Nirvana

*Shohaku Okumura, from* Realising Genjokoan

Nirvana is the way of life that is based on awakening to the reality of impermanence and lack of independent existence. It is not a special stage of practice, nor is it a certain condition of mind; it is simply the way to live one’s life in accordance with reality. When we truly see impermanence and lack of independent existence, we understand deeply that we cannot hold onto anything; nothing lasts forever. Seeing reality encourages us to stop clinging to our lives and their contents and gives us the chance to open the hand of thought before life forces us to open it. This seeing, accepting, and letting go is Buddhist practice.