

Mountains and Rivers Order – Fall 2018 Ango Training Commitment

Name: _____

Ango is a wonderful time to work toward making our lives more unified with practice. In addition to practicing moment-to-moment awareness in your daily activities, what other ways can you bring yourself into contact with the dharma during the day? Let this question guide you as you formulate your commitments for the angu. Ideally, your angu will include deliberate periods of practice in which you set aside time for one or two of the Eight Gates, as well as an ongoing effort to bring elements of the Eight Gates into the midst of your regular routines.

Please reflect on the material below and your other life priorities as you plan your commitments for this angu. Remember, the purpose of angu is to renew and deepen our commitment to practice and training as integral parts of our daily life.

Return this sheet to the Monastery Training Office by Tuesday, August 28, 2018. Consider joining the sangha for the Angu Opening Ceremony on Sunday, September 2nd at ZMM or Sunday, September 9th at the Temple. You're welcome to call the Training Office if you have questions.

Training Retreats

Training within the sangha is an essential aspect of angu. Indicate the two retreats, at least one of them at the Monastery, that you commit to attending.

1. An Intensive Meditation Retreat at Zen Mountain Monastery:

Note: Sesshin, Wild Grasses, and the Peaceful Dwelling Intensive all fulfill this requirement.

2. A Second Retreat at ZMM, ZCNYC, or an MRO Affiliate*:

Any retreat, zazenkai or a second sesshin fulfills this requirement; so does a short period of residency at the Monastery (strongly encouraged for MRO students).

***If you can't attend a second retreat during the angu, you may:**

- 1) Attend three of either a mondo, fusatsu, or dharma encounter. You might also participate in a Web Mondo with one of the teachers (available to Practicing Members and Training Students).
- 2) Have face-to-face teaching at least twice each month (formal MRO students).
- 3) Do a one-day (8-9 hours) silent meditation intensive by yourself at home.

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Concentration Practice

This is a way to develop single-pointed mindfulness as part of our daily life. Choose a simple and brief task or activity that you do each day and commit to letting your mind rest entirely in that. Part of the challenge is remembering to actually take up your concentration practice throughout the entire angu, so also consider how you can best help yourself do that.

My concentration practice will be:

Eight Gates

This angu we will focus on the gates of Zazen and Buddhist Studies. There is an optional Art Practice assignment posted on the [angu site](#). Please choose any additional gates of training you would like to focus on.

Zazen: (All angu Participants) Outline your daily / weekly sitting practice for the Angu. You may wish to intensify your zazen by sitting more, or by committing to sitting more frequently with sangha at the Monastery, Temple, or in an affiliate. Consider also including moments of standing or sitting 'zazen' (eyes open, being mindful) while waiting in line, commuting, and at other times of the day.

Buddhist Studies: This angu we'll be studying the theme of Buddha Ancestors. The teachers have assembled a group of readings that will help us explore this rich topic from a variety of positions. Those readings are available from the angu web page. If you are planning on working with other texts as part of your angu practice, you may list them here.

Check the angu schedule for study sessions at ZMM and ZCNYC and consider attending. Some of the study sessions at ZMM will be available via Livestream, as will the Monastery's Angu opening.

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Art Practice: (All angos Participants) The art practice assignment is posted on the angos website and can also be downloaded below. Note the medium you intend to use (or at least begin with) below. You may also find it useful to commit to a specific time each day or week when you plan on working with the assignment. Please mark your calendar for the art practice sharing (November 7th, 7pm at ZMM and November 9th, 6:30 pm at the Temple) and join us if you are able. If you have questions about the art practice, please call the Training Office.

Liturgy: (Optional) Consider how you might use liturgy to help develop your relationships with your Buddha Ancestors—chanting services, dedication of merit, and bowing practice can all be used to express gratitude, invite connection, and even to ask for guidance. Describe your liturgy practice during angos.

Body Practice: (Optional) Indicate any body practice that you will be engaging during the angos.

Right Action: (Optional) Many of us are involved in forms of political and social action. If you would like to take this up as part of your angos practice, please consider how you might use liturgy or zazen to help you approach it as bodhisattva activity.

In relation to the training gate of Right Action, the larger sangha is encouraged to take up some of the themes and resources connected to Beyond Fear of Differences, our developing program of anti-bias and anti-oppression study and practice. Shugen Roshi will be speaking to this work and its relevance to the Angos theme in the first few teishos of the angos.

You can follow this link to the [BFOD Resources page](https://zmm.org/our-programs/beyond-fear-of-differences-resource-list/) on the MRO website:
<https://zmm.org/our-programs/beyond-fear-of-differences-resource-list/>

For those who identify as white we particularly recommend the following materials:

1. "Seeing White" — a podcast series from Scene on Radio
2. *What Does It Mean to Be White?* by Robin DiAngelo
3. *White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack* by Peggy McIntosh

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Please indicate any activities you plan on taking up this angu related to Right Action.

Making and Maintaining Your Ango Commitment

This angu we are encouraging the sangha to make time to check in about their commitments once angu is underway. It's good for angu to be a little bit of a stretch, but if you've aspired to things that are unrealistic, then angu can take on a tone of "failure" or "success." Instead, let's take up the skillful practice of adjusting our commitment to better meet the reality of our lives. Please print or save a copy a of your angu form that you can refer to for this purpose, and during the first week of October, we'll remind you to review it. Shugen Roshi will be offering a video conference about this on October 7th, and you can also contact your training advisor or teacher with any questions.

[Register online](#) or mail, email, or fax this to the Monastery Training Office by Tuesday, August 28th (zmmtrain@mro.org; fax: 845-688-5474)

(All angu forms will be reviewed and processed at the ZMM Training office, so even if you will be practicing primarily at the Temple, this sheet should still come directly to the Monastery.)

Keep a copy for yourself that you can refer to during the angu and plan to review your commitments as the angu unfolds.

To participate formally, we ask a suggested donation of \$45. The teachers put a great deal of work into preparing the angu and all its different offerings; making a donation is a way of helping us value the angu and our commitments, as well as a way to support the Monastery and Temple. If making a financial contribution is prohibitive for you at this time, consider offering some of your time for work practice or in other service to the sangha.

REMINDER that completing this form does not register you for any retreats. You must register separately, and angu sesshins tend to fill up, so don't delay.

To attend a ZMM retreat, call (845) 688-2228 or email registrar@mro.org.

To attend a Temple retreat, call (718) 875-8229 or email zcnyc@mro.org.

Angu Registration donation: (\$45 suggested) \$_____

Credit Card Number _____ - _____ - _____ - _____ Expiration date ____/____

Card Security Code _____ Name as it appears on Card _____

____ Use card on File ____ I am mailing a check ____ I will offer work or other service