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## I. THE JISHA'S ROLE IN SESSHIN (GENERAL)

As Jisha, your job is to:

- ✧ Assign jobs (before, during and after sesshin) to each participant
- ✧ Create a sesshin schedule and seating chart
- ✧ Arrive early and preside over sesshin set-up
- ✧ Personally set up and maintain the hojo
  - ✧ Serve as Nelson's attendant - making sure he has everything he needs. **You are responsible for supplying his bedding, towels, buckwheat zafu, oryoki set and teacup.**
  - ✧ Make a list of sleeping arrangements and keep track of attendance
  - ✧ Preside over the pre-sesshin work meeting
  - ✧ Give the Jisha cautions at the beginning of sesshin
- ✧ Monitor the dokusan line
- ✧ Make changes in participants' jobs and schedules as needed during sesshin
- ✧ Set up the zendo for Dharma assembly
  - ✧ Help to accommodate people with limitations such as part-time attendees, those sitting in chairs and those who may need to walk or rest during some scheduled periods of zazen
- ✧ Perform the Shokai-jo and Daikai-jo ceremonies with the Jikijitsu
- ✧ Organize and explain *yaza* (late night sitting) on the last night
- ✧ Preside over the task of cleaning up and breaking down the dojo.

### **Assigning Jobs:**

The Jisha prepares two job charts prior to sesshin – one for jobs during sesshin and the other for jobs after. Make several copies of each chart and post them in conspicuous but non-intrusive places. (You may need to bring tape or thumbtacks.)

Assigning jobs requires you to know a something about individuals and their experience. The best way to find out this information is to consult with Nelson and the Sesshin Coordinator. When assigning jobs, it is important to consider the jobs that people have done during recent sesshin, how long they have been participating in sesshin and their general health. People should not be assigned the same job sesshin after sesshin. People with lower back issues should not be servers. Newcomers should be assigned jobs that are especially conducive to practice. They should not be cooks, for example, because cooks have to miss periods of sitting. As Jisha, you should coordinate with Nelson, especially when choosing cooks, so that the cooking assignment can be considered from a practice point of view. In general though, do not cater to personal preferences in assigning jobs. No-picking-and-choosing is a part of practice.

### **Assigning Seats:**

The Jisha prepares six copies of the seating chart – one to post outside the zendo, one copy for Nelson and one copy for each dojo leader. Assigning seats in the zendo requires some

consideration. Those sitters that require chairs are often seated near doors. Seating the tenzo near the main door allows him or her to slip in and out if need be. If there is a center row of seats, these should be assigned to experienced sitters who will tend to be less rattled by the disruption of facing other people. Seating part-timers -- both part-timers who share seats and those who do not -- in the middle sections also reduces disruption. It is also helpful to be aware of strong energies that may exist between sesshin participants. It is best to separate people who may tend to worry about each other, fixate on each other, or perturb each other. It is prudent to seat couples out of direct line of sight of each other. Folks with food allergies - typically wheat and dairy - can be seated together, perhaps at the end of the Ino row. Review the seating chart with Nelson prior to sesshin.

### **Early Arrival:**

The Jisha should arrive early to sesshin. It is important to touch base with either the Sesshin Coordinator or the other leaders individually to find out when they will be arriving and whether they will be able to be responsible for part of the set-up. In general, the Jiki will oversee the initial clean-up of the zendo, the Tanto will oversee the set-up of the zendo including the altar and the Tenzo will oversee the set-up of the kitchen. Nelson will usually oversee the set-up of the dokusan line in consultation with the Jisha. Other tasks that need to be assigned include hanging the densho, han and umpan, posting job and seating charts, setting out drinking water and cups, creating a dana bowl, etc. As people arrive with food and various equipment, they should be assigned tasks.

### **Hojo Set-Up:**

The jisha prepares the hojo prior to sesshin. The hojo should be very clean and free of clutter. There should be an altar with incense and an incense bowl, a candle, matches, a small statue and a small vase with an arrangement. On the floor near the altar you will need a box of tissues, two zabuton (one for Nelson and one for the student) and one buckwheat zafu for Nelson. It is the Jisha's responsibility to make sure all these items are available and set up.

### **Attendant Duties:**

As Nelson's attendant you are also responsible for making sure Nelson has everything he needs for his personal use and for teaching. This may include, but is not limited to, linens and bedding (bath towels, sheets, pillows, blankets), oryoki bowls, two buckwheat cushions (one for the zendo and one for the hojo), a lectern and two covered tea cups -- one for the hojo and one for dharma assembly. **Check in with Nelson in advance about what he will need you to provide!!!** You will also fetch the roshi from the hojo for dharma assembly and escort him to the zendo, carrying the teisho manuscript.

