



schedule meditation members contact



*All beings by nature are Buddha, as ice by nature is water...*  
- Hakuin Zenji, *Song of Zazen*

**Zen Columbus Sangha** is our community (sangha) to support Zen meditation practice. We meditate as a group every Tuesday evening (7:00pm) and Saturday morning (8:30am). All meditations are open to the general public. While we encourage donations, there is no cost to attend.

#### **Zazen Orientation**

To learn more about zazen (sitting meditation), we invite you to attend our orientation program given each month on the second Saturday 8:30-10:00am, and the fourth Tuesday 7:00 - 8:30 pm.

For an in-depth, downloadable explanation of meditation positions [click here](#).

#### **Meditation Practice**

Zazen is the means to become aware of our true nature and so it is the heart of zen practice. Zazen means "seated Zen."

Cushions and chairs are always available for your use. Ask about different postures: cross-legged, kneeling, sitting in chair.

Remember to keep your back straight, shoulders and abdomen relaxed, and eyes open with unfocused gaze 3 - 4 feet in front of you on the floor. Rest your hands in your lap.

Pay attention to the settling of your breath, mind, and body. Sit with dignity like a mountain and with the energetic strength of a young lion. "Dullness and distraction are struck down." -- Dogen Zenji - *Fukanzazengi*

Do not casually move to adjust your position. If you need to move, do so consciously and mindfully, and quietly so as not to disturb others.

#### **Etiquette**

Please arrive early. Zazen begins promptly on the half-hour.

If you are new to zazen, please arrive still earlier and let the timekeeper know that you may need some assistance (the timekeeper sits at the back). Pick up a zafu (meditation cushion). Gassho and bow in the entrance every time you enter and leave the zendo. Find an empty zabuton (mat) and place the zafu on it, then bow toward them. Turning in

the direction of the altar, bow toward the center of the room. Sit and prepare for zazen.

### **Zazen and Kinhin**

One strike of the clappers and three bells marks the beginning of meditation blocks. These last for 25 minutes and alternate with 5 minutes of kinhin, walking meditation.

Two strikes of the bell mark the beginning of kinhin. Do a half bow on your cushion and begin to stand. When the leader strikes the clappers once, bow to center and turn to left. Fill in any empty spaces by walking forward quickly. If you need to leave or use the restroom, you may do so during kinhin. When the leader strikes the clappers once, quickly continue around to your place and wait until the leader signals. Gassho and bow to center, turn facing the altar and bow to your cushion.

A single strike of the bell marks the end of the final block of zazen. Do a half bow and remain on your cushion.

### **Zen Service**

*For a copy of the chants and the translations that are used by ZCS, [click here](#)*

Hold your chant book up near your face and chant loudly enough so that you can hear yourself. After "Great Vows for All" the leader rings the inkin bell with a crescendo. This is the signal to rise and face the altar. The inkin is rung once and everyone does a kneeling prostration. Repeat twice more. At the next ring of the inkin, bow towards the altar. The leader approaches the altar, bows, extinguishes candle, bows and returns. At the next ring of the inkin, bow towards the center.

### **Additional Reading**

Some of our members have compiled a [list](#) of books that have helped them with their practice.

### **Other ZCS Activities**

Watch our [schedule](#) on our website and/or subscribe to our listserv. We hold half-day sits, book and dharma discussions, potlucks and dinners out.

*[For a downloadable version of this page, click here.](#)*

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