

# *Handbook for Zazen*

## *Tips for how to do Zazen*

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- 1.* Grounding your body in.
- 2.* Make your spine straight with shoulders, chest and neck relaxing.
- 3.* Concentrate on your breathing.
- 4.* Keep your eyes open.
- 5.* Stay in every single moment.



### *Before you start Zazen session*

Be silent at the entrance of Zendo hall. Walk in silence towards Tan (Zabuton, seat) with Gassyo (join your palms together). Make a Monjin (a deep bow) in front of your Tan then take a seat. Loose and relaxed clothes with barefoot are recommended for the sessions to adopt an easy physical attitude.

### *A method of Zazen*

There are three essential elements for doing Zazen ; posture, breath and mind. You must focus on these three and balance them in the sessions. This is the very basic foundation to approach to the right way of “ How to do Zazen ”. You take three steps as follows.

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## 1. Choh-shin / tone your posture

- Set up your legs at your seat. Sit cross-legged and place your right foot on the top of your left thigh (Hanka Fuza, half-lotus position). Next rest your left foot on the top of your right thigh (Kekka Fuza, lotus position). If it's hard for you to do both ways, you may stay with Hank Fuza.
- Make a position for hand. Place your right hand with its palm up on your foot, next place your left hand with the same way on your right palm. Extend your both thumbs toward each other but not quite touching. This is the most popular position for hand when you do Zazen called Hokkai Johin. Draw Hokkai Johin toward your lower abdomen. Relax your shoulders, leave a little space under your arm and elbows.
- Settle and stabilize your whole body on the Tan. Rock your body (Yohshin) forward to backward, left to right as you find center of the balance. Extend your lumbar area and make your spine straight to upward.
- Stand your neck straight with your chin pulling in lightly. Close your lips. So do teeth and tongue inside of your mouth.
- Look at about 1.5m ahead on Tatami (floor) without any tension of eyelids. Your eyes should be half-closed (Hangan).
- Scan your whole posture at last. Stabilize yourself on the Tan with spine straight, shoulders relaxing.



Kekka Fuza



Hanka Fuza



Hokkai Johin



## 2. Choh-soku / tone your breathing

- Exhale slowly as you deflate the air from whole body. When you completely exhale, inhale quietly as you let the air flow into your body.
- Be conscious of your lower abdomen (Tanden, about 10cm below your navel), and eventually find a calm state of breathing.

Diaphragmatic respiration is taken for the breathing in Zazen. Exhale calmly, slowly and long as much as you can. Imagine to breath with all pores of your whole body. It may help you to have relaxed, long breaths.

## 3. Choh-shin / tone your mind

After posture and breathing, tone your mind. Concentrate on your breathing, rather than try to reach a state of blank mind. "Susoku-kan" (counting breaths) can work for your concentration. Count one exhalation and one inhalation as one breathe, count it from one to ten. Go back to one again when you reach to ten, and keep breathing repeatedly.

Try to make your session balanced in order to feel good about yourself at the end of it.

## Keisaku

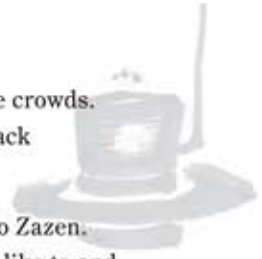
Keisaku can be given to make you re-concentrate on Zazen session. The purpose is to help to tone your posture and breathing, neither to wake you up nor a kind of punishment. Relax your shoulders and back when you get actual sticks. Here is the order of the events if you'd like to have an experience of Keisaku.

- Make Gassyoh on your Tan while seated and wait for the master to come.
- Make a deep bow with Gassyoh when you face each other.
- Bend your upper body forward with your arms folded. Remain in that position.
- You have four strikes in total, two times each for left and right side.
- After the strikes, raise yourself and make a deep bow with Gassyoh.
- Re-align your posture as you begin another fresh session.



In our daily lives, our minds has been exhausted, stepped on and dirtied from the crowds.

It is necessary for us to wash and purify this dusty, stained mind and get back our state in order to discover a certain meaning of one's life.



Senshin Zazen-Kai session is neither practice nor a counsel group. You simply do Zazen. You could visit quiet precincts of the temple whenever you need, whenever you feel like to and do Zazen calmly among the singing of the birds.

The meaning of "Senshin" is washing one's mind. Through Zazen sessions, you wash out and purify your mind and face your problems, worries or sufferings to find a way out for each one.

It cannot be a real solution if it's given by someone. It won't work unless you struggle and reach out on your own.

"Do not prevent anyone from coming nor leaving (Kuru mono wa kobamazu, Saru mono wa owazu)".

This is the ways of the Zens. Our gate opens for everyone.

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