

DOSHINJI CODE

Monastic Rule of Conduct at Zen Mountain Monastery

(Revised 4/16/21)

For centuries, Zen training has been conducted within the framework of a distinctive monastic style that creates a conducive container for dharma study, meditation, and the actualization of the teachings in daily life. Master Pai-chang created the Zen monastic code that has shaped Zen training since Tang dynasty China. All subsequent Zen monastic codes in Asia stem from his original work.

The Doshinji Code is an adaptation of the Pai-chang code made relevant to American Zen practice, and taking into consideration the unique combination of monastic and lay training. All formal Mountains and Rivers Order (MRO) students and resident trainees, in residential training, participating in programs, or visiting the Monastery, for long or short periods of time, are subject to these monastic guidelines and rules.

MONASTERY: Zen training at the Monastery utilizes the traditional Zen monastic form rather than the form of a Zen center or community. Living within a monastic environment is significantly different from living within other types of communities or a private residence. Its express purpose is to facilitate the practice, realization and actualization of the Buddha Way through simplifying one's daily needs and concerns for the duration of one's residential training, allowing for total immersion in traditional monastic practice. As such, both monastic and lay practitioners are subject to the same training, deportment and practice demands. The Monastery is continually creating and maintaining an "archive of sanity." Each student and resident practitioner is part of this process and will benefit from it individually. They are also expected to contribute to the overall strength and harmony of the religious training for all. Residents and students are asked to take full responsibility for making this work.

RELATIONSHIPS: Maintaining appropriate personal relationships is probably one of the most difficult areas to work with and attend to when living in community. It requires a keen awareness and sensitivity in our actions and the ways we deport ourselves. Do our speech and actions create a harmonious or unharmonious training situation? Most of us are coming in from the secular world where there are no 'rules' or boundaries in how we conduct ourselves in terms of our attractions and desires. Monastery practice is consciously and purposefully different in how we are asked to navigate and conduct ourselves in this regard, so that at all times we can be clear and intentional about our attention and focus. To be in residential training is to be deeply focused on practicing the Dharma.

Thus, to be in residence at the Monastery is to make a firm, living commitment to *not* create a new romantic or exclusive relationship, and to maintain relationships with other sangha members that are clear and free from sexual tension. This guideline is both for you, the individual, and for the harmony of the entire community. Together we are creating a respectful, bounded container for practice and training. If such an energy does arise, and you feel a particular attraction to someone, you are expected to bring this forward and seek guidance from the teachers and training staff immediately. At this point you may be asked to meet with the Guardian Council (a group of 3-5 senior practitioners) to determine the best course of action.

In meeting with the Guardian Council, if you or the persons involved are able and willing to accept guidance in how to work with your emotions and desires, not acting them out but instead returning to your commitment to residential training, you will be met in that intention, in which case the situation can be quite workable and growth can take place. If you are not able to maintain a clear intention not to form a new relationship, or do not wish to take up the practice of discipline and distance required, you may be asked to end your period of residency.

As a residential sangha, it is of critical importance that we learn to rely on each other, and practice within each other's trust.

ROOMS: Rooms are provided for all long-term residents and should be seen as an extension of the other training areas of the Monastery (e.g. zendo, library, kitchen, etc.). They should be simply furnished and kept neat and clean at all times. Use of the internet, cell phones, laptops and other electronic devices should be limited to essential business and dharma related activities during the training week. Please use headphones as appropriate. Residents are not to use their rooms for entertaining guests (resident or non-resident). Outside guests should not share a resident's room for sleeping quarters (see VISITORS). No alteration or construction should be done to change any room or cabin without prior approval by the Operations Director. The condition of one's room reflects the condition of one's practice. Please learn to live simply.

DRESS: For residents and students, zazen robes are the required dress for the zendo and ceremonies. Persons without robes should wear dark, neat, loose fitting clothing. Dress should be modest--keep shoulders and knees covered during the training week.

DEPARTMENT: The Monastery building is the heart of our training center. Silence and introspection is the general prevailing attitude. There should be no talking in the zendo. Support your own practice as well as that of the sangha by making the atmosphere in the main building, private rooms and monastery grounds one of contemplation, study and meditation.