### **Sleeping Chart:**

At the beginning of the work meeting, before jobs are discussed, the jisha should ask each person where they are sleeping and write it down so that s/he knows where to look for someone in case they do not appear for sitting. At this time, the jisha should also ask whether anyone needs to review meal and dokusan procedures and make arrangements for those people to get training from the Ino and Jisha prior to the start of sesshin.

**Work Meeting:**

The work meeting takes place after the informal supper. At this meeting, job assignments are read out loud. The jisha identifies each work group leader and makes sure everyone knows which group they are in and what each group is responsible for. Then participants break up into work groups and are briefed on their responsibilities by the group leader. For example, cooks and dishwashers meet with the tenzo, servers with the head server, choppers with the head chopper, etc.

During sesshin, people may be asked to do work that they are not familiar with. The Jisha will, to some degree, set the tone for the work that takes place during sesshin. You set a good tone by being organized, positive in tone and manner, and by covering the important points for each work group. Work is a part of practice and may give us clues as to how to carry practice into our daily lives.

Announce that all communications to the kitchen should go through the Jisha. The Jisha communicates with Head Server and with the Tenzo, The Head Server then passes information to the other servers and the Tenzo to the cooks, head choppers and dishwashers. Stress that no cross-communication should be happening.

Throughout sesshin, as a leader who makes many announcements and has to deal with many of the issues that come up, the Jisha sets a calm and confident tone. When people seek in-sesshin instructions from the Jisha, deliver your comments with brevity, sensitivity, and in a neutral tone. Most importantly, listen; you need not always solve someone's issue.

**Jisha Cautions:**

Along with the other dojo leaders, the jisha delivers standard cautions to the assembly at the start of sesshin. The jisha instructs the assembly on matters relating to work and dokusan.

**Early Morning Attendance:**

Scan the room at the beginning of the first period of zazen of each block. If someone is missing, go to their sleeping quarters to look for them. If they are sleeping, wake them gently and make sure they are OK.

**Monitoring the Dokusan Line:**

The Jisha observes and monitors the dokusan line throughout sesshin, making sure that dokusan begins and ends on time, that the line stays full and that everyone who wants to go to dokusan gets an opportunity to go. At the end of every block, the jisha dismantles the dokusan line by putting away the zabuton and the bell.

**Work and Changes During Sesshin:**

The Jisha may make occasional changes in job assignments or an individual's schedule after sesshin has begun. For example, if someone is unable to perform the task assigned to them they may have to switch jobs with someone else. If there are not enough choppers to complete the work during the morning work period, other people may have to fill in as extra choppers. All changes are made in consultation with Nelson.

### **Accommodations During Sesshin:**

Participants may need to take extra rest periods due to illness or disability.

### **Sho-kai Jo and Dai-kai Jo:**

The Jisha and the Jiki perform the ritual sounding of signal instruments that marks the end of every day and the end of the sesshin. The Jisha also chants the evening caution. **It is important that you familiarize yourself with these ceremonies and have practiced them before sesshin as they are somewhat intricate.**

### **Yaza:**

An exception is made on the last night of sesshin to the usual rule of going to bed promptly after the last formal period of sitting of the day. This sitting is called *yaza* (ya = night and za = to sit). Traditionally *yaza* takes place in the zendo but if the zendo is being used for sleeping, a different space may be used. The jisha explains this ritual and the procedures to the assembly and takes care of any logistical preparations.

### **Sesshin Break-Down:**

The Jisha oversees the break-down of the dojo after sesshin. This means that s/he should be one of the last people to leave. Duties include making sure everybody knows what to do and carries out their assignment before packing up their personal items or visiting with friends, making sure all equipment is properly packed and returned to the people who brought it, making a final check of all rooms used during sesshin including sleeping rooms, and dealing with the inevitable items left behind so these things do not become a burden to the retreat center.

