in a relationship right now, in this moment. So that's why you are no-self and I'm no-self, because when we get up and I go out there, I'm just a participant.

Wendy Hasenkamp ([19:23](#)): It's different.

Zenju Earthlyn Manuel ([19:24](#)): Yeah. The conditions have changed and now I'm a participant. So when I go out the door, I'm not an interviewee. So identity is quite different. If we talk about our heritage or our race, that's quite different than talking about no-self, which is our interrelationship as living beings. Not even just as humans, but as living beings. So when you get to identity, and when we're talking about our identity, we're not really talking about the identity of an alligator, even though we're related to an alligator. We're not really talking about that in this country, even when we're talking about the struggles and the turmoil, systemic oppression.

([20:04](#)) So, when I begin to take on this quest of Zen, I took it on with... holding onto what they said [to] let go. They said, "Let go of the identity. Don't cling to it. You know, maybe it's not because you're black, maybe that's not happening. Cause you're queer. It's not happening because of these things. It's happening, period, done." You put the period on that. It's happening, period. I understood that. Of course. Of course. And then I came upon the greatest teaching, which they don't teach much, in the world. They teach the four noble truths, but they rarely teach the two truths. And the two truths is relative and absolute, right?

Wendy Hasenkamp ([20:55](#)): Yes.

Zenju Earthlyn Manuel ([20:56](#)): So, relative and absolute truth, and they're not separate.

Wendy Hasenkamp ([21:00](#)): Right. And this is essential for the self issue?

Zenju Earthlyn Manuel ([21:03](#)): Exactly. It's essential to identity. Because we're embodied. So if you're trying not to, say, "I understand I'm having an illusion, or my mind is deluded. So let me see if I can try not to be deluded or..." You can't. You can't do it. But however, that doesn't mean you can't have an experience of it. I don't know if you've seen this movie everyone's talking about, I mentioned it, called When They See Us. What if someone went to those young men and said, "You're having an illusion. There's no body." How would they be able to explain their experience? Because that doesn't work in the midst of the suffering that we have. We have to take on the fodder, take on the material matter, the relative matter, so that we can use that. Not get mired down in it. I don't believe that, dwelling in it and prolonging our depression, or our woundedness, or any other thing like that. I'm not saying that.

([22:05](#)) But I feel the gateway is through our embodiment. It is through who we are. It doesn't have to be just race. I just started with race because that's where my turmoils are. That's number one for me, and then sexuality or gender, and then class, and on and on and on and on. Disability, all of that is part of my life. And so, I kept those things as material, like I said, as fodder, as fertilizer, to walk this path, and to keep it moist and keep it juicy. So to just get rid of it, would've been very dry, a very dry path.

([22:40](#)) And so I think that there's a reason we were given a body, and then there's a reason we're being introduced to spiritual paths. And so why not bring it all, to the path. So that we could use it. Now, I've gotten some feedback from all traditions, not just Buddhist traditions. African religions, people who are practicing Ifa and Candomble, and all these other... Lakota Sun Dance, Native American practices that have come to me, who have read this book and are happy, because it doesn't happen in those realms either, because we think spirit is 'out there.'

Wendy Hasenkamp ([23:20](#)): Right. And you're bringing in the body.

Zenju Earthlyn Manuel ([23:22](#)): Yeah. Where is it? Is it out there? It's hanging out around you? Okay. That could be also a paradigm or perspective, and it could be real. Okay, so I'm not even dashing that. But right here, where I'm working from, from Buddhism, you have to use your body in order to understand the practice, in order to meet harmony, in order to meet compassion. Those are experiences. I don't believe we have to become compassionate. Don't become compassionate. I don't believe you become loving and kind. I think you meet those experiences because they're already there in you. They're already there. You're having difficulty meeting that.

Wendy Hasenkamp ([24:07](#)): Accessing them, yeah.