ALCOHOL AND RECREATIONAL DRUGS: Alcohol and recreational drugs are not permitted on the Monastery property. On special occasions alcohol may be served with meals with the authorization of the Monastery's Board of Directors. Alcohol and illegal or recreational drugs are not to be consumed at any time during the scheduled training time, and at no time may one be on the Monastery grounds while intoxicated. Residents should understand this rule and its importance in relation to their practice while in residential training. While having a drink of alcohol at an off-campus establishment during hosan is permitted, one should do so only in moderation.

PETS: Pets are defined as animals kept exclusively for the personal pleasure of the owner. This does not include working animals. Residents are not permitted to keep pets while at the Monastery.

COMING AND GOING: The daily schedule defines the day's routine for all residents. At lights-out, each practitioner should be in their assigned room with the lights out, or in the zendo doing zazen. Missing scheduled events or leaving the premises (except on Monastery business and hosan) should be cleared with a staff person.

CARETAKING: Every resident, from the Abbot to the newest novice, is responsible for the maintenance of the building and grounds that provide our shelter and nourishment and is therefore to be assigned a caretaking practice. This practice should be conducted during the scheduled caretaking period whenever possible. The practice of taking care of the buildings and land that support our practice should not be taken lightly and should be conducted in an attitude of silence and mindfulness.

SERVING: Part of residency at the Monastery includes service to others: the teacher, the seniors, the sangha and particularly to guests and visitors. Please make it your practice to assist whenever possible in making retreatants, guests and visitors feel welcome and comfortable. Serving is a form of selfless giving - dana paramita.

VEHICLES: Monastery vehicles are to be operated by their designated operators only and only in the conduct of the Monastery's business. In emergencies, special permission for personal use may be obtained from the Operations Director.

VACATION: There is no vacation during the first year of residential training. Vacation time for long-term residents and staff is as follows: during the second year—one week; third year—two weeks; fourth year and more - three weeks. Vacations should be taken one week at a time, and should, if at all possible, be taken off of the Monastery property. Vacations should be scheduled during the Summer, Fall or Winter Training Period, and should be cleared with the Training Office in advance.

SICK LEAVE: The zendo monitors are to be informed if any scheduled events are to be missed because of sickness. Persons on sick leave should remain in their room or another designated space so that we can take care of them. They will be served meals by the kitchen staff and visited each day by a member of the training staff. Serious illness should always be attended by certified medical practitioners. Due to the rigorous nature of residential training, the Guardian Council should consider if it is appropriate for a person suffering extended or repeated illness to remain in residence.

VISITORS: All visitors must have explicit permission to be on the Monastery premises and are required to register through the Training Office. Guests of residents must also be granted permission to visit the Monastery in advance of their arrival, and should register through the office. If the guest seeks to stay overnight they will be assigned a room for sleeping.

COMMITMENT: Commitment and agreement form the foundation of both social responsibility and sangha life. Persons who are clear on their agreements and fulfill their commitments strengthen both their own personal lives and the life of the sangha. It is expected that resident practitioners clearly understand their agreements with this Monastery and intend to commit themselves to the fulfillment of those agreements. Ignorance of the Doshinji Code rules is not an acceptable excuse for not observing them. It is the responsibility of each member to properly inform themselves and carry out this practice code.

PRECEPTS: The Precepts of the Buddha Way form the basis of ethical conduct and moral commitment in all aspects of training at the Monastery, whether or not the practitioner has formally received the precepts.

The Three Pure Precepts

1. Not creating evil
2. Practicing good
3. Actualizing good for others

The Ten Grave Precepts

1. Affirm life; Do not kill
2. Be giving; Do not steal
3. Honor the body; Do not misuse sexuality
4. Manifest truth; Do not lie
5. Proceed clearly; Do not cloud the mind
6. See the perfection; Do not speak of others errors and faults
7. Realize self and other as one; Do not elevate the self and blame others
8. Give generously; Do not be withholding

9. Actualize harmony; Do not be angry

10. Experience the intimacy of things; Do not defile the Three Treasures

The Doshinji Code exists to provide a matrix within which we may practice our lives in peace and harmony with each other, our natural environment, and the community that contains us. Our mutual commitment to uphold these agreements is what makes this possible. Please strengthen your own practice as well as that of the sangha by diligently practicing these guidelines.

Zen Mountain Monastery

Doshinji,

Geoffrey Shugen Arnold, Abbot