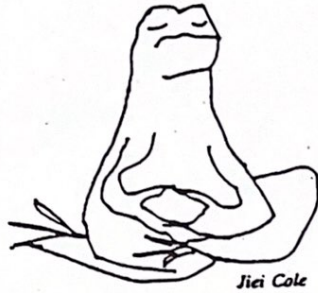


HOW TO SIT (ZUZEN)

The Ten Directions, 1993, 14(1)
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1. Sit on the forward third of a chair or cushion.
2. Arrange your legs in a position you can maintain comfortably. In the half-lotus position, place your right leg on your left thigh. In the full-lotus position, put your feet on opposite thighs. You may also sit simply with your legs tucked in close to your body, but be sure that your weight is distributed on three points: both of your knees on the ground and your buttocks on the round cushion. On a chair, keep your knees apart about the width of your shoulders, feet firmly planted on the floor.
3. Straighten and extend your spine, keeping it naturally upright, centering your balance in the lower abdomen. Push your lower back a little forward, open your chest, and tuck your chin in lightly, keeping the head upright, not leaning forward, or backward, or to the side. Sway your body gently from left to right, until you naturally come to a point of stillness on your cushion.
4. Keep your eyes cast on the floor about 3 to 4 feet in front of your body, eyes neither fully opened nor closed. If the eyes are closed, you may start to daydream or visualize things.
5. Keep your lips and teeth together with your tongue resting against the roof of your mouth.
6. Place your hands on your lap with the right palm up and your left hand (palm up) resting on your right hand, thumb tips gently touching, forming a horizontal oval. This is the mudra of zazen, in which all things are unified. Place the sides of the little fingers against your abdomen, a few inches below the navel, harmonizing your center of gravity with the mudra.
7. Take a few deep breaths, exhaling fully. Let your breath settle into its natural rhythm. With proper physical posture, your breathing will flow naturally into your lower abdomen.
8. Sitting still, keep your attention on your breath. When your attention wanders, bring it back to the breath again and again — as many times as necessary!
9. Be fully, vitally present. Simply do your very best. At the end of your sitting period, gently sway your body from right to left. Stretch out your legs; be sure they have feeling before standing.
10. Practice every day for ten to fifteen minutes (or more) and you will discover the treasures of your very life itself. ☸

Zendo procedure:

- bow on entering and leaving the zendo
- go to your place. bow to opposite neighbor, and then bow to your cushion
- be careful on standing up after sitting: *take as long as you need* to wake up legs that are still asleep.
- at kinhin (walking meditation), stand with hands in gassho (praying position); at first clap turn to right (or left as indicated by leader); at second clap put hands in clasped position at chest. At third clap indicating end of kinhin, put hands in gassho again and return to your cushion at first option to do so.

GLOSSARY (courtesy of Janet Abell)

daisan	private interview between teacher and student for examining correct practice
dharma	the living truth, the universal law
gatha	verse
gassho	raising the hands with palms together as an expression of respect, gratitude, humility or all three
head monk	person in charge of zendo
koan	a perplexing paradox that points to ultimate truth
kin-hin	walking meditation
karma	process of cause and effect
monitor	person who helps maintain zendo discipline
roshi	master (teacher)
sensei	teacher
sangha	the zazen community
seiza bench	small bench on which to practice zazen
sesshin	a Zen retreat
sutras	the Buddhist scriptures
teisho	talk on the dharma
zazen	sitting meditation
zabuton	under mat
zafu	pillow on which to practice zazen
zendo	meditation hall