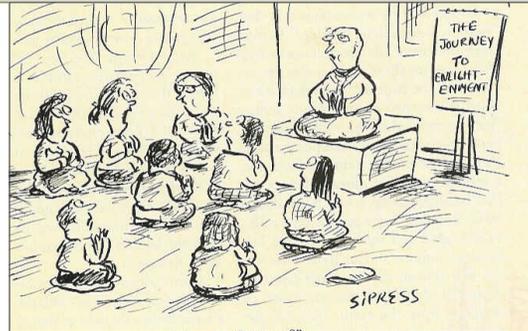


BE CREATIVE

Any ideas or personal preferences can be incorporated into your Practice Plan. Ideas:

- use an on-line meditation application (Insight Timer or Headspace for example)
- choose a lojong slogan to practice for the Period. (See Norman Fischer's Book on the practice of Lojong).
- do a "slow" half-day at home (see Thich Nhat Hanh for description)
- make a home altar and have the family help decorate and keep clean and fresh
- choose one or more gathas (a short saying designed to bring your mind to present awareness) to use at home at different times of the day
- formulate an intention and start and end each day with it
- incorporate a ritual into your life.



"Are we there yet?"

LOGISTICS AND FURTHER INFORMATION

The Intensive Practice Period will start March 15 and end on the last day of spring sesshin, April 19.

Pick up your brochure and worksheets at the January All Sangha Meeting. They will also be available on line at that time. Work carefully and thoughtfully to create your personal Practice Plan.

Before the beginning of the Intensive Practice Period, make an appointment with a preceptor to talk over your plan, to help strengthen your commitment and finalize the details and enrollment.

The Intensive Practice Period will begin and end with a ceremonial gathering of the Practice Period participants to discuss our intentions and our continuing practice journey.

Participants are encouraged to chart their Practice Plan and record their daily activities.

Participants are also welcome to find a practice partner. This can be helpful for support and accountability. You can choose your own partner or we can help find you one.

There is no cost to participate in the practice period but registration is limited to dues-paying members.

Out of Town members: Members who reside out of town can also take advantage of Practice Period by accessing documents online and setting up appointments for dokusan and/or meetings with preceptors for support.

PSZC

INTENSIVE PRACTICE PERIOD

2020 (MARCH 15-APRIL 19)

"THE HEART OF OUR PRACTICE"

WHAT IS THE PRACTICE PLAN?

The Intensive Practice Period is based in ancient Buddhist tradition — the monks and nuns gathered during the rainy season to practice intensively together. In present day practice, it is time set aside each year when practitioners make personal and collective commitments to intensify their practice.

The Intensive Practice Period depends on the integrity of the personal commitment each person who joins will make, as well as the strength of our shared intention and mutual support.

In this brochure we have provided guidelines for you to formulate a personal plan to follow for the duration of the intensive practice period. Whatever your personal circumstances - at home with small children, working in the city- there are many ways to practice.

In your personal Practice Plan, you will be asked to include **required** elements as well as those under **strongly recommended** and **supporting** practices under three categories: Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. This shaping of your Practice Plan can be a process of considerable thought and introspection. Take some time, sit with it, and talk it over with your family and sangha friends.

Practice Plan Elements

BUDDHA

Required Practice: More Zazen! Make a plan for regular zazen (5-7 days per week)

Zazen:

I will sit at home _____ times a week for _____ minutes
and/or

I will sit _____ times a week at the zendo (specify days and times. See the PSZC website for a list of possibilities)

(optional) My zazen focus will include _____

(ideas: tonglen, breath work, body scan, metta work- specify your focuses)

Strongly Recommended Practice:

Retreat:

I will commit to attending the five-day 2020 spring retreat either in full or for _____ days

Supporting Practice: some ideas

Body Practice:

I will commit to doing the following body practice for the practice period:

(some form of regular exercise- specify the form and frequency)

Art Practice:

I will commit to carrying out some form of art practice over the following 5 week practice period (specify):

(ideas: write a poem, keep a nature or sketch book, learn or write a song)

At Home or at Work:

I will commit to focus my full attention whenever I'm doing this specific activity: _____

(ideas: washing dishes, walking the dog, driving to work)

DHARMA

Required Practice:

Setting Practice Plan:

Anytime between January 15 and March 15, I will set up a meeting with a preceptor to go over my practice plan.

Working with a teacher:

I will meet with the abbot in dokusan (brief meetings for practice questions) _____ times (at least twice, 4 X recommended during the practice period.

Readings and dharma study:

I will commit to reading intensively Thich Nhat Hanh's book "The Heart of Understanding: Commentaries on the Prajnaparamita Heart Sutra".

Supporting Practice

Writing:

I will commit to keeping a daily/weekly practice journal during the five week period.

SANGHA

Required Practice:

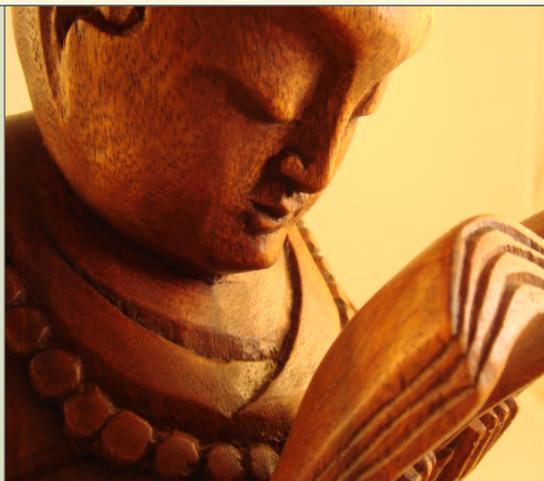
Work Practice: I will support our sangha by doing 2 hours of work practice during the five weeks. Some ideas:

There will be work parties scheduled both on the Land and in the Zendo.

Work with Sokan Chris Ezzell to clean a tea house

Volunteer for helping with a homeless dinner

Out of town participants can volunteer service hours in their community



INTENTION

Before you begin to shape your practice plan, take some time to reflect and write a paragraph or two about your intention for committing to the Intensive Practice Period.

Why am I doing Zen practice? Why is it important to me in my life? Why is it important in the world?

IDEA: Sit for a while with the question "What is the most important thing?" Wait for the intuitive truth of what is the most important now to arise...write a phrase of three to seven words that expresses it as well as you can (from Clouds in Water Zen Center).

CREATING YOUR PRACTICE PLAN

As a guide to the creation of your own Practice Plan, we have included "required" elements, "strongly recommended" elements and "supporting" elements under each of the three categories of Buddha, Dharma and Sangha. Remember your commitment, and don't carry a load that is too heavy, or sell yourself short by planning a practice that lacks challenge.