Zenju Earthlyn Manuel ([24:08](#)): With yourself and others, and everything else in the world. So you're learning—when we're breathing, we're connecting. We're not trying to become something. We're just meeting those experiences, and the breath is teaching us how to meet them. So to me, in my practice, I experience holding onto that identity, because I'm stubborn. I held on, I didn't let it go, because I wanted to see what would the Dharma, how would it speak to the life I had lived of prolonged mistreatment? Cause if it couldn't address that, then I don't know. But I began to see, just in silence... Like, I didn't write that book as soon as I got into Zen. I wrote that book 20 years later. After I walked the path (well like 18 years)... Walked the path to see what would open up. What would I discover? I shared it, I was very afraid to share it. That book made me very afraid—I couldn't sleep, when I got published.

Wendy Hasenkamp ([25:09](#)): Is it like a vulnerability?

Zenju Earthlyn Manuel ([25:10](#)): Yeah. I couldn't sleep for a long time. I didn't know if they were going to kick me out talking about "hold onto your identity." And that the identities were the gateways. That embodiment is the gateway. Even if they say there's really no body, there's no self, there's no-

Wendy Hasenkamp ([25:24](#)): At the ultimate level, yeah.

Zenju Earthlyn Manuel ([25:25](#)): I understand that. Absolutely. But we don't need to be convinced of that, because when we're suffering, that's not the point. So I've gotten a lot of people to open their eyes in a different way, which was my point. I thought the conversation on race especially was getting stale. And I thought that maybe now is the time to talk about it in the realm of religion. In the spiritual world, because they're not talking about it anyway, but I'm going to bring it, and see if we can begin to make this conversation of the spirit world and religious world, and the social justice world, come together. Because I have friends in both camps. And in both camps they probably have some view of me. "Oh, she's a clergy, she's some kind of priest, so she's not with us." And then, the clergy priest like, "Oh, she's all about race, so she's not with us." But I'm going to continue to stay right here and see who will join me.

Wendy Hasenkamp ([26:30](#)): Yeah. That's great. So where do you find that point of intersection between the spiritual path and the social justice work? You've talked about also serenity and holding that, but also still doing the good work and fighting the fight...

Zenju Earthlyn Manuel ([26:48](#)): Yeah. There's no difference. You can study Christian theology, those who have the activist component to it, I mean, Martin Luther King... There's a lot of studies around social justice and the coming together of transformation and spirituality. I was thinking of a friend, my friend Liza

Rankow teaches the teachings of Howard Thurman. All these people already knew this, and we already know that there is an integration. So to me, social justice is spirituality, and spirituality is social justice.

(27:23) Because for me to be well—let's go back to the little girl who has a question about Adam and Eve. What happened? And what are we going to do from the... If, say that Eden and all that did exist, let's hold onto that story. What happened? What separated us from the earth? What separated us from nature to make us think that the fight was over here, and we had to fight a certain particular way? Or that we had to also do religion and spirituality in a certain way. Both of those to me have some kind of way, right, that you do. And I did both. I did both of those ways. I was completely an activist and still consider myself one, and completely clergy.

(28:14) So I think they meet at the place that they're naturally and organically intersected. Because we are working on suffering, and alleviating it, and easing it or eliminating it. And so when I see suffering in our world, I write about it, speak about it, in an integrated way. I'm rarely, "Oh let's go fight! Rarely, "Let's just pray, or sit." A lot of my friends want to just, "Let's go sit." But that's not necessarily an integration. That is an action. And it's a valid action. But it's not an integration yet, just because we're sitting there.

(29:03) So the integration, we're still working at, it's very new. And it takes a skill and a talent and an attention, in order to see where the intersection is around the suffering, in the realm of both. Not just in the realm of, "Oh, this was a bad thing, this happening in the world," or, "Oh here's the opening." But I think there's a number of people who have the ability to shed light on both, to acknowledge and recognize and bring forth the voice of justice. And at the same time, bring God, Buddha, Allah, or whoever, or just nobody, just nature, through that voice of justice. Because if we could give back to that... You know, that's why we love the trees. That's why [when] we come home, we can't wait to get out to be with ourselves, to be with us. We are the trees. That's why we're like, "Ahhhh." It reminds us. We see water slowly dripping off the tip of—which I saw the other day—water dripping, one drop from the leaf, out my window. And the mist behind it on the mountain. That's us in here. I feel the same way. When I see that, and I'm in here, I feel that.

