

Information for Yong Maeng Jong Jin Retreatants

What to Bring

- Your bowing robe if you have one, and if you are a dharma teacher your long robes (we normally have enough eating bowls for everyone)
- Seasonally appropriate clothing without images or writing on it
- Loose clothing that is comfortable for sitting (preferably long pants)
- Outdoor clothes (including rain gear if appropriate) for work period
- If you need a kneeling bench, special cushions, or a special chair, please bring your own.

Please do not bring:

- cameras, tape recorders, MP3 players, CD players, PDAs, laptops, or diaries
- personal food or beverages (let us know of any dietary restrictions you may have)
- jewelry, perfumes, or any personal care products which are strongly scented

Sleeping at the Zen Center

- Empty Gate is an urban Zen Center located in Berkeley, CA. Many of our members chose to commute home each evening, not sleeping at the center during retreats.
- Retreatants are welcome to sleep at the Zen Center during retreats, without any additional cost.
- We try to segregate those who snore from those who do not. Snorers are often put in the living room area (with couch and carpeted area), and the rest in the Dharma room. Please let us know if you snore.
- In the Dharma room, there are a limited number of futons to sleep on. Others can stack up meditation mats. Or bring your own sleeping pad, of course.
- You are responsible for all other bedding. So please bring a sleeping bag (or sheets and blankets), and a pillow if you want one.
- Please quickly store your bedding and arrange the Dharma Room in the morning

Additional information for those staying at the Zen Center:

- The center has one shower and two bathrooms for use by the retreatants. For larger retreats, we will put up a sign-up sheet on the shower.
- We supply toilet paper and soap, but you must bring all other toiletry and personal care articles. A towel and a small flashlight are suggested.
- There are plenty of stores you can walk to on breaks to buy any articles that you forget to bring.

Transportation

- For those coming to the Zen Center with your own car, be aware that on weekdays (including Fridays) the neighborhood of the Zen Center has strictly enforced two hour parking limits. Car tires are marked with chalk, and if they do not appear to have been moved two hours later, your car will receive a steep parking ticket. Check your car frequently or park several blocks West (past Martin Luther King, Jr. Ave) where there is no 2 hour limit.
- If you are taking Bart
 - Take the "Richmond" Bart train to the Downtown Berkeley Bart station
 - Get off at the Downtown Berkeley Bart station
 - Walk South on Shattuck
 - Turn left at Parker Street
 - 2200 Parker street is the address and it will be on the right hand side just pass Fulton St.
- For other transportation needs, contact the Vice Abbot or Head Dharma Teacher

Head Dharma Teacher: hdt@emptygatezen.com

Vice Abbot: viceabbot@emptygatezen.com

Practice Information

Schedule

Everyone is encouraged to participate fully in the schedule. If you need to miss any part of the practice schedule, please let the Head Dharma Teacher know. The head dharma teacher is in charge of the dharma room and formal practice. Interviews are given during chanting and sitting periods as determined by the retreat leader. The dharma room is open during breaks for those wishing to do extra practice, stretch, or rest.

Friday

9:30 am 108 Bows

10:00 - 12:30 Sitting and Walking Meditation

12:40 Lunch

1:00 - 2:00 Break Period

2:00 - 4:30 Sitting and Walking Meditation

4:30 - 5:30 Break Period

5:30 Dinner

6:00 - 6:30 Short Break

6:30 - 7:30 Chanting

7:30 - 9:20 Sitting and Walking Meditation

9:20 - 9:30 Chanting

Saturday

5:45 am Wake-up Bell
6:00 108 Bows
6:30 - 6:50 Morning Bell Chant
6:50 - 8:00 Sitting and Walking Meditation
8:10 Breakfast
8:40 - 9:40 Work Period
9:40 - 10:00 Break Period
10:00 - 12:30 Sitting and Walking Meditation
12:40 Lunch
1:00 - 2:00 Break Period
2:00 - 4:30 Sitting and Walking Meditation
4:30 - 5:30 Break Period
5:30 Dinner
6:00 - 6:30 Short Break
6:30 - 7:30 Chanting
7:30 - 9:20 Sitting and Walking Meditation
9:20 - 9:30 Chanting