## **II.**

## JISHA'S SESSHIN PREPARATION CHECKLISTS

### 1-2 weeks before sesshin

1. Get a final list of sesshin participants from the Sesshin Coordinator. This list can include attendance schedule (if part time), notes about special needs such as needing to sit in a chair, food allergies or medical conditions, and phone numbers. Let the Coordinator know that anyone who changes plans at the last minute or needs additional special consideration should call the Jisha directly. The coordinator and the Jisha should make sure that the Tenzo knows of any special food requirements.
2. Consult with Nelson and with other leaders as necessary to make the work assignment lists and to identify people who have never attended an East Rock Sangha sesshin and/or never worked with Nelson before. You need to check with Nelson before finalizing work assignments because he may have additional information about people that is relevant in assigning their job. Confirm that the Coordinator has asked Nelson if he wants to meet with new people and whether arrangements have been made.
3. Phone the prospective Tenzo to make sure they are able and prepared to do their job. It is not absolutely essential to notify the cooks in advance, but it is a good thing to do, especially the lunch cook. This gives cooks time to prepare.
4. Make sure that folks new to the East Rock Sangha are able to arrive early. Check with the Sesshin Coordinator to see that they have informed new folks to come early. Newcomers need time to settle in and to receive meal and dokusan procedure instructions. Those new to working with Nelson may want to check in with him informally in the hojo before sesshin begins - if this is feasible for both parties.
5. Umpan (meal gong): Arrange for the head server and yourself to meet before the leader's meeting and practice hitting the Umpan.
6. Generally the Coordinator has identified newcomers who may need meal and dokusan instructions, and has let the Tanto know who they are. Confirm who they are, and make sure that the Ino has the names of those who need meal instruction. The Jisha is responsible for instructing those who need to learn dokusan procedures.
7. Assemble all supplies that will be needed for the hojo and Nelson's personal use. For hojo – box of tissues, small statue, incense bowl with ashes, incense, small flower vase (you can bring flowers or cut whatever is available outside). For Nelson's personal use – two buckwheat zafu, a teacup and oryoki set and necessary linens (sheets and towels) and blankets. **Confirm with Nelson that you have everything he needs.**

### 2-3 days before sesshin

1. Talk to the Sesshin Coordinator to find out if there are any last-minute changes.
2. Create two jobs lists (during and after sesshin).
3. Create a seating chart. Write the seat assignments in pencil. (See blank forms in Jisha packet.) Review seating with Nelson.
4. Create a sesshin schedule.

5. Find out when other leaders will be arriving to make sure they will be able to discharge their pre-sesshin set-up duties. If they will not arrive in time, make arrangements for others to fill in.

### III. Jisha's Sesshin Set-Up Duties

#### 1. Day of Sesshin - At Home:

##### Making Copies of Lists and Charts:

Make **six** copies of the blank Seating Chart and both Job Assignment sheets (sesshin and post-sesshin). Make **seven** copies of the Sesshin Schedule. Post one copy of each of the Job Assignment sheets and Schedule near the zendo and a copy of the Schedule in the kitchen before going to the pre-sesshin leaders' meeting. Bring all documents to the pre-sesshin leaders meeting. Fill in the seating chart after the final seating is confirmed at the leader's meeting.

**Plan to arrive at sesshin as early as possible, and no later than 2:00 if possible. The leaders' meeting needs to be at 3:30 in order to have a work meeting at 5:00. Clean and set up the hojo prior to the leaders' meeting.**

#### 2. Day of Sesshin – At the Zendo:

The Jisha oversees these tasks, and may help with them. You may want to post a printout of this list:

- Clean the zendo (Jiki)
- Clean and organize the kitchen. Set up kitchen altar (Tenzo, the Head Chopper, the Head Server.)
- When food arrives, help unload and put away groceries in appropriate places (Tenzo, Head Chopper)
- Cut pickles. Sharpen knives (Head Chopper.)
- Arrange cushions in zendo and put meal cards and sutra books in stacks (Ino)
- Prepare the Hojo - sweep and mop the floor, dust thoroughly, set up the altar and cushions (Jisha)
- Post job assignments, seating chart and sesshin schedule near the zendo (Jisha)
- Post sesshin schedule in kitchen (Jisha)
- Organize and set up dokusan line - zabuton and zafu, bell and striker (Jisha)
- Set up the altar in the zendo, sift the ash in the incense burner ash and making decorative arrangement (Tanto)
- Put flowers in the zendo and kitchen altars. (Tanto)
- Give instructions to the following people before (preferable) or at the work meeting (Jisha):

Sutra book distributor

Teisho Set-up person - locate the teacup and stand (on the shelf in the kitchen) and lectern (usually stored near the zendo) for Dharma Assembly

Head server (an experienced head server can also instruct a new one.) Practice Umpan

Communicate with other leaders to make sure that they're aware of the set-up tasks that they oversee. After the work meeting, people will be able to go back to some of these tasks to finish up. If there are any questions, people can ask the specific work leader indicated in the parentheses.

### **Leader's Meeting:**

Give Nelson and each leader one copy of:

- work assignment sheet
- seating chart
- sesshin schedule (if they want one)

Call to their attention any change in the attendance list that they may be unaware of.