Wendy Hasenkamp (30:27): That's beautiful.

Zenju Earthlyn Manuel (30:28): That's the integration.

(30:28) – *musical interlude* –

Wendy Hasenkamp (31:05): We just have a couple minutes left, but I would love to hear your perspective... We're here at the Summer Research Institute, and so we're around a lot of academics and scientists and other researchers who are interested in studying these kinds of practices. I'd love to hear your perspective on where the field should go, what kind of things should be studied?

Zenju Earthlyn Manuel (31:28): I heard about the Mind & Life Institute when the Dalai Lama first came, and I saw it promoted. I could say my first feeling was, "Oh no, they're taking it to science." And then my other feeling was, "Oh yes, why not?" Because, I feel where the field is now, and what I'm listening to... I've only been here a few days. And I haven't read a lot of studies, so I'm going to claim that. I did say, when we were getting ready to come here they had a faculty orientation, and I told them that I'm very scholarly, intellectual and I can go there. And I have a PhD and all these kinds of things. And I've done a lot of research on my own, when I was a social science researcher, and I've worked for think tanks. And so I do understand this world.

(32:25) But at the same time, I told them, I keep all that at bay. Because what I'm now doing is witnessing in a contemplative way of life. And I understand that some people need to have evidence of what is going on, and have it explained. So to me, if it's explained and discussed [by] having dialogue in many different ways about the same thing, I'm for it. If you want to do a movie, do a novel about it, write poetry about it, do research about it—and it all culminates to that place about what we're doing with each other and how we're living on this planet, and engaging and not, or being interconnected and not—I want to hear it. I don't care which way. You could do hip hop, talk to me. Do whatever way you're gonna bring it, but bring it. Cause I believe in bringing it. [laughter] And I hear people bringing it from different places, from all ages-

Wendy Hasenkamp (33:18): Yeah! There's a lot different kinds of "bringing it" here.

Zenju Earthlyn Manuel (33:19): Yeah. Cross gender, cross race, everything, I hear it. So I'm part of that. And so that's what I have heard here, and am very excited. I think the dialogues can be more integrated... I would have loved to have been on stage when the presentation on illusion and delusion and personhood, and self—the absolute story. Because I think that it's a real story, and it's one that... And I'm telling a story too. I'm telling a story about the relative meeting the absolute. That they're not even separate, they're just all together. There's no way of even meeting that. And then how does one experience delusion? It all comes together. I wrote an article for Buddhadharma, called... and I can't even remember the name of it, but it talked about that. That delusion and enlightenment, that they come together, they're partners. It's a tangle, together. And they can't do that dance together, delusion and enlightenment, without each other. (I didn't write that, Dogen did. And Dogen Zenji is the founder of Soto Zen. So, not Zenju.) So I'm of that thought, and that school. We're all of thought, of some school of thought. We're all thinking.

Wendy Hasenkamp (34:45): Yes. Very much. [laughter]

Zenju Earthlyn Manuel (34:48): And so that's okay. If the thinking is in the direction of our liberation and freedom, I am not against thinking at all. Let's think it, and let's talk about it, and see what we can evolve to and bring, and watch it evolve and flower through our children. Yeah.

Wendy Hasenkamp (35:12): Wonderful. Well, thank you so much for spending time with us today on the podcast. It's been really great to talk with you.

Zenju Earthlyn Manuel (35:17): Thank you, Wendy.

Outro – Wendy Hasenkamp (35:25): *This episode was edited and produced by me and Phil Walker. Music on the show is from Blue Dot Sessions and Universal. Show notes and resources for this and other episodes can be found at podcast.mindandlife.org. If you enjoyed this episode, please rate and review us on Apple Podcasts, and share it with a friend. If something in this conversation sparked insight for you, we'd love to know about it. You can send an email or voice memo to podcast@mindandlife.org. Mind & Life is a production of the Mind & Life Institute. Visit us at mindandlife.org, where you can learn more about how we bridge science and contemplative wisdom to foster insight and inspire action towards flourishing. There you can also support our work, including this podcast.*