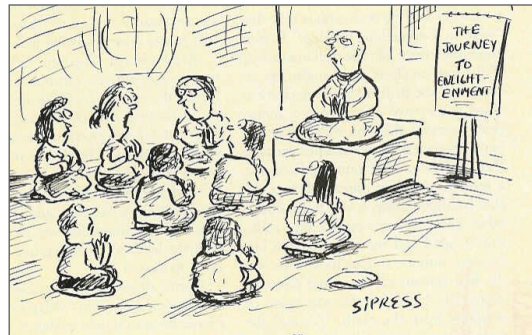


BE CREATIVE

Any ideas or personal preferences can be in-corporated into your Practice Plan. Ideas:

- use an on-line meditation application (Insight Timer or Headspace for example)
- designate a “no-tech” day each week
- do an at-home retreat day
- 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.
- take a deep dive into something you’ve been meaning to explore



“Are we there yet?”

Logistics and Further Information

Dates: The Intensive Practice Period will start March 13 and end on the last day of spring session, April 17..

First steps:

- 1) **There is no cost to participate in the practice period but registration is limited to members.** If you’d like to explore membership, contact membership@pszc.org. Non-local members are welcome, and are welcome to participate in the practice plan.
- 2) **Your brochure and worksheets will be available on-line by early January.** Work carefully and thoughtfully to create your personal Practice Plan for the intensive period.
- 3) **Sign up on the pszc.org website under “events”**
- 4) **Make an appointment with a preceptor to talk over your Practice Plan before March 13.** A list of preceptors is on the planning worksheet.
- 5) **Join us if you can via Zoom (or possibly in person) at our ceremonial start of the Intensive practice Period on Sunday March 13** after our service.
- 6) **Participants are also welcome to find a practice partner.** This can be helpful for support and accountability.
- 7) **Sign up to meet with a teacher in dokusan at least twice during the practice period** either online or in person. (Signup info to come)

PSZC

INTENSIVE PRACTICE PERIOD
2022 (MARCH 13-APRIL 17)

LIFE AND PRACTICE ACCORDING
TO THE TEACHINGS OF
BODHIDHARMA

WHAT IS INTENSIVE PRACTICE PERIOD?

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 core elements as well as strongly recommended and supporting practices under three categories: Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha, representing the “three jewels” of Buddhism. 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.



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 core elements, strongly recommended elements and optional 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.

Practice Plan Elements

"BUDDHA"

Practices based in meditation and contemplation

Core Practice:

Set your intentions for zazen and commit to more sitting than usual, if you can, for this five week period.

Strongly Recommended Practice:

- Attend as much as you can of the Spring retreat, from April 12-17, 2022
- Attend as many half-day sits as you can

Optional Supporting Practices

Explore how body practice, posture, diet, or your home or work environment intersects with your practice; do additional sitting or retreats with other groups; volunteer to learn a Zen ritual role....

"DHARMA"

Practices based in learning and reflection

Core Practices

Working with a teacher:

Meet with a teacher in dokusan (brief meetings for practice questions) at least twice during the practice period

Readings and Dharma study:

If you can, get a copy of the book *The Essence of Chan: A Guide to Life and Practice According to the Teachings of Bodhidharma* by Guo Gu.

Readings and Dharma study:

Sunday talks and Wednesday discussions will address aspects of Bodhidharma's teachings, and other readings may be accessible online as well. Come to as many of these sessions as you can.

Optional Supporting Practices:

Taking online classes, listening to podcasts, doing additional readings, memorizing chants, reflecting in a journal....

"SANGHA"

Practices based in building community

Core Practice:

Support our sangha and community by doing 2 hours of work practice during the five weeks through Zen Center gardening, maintenance, or administrative work. Out of town participants can volunteer service hours in their own community.

Optional Supporting Practices

Connect with members of the sangha in a new way; write appreciation notes to sangha members; share something on our google group email about how the practice plan is going for you ...