## **III. WORK MEETING**

Jisha calls people to the pre-sesshin work meeting and presides over it. Work meeting is usually held at the when people are gathered for informal supper, after they have had a chance to eat their meal.

*Conduct the work meeting in your own way, but cover the essential items.*

**Welcome.**

**Where to store personal items.**

**Location of toilets:** When they can be used.

**Showers, water-use:** Which one are for men and which for women. When they can be used. Be economical about using water. Get wet; turn off showers as you soap up, then rinse.

**Drinking water, cups, routine medical supplies:** Make sure the Jiki has set out water, cups, masking tapes and marker for identifying cups. Identify location of medical supplies.

*Teacups should be at peoples' places in the zendo. At cautions, people will check to see if they have meal sutra cards stored under their zabutons if they want them. If not, they can be passed out at that time.*

**Job assignments, schedule, and seating chart:** Point out the seating chart, the list of job assignments and the schedule. Read the job assignments out loud and have people identify themselves. Also ask people where they are sleeping and write the sleeping places down on your copy of the seating chart.

**Health and miscellaneous cautions:** Encourage all to wash hands frequently. For wintertime cautions, encourage people to cover sneezes with their arm. Sneeze into the crook of your elbow. If someone has to use throat lozenges, they should unwrap them outside the dojo.

**Sutra Dedications for the end of sesshin:** *Remind the Ino to announce this at work meeting. "You should write down: 1) to whom it is dedicated, 2) their relationship to you, 3) the occasion, and 4) your wishes for them. These should be given to the Ino before sesshin begins or be placed next to the sutra book near the Ino's seat."*

**People who need to leave before final clean-up:** *Ask anyone who plans to leave promptly after sesshin ends to let you know so that you can make arrangements with them to cover their post-sesshin clean-up assignments. (This can also be announced at the end of sesshin.)*

**Arrange the time for cautions and for people to meet with work group:**

Set an approximate time for people to reconvene for cautions. Have people meet the leaders of their various work groups in order to go over work procedures. *This is a good time to stress that these are their work leaders for sesshin, and that if anything specific to their work comes up during sesshin, they should consult these people or one of the jisha if they can't find their work leader.*

- Servers meet in the zendo. (Meet head server. See Servers' Procedures instruction sheet.)
- Cooks meet with the Tenzo in the kitchen.
- Dishwashers review written instructions or get briefing from an experienced dishwasher. (Tenzo. See Dishwasher's Duties instruction sheet.)
- Choppers where they will be working, usually the kitchen. (Tenzo. See Head Choppers Instruction sheet.)
- Zendo cleaner meets with the Jiki in the zendo.
- Teisho Set-up person and sutra book distributors meet with the Jisha. (See Teisho Set-up and Sutra Handout instruction sheets.)
- (If it has not already been done) the Jisha will meet with newcomers at the corner of the porch near the Hojo in order to go over the Dokusan procedures. *The Jisha will go over step-by-step how to go out to the Hojo, beginning with ringing the bell. Actually take them there.* Also, the Ino will meet with newcomers to review the meal procedures if this has not been done already.

Tell everyone that the next time we get together we join in the zendo for zazen. When the Densho sounds, we move into silence (no talking) and it is time for zazen and sesshin cautions.

## IV. CAUTIONS

### 1. Introduction

*Explain that the Jisha is responsible for overseeing work, monitoring attendance, and supervising the line for dokusan. If people need help related to one of these things, they should see the Jisha.*

### 2. Work

Work is another part of our sesshin practice. Carry out work with as little visibility as possible. If you need something, consult the person in charge of the specific work, or to the Jisha.

Related to work and practice, the Jisha may mention that the kitchen is a practice place, and that only Tenzo, cooks, dishwashers, servers, and others with work responsibilities there should use the kitchen.

### 3. Attendance

The Jisha helps by keeping track of where people are during sesshin. Unless you've made a special arrangement prior to sesshin, or have to make some such arrangement during sesshin, every one of us will be in our assigned seats for every zazen period, meal and sutra-chanting times. As Jisha, you may explain any deviations from this for the specific sesshin. For example, "on the weekend, we will have some changing of people occupying the middle row" - something like that.

If you do not show up for zazen on time, as Jisha, it is my responsibility to come to find you. If you are sick, forgot your alarm clock, or something, please let me know in advance if possible so that I can help you find a solution and won't need to come looking for you. If you need to leave before the end of sesshin for some reason, do not depart without notifying the jisha and making your good-byes to Nelson. Do not leave a note.

