

Illuminated Journal: The Art of Noticing - Live Recordings

*Seeing Forms with the Whole Body and Mind,
Hearing Sounds with the Whole Body and Mind
One Understands Them Intimately.*

—Eihei Dogen

Illuminate: light, light up, throw light on, cast light upon, brighten, make brighter, shine on

For this Ango we will be working on Illuminated Journals. This is not a journal in the sense of a personal, reflective diary, but live recordings of what we notice. It is an invitation to a journey of intimacy into the world. It is seeing, hearing, expressing with the whole body-mind as we experience our lives over the next three months.

You will need a blank book of some kind to begin. (See some suggestions below.) Keep in mind that we can study and record details anywhere and everywhere, so get something portable. Then, bring it with you everywhere. Any moment can be ripe. You can notice fruits and vegetables, mountains, rivers, rocks, trees, buildings, plants, lamps, the moon, bugs, your children, friends and strangers and the weather. You can record travels faraway and journeys up close. You can notice the wonder of textures, colors, and patterns. How do we keep meeting and discovering what is right in front of us that we may have never noticed? Come closer. Come closer still.

Your illuminated journal can join words, poems, delightful descriptions with images, collage cut outs, paste-in scraps, swatches of pure color. Words written large and small upwards and large across pages. You can use gestural marks, no look lines, smudges of color, found objects, rubbings and fun facts you've looked up in a nature book. Let your creative expression slow you down, allow it to be a way to pause and connect with your surroundings with this amazing Earth.

The illuminated journal form is very immediate—there is no time to analyze, consider or second guess. Let your life dash through the pages and leave mysterious tracks behind! Then, over time, we can see how apparently random details cohere. They form memories that are distinct, unique and eternally fresh. By the end of angō, we want to have every page filled. It's a full 90 day recording! You can be on it anywhere as much as you would like—illuminating page after page after page. In November we'll have a journal sharing.

NOTE: Hojin Sensei will offer some instruction and guidance to get us started in a short video to be uploaded to the angō site. Then, during the angō, she'll offer prompts to ignite creative sparks and keep us noticing.

Materials needed: A blank book. Choose one that feels good in your hands that you would love to fill. It should be bigger than pocket-size, but not too big. You should be able to fit it in your backpack or workcase. You want to be able to take it with you everywhere! I prefer hard or soft bound without a spiral ring, since the spiral keeps you from using a two-page spread effectively. It's worth it to get a good one with the ability to work in various mediums.

Have some pens, pencils, colored pencils, crayons, white eraser, markers, scissors, glue stick, watercolors in a small pouch that you can carry with you all the time. (Check what might already be in your home, in drawers, the floating pens and pencils...) I love Pigma Micron pens that write fine and beautiful (005 and .01 sizes) and also cheap ball point pen blue ink!