Sunday

5:45 am Wake-up Bell
6:00 108 Bows
6:30 - 6:50 Morning Bell Chant
6:50 - 8:00 Sitting and Walking Meditation
8:10 Breakfast
8:40 - 9:40 Work Period
9:40 - 10:00 Break Period
10:00 - 11:50 Sitting and Walking Meditation
12:00 - 12:30 Circle Talk
12:30 Lunch

Silence

- During Yong Maeng Jong Jin we keep silence in all areas of the center. If you need to communicate with the head dharma teacher about formal practice or work, please speak in a low voice away from other retreatants.
- Everyone helps maintain an atmosphere of quiet in the dharma room. During meditation periods, if you are sleepy or in a great deal of pain, you may do a sitting bow and then stand quietly behind your cushion, with your hands in hapchang. (Before you get up to stand, please make sure your legs are not asleep.) Before sitting back down again, do a standing bow, then settle quietly.

The Dharma Room

Chanting time

- During chanting, please hold the chanting book in the hapchang position.

Entering and leaving

- When entering or leaving the dharma room, stop just inside the door, face the Buddha, and bow.
- During sitting periods, please enter or leave the dharma room only during walking meditation, except for an emergency. If you are late, please wait in the living room area until the chukpi is hit, then enter during walking meditation. You may enter the dharma room during bows and between chants.
- During walking meditation, you may leave to use the bathroom; walk in line until you come to the door, then bow and leave. When you re-enter, either return to your place in line, or wait until everyone is standing in back of their seats and enter quickly.

Interviews

- During interviews, the Zen teacher helps participants with their individual practice and questions.
- When it is your turn for an interview, bow, get up, and leave immediately, bowing again at the dharma room door. Go to the interview room, open the door, and do a standing bow facing the teacher. Close the door, then stand behind the cushion and do a standing bow, a prostration, and a standing bow. Then sit. Follow this form in reverse when leaving. Do not turn your back to the teacher while leaving.
- When your interview is over, you may re-enter the dharma room immediately (In this case, it is not necessary to wait until the end of a sitting or chant to re-enter the room.)

Head dharma teacher

- If you have questions or problems at times when interviews are not scheduled, please speak to the head dharma teacher who will help you (or possibly set up a meeting with the teacher leading the retreat.)
- The head dharma teacher will walk with the stick during sitting periods, to help everyone stay awake and alert, and also to relieve muscle tension. Someone who is sleeping (or nodding) may be tapped lightly on the shoulder with the stick.
- You may also ask to be hit by holding your hands in hapchang. The procedure for this will be demonstrated at orientation. The person carrying the stick also corrects posture and mudra (hand) position.
- The retreat leader will walk with the stick at the end of each day and at the end of the retreat. Everyone will receive a hit at these times.

Meals

- Attend all meals, even if you are fasting. The meals are part of the formal practice and are eaten silently in traditional temple style, with four bowls. The silence of the meal includes handling the bowls and utensils quietly
- There will be a sign-up sheet in the kitchen for cooking and clean-up jobs during the retreat; everyone helps with food preparation and clean-up.

House Information

- Please do not wear fragrances during Yong Maeng Jong Jin.
- When a bathroom door is closed, please knock before entering. If someone knocks while you are in the bathroom, knock back to let them know that it is occupied.

Work period

- You will be given a work period assignment each day. The beginning and end of work period is signalled by a work bell. Work period is part of formal practice... please do the job thoroughly and meticulously. If you finish your assignment before the hour is through, please see the workmaster for a new job so that the full hour is used. Please ask the workmaster any questions about your work period job.

End of retreat

- Three-day Retreats end on Sunday with a circle talk at 12:00 p.m., followed by an informal lunch.
- Plan on leaving after 1:00 p.m.
- *Have a good retreat!*