If you are using a chair, label your chair. Put your name on the back with masking tape (found in the kitchen)

Once you come to the zendo, help keep the zendo clean and orderly. Do not wear your shoes on the decks or inside the building. If you have been walking in the grasses, brush your pants off before coming inside to remove ticks, insects and debris. If you are doing a job like chopping or cooking, you may change from sitting clothes into work clothes for your work or wear an apron.

If you need a different zafu, do not take it from an empty seat.

*As Jisha, encourage sesshin participants to keep their sitting places clean and neat. Extra gear like sweaters and jackets, if necessary, should be folded neatly. The zafu's resting place is squarely in the middle of the zabuton, with any square support cushions underneath, not on top, of the zafu. Bowl sets and cups are to be kept tidy.*

### 4. Dokusan

Hopefully, describing dokusan procedures will not be necessary if newcomers have been briefed beforehand. Reminders of key points should suffice. You can best describe these by illustrating them.

There are four times one can go to dokusan: 1) when the Jisha begins to ring the kansho (Jisha bell) at the beginning of dokusan; 2) whenever someone rings the kansho to go (except when the bell has already sounded to end the period of sitting or kinhin is in progress); 3) at the end of a kinhin period, after we all bow; and 4) when the Jisha announces "last call." Take your zafu with you, follow the usual path around the dojo, not crossing the middle section, go straight out the door to the line, put your zafu on the mat, bow, sit down, and continue your zazen.

Except for sosan the first day (when the jisha will ring the bell for you), when you reach the front of the line, pick up the mallet for the bell and continue zazen **with the mallet resting in your hand**. Ring the bell twice as soon as you hear Nelson ring his bell. Without bowing, get up, put your zafu aside where you can recognize and retrieve it, and proceed to the hojo with your hands in shashu mudra.

The first bow, the bow to the place of teaching and learning, is made over the threshold, facing towards the altar. It can be either a full bow as some do, or a standing bow, as others are in the habit of doing. Decide which practice you will do, and stick with that.

With hands in gassho, step in front of the zabuton where you will sit, and bow again. This is a bow exchanged between you and Nelson, and may again be made standing or to the floor. In either case, then sit down, preferably on your heels, on the zabuton in front of Nelson. Sit close up, well forward on the cushion.

State what practice you are working on, and make your presentation. Sometimes, we may have nothing to say - that is a fine presentation. Nelson may have something to say to you. Just present whatever is on your mind. The tradition is to encourage all of us to have at least one dokusan a day, even if we feel disinclined. Often, it's especially important to go when we don't feel like it.

Please be mindful about the length of your dokusan. There are a lot of other folks who want to go too. Take the time necessary for your most pressing issue, but decide which things can wait for another opportunity, like after sesshin. Dokusan is a two-person process. Take responsibility for moving it along. For example, you do not have to wait for Nelson to end it; you may sense when it is over, and bow. When the dokusan is over, Nelson will bow and ring his bell. Bow with your hands on your thighs (demonstrate a "tea" bow), then stand, come to gassho, and step back over to the door. Make a bow to the place of teaching and learning just as your first bow on entering. (The exit door may not be the same as the entrance door, depending on the facility. These details will be decided at the leader's meeting before sesshin and should be incorporated into the cautions.)

Return to the zendo with your hands in gassho. Pick up your zafu, with hands still in gassho, walk to the zendo door, **enter without bowing**, walk to your seat, bow once to your seat and then once to the sangha, and sit down. Just after dokusan may be a critical time for your zazen so return to the zendo immediately. If you really need to go to the bathroom and feel like you cannot wait till the next break, instead of coming back into the zendo, just bow at the door, put your zafu down by the doorway, and go. Be as brief and silent as possible and return to the zendo straight away. When you return to the zendo, pick up your zafu, resume gassho, and walk to your seat.

If you are still waiting in line when the time for dokusan is up, the Jisha will bow to the line as a signal to return to the zendo and write down your name. Before the next block of dokusan, the Jisha will tap you on the shoulder in the order you were left in line, and you will come out to sit in the line. If you do not want to return to the line, simply remain seated when you are tapped.

Zendo leaders and cooks have been instructed to go to the head of the line if they want to go to dokusan - leaders during any sitting block and cooks during their cooking block. The leaders and cooks jobs do not allow them enough time to wait in line. If you're sitting at the head of the line and someone sits down next to you, ring the bell at the proper time for him or her, and they will go before you.

Don't go to dokusan more than once during a dokusan block unless Nelson specifically invites you. In that case, come at the end of the line, after "Last call."

*It may makes things smoother if you as Jisha give some cautions at the outset of sesshin concerning the announcements that may be made.*

- *"The line is now open for all" also implies that no one who has already gone in that sitting block can go again. "All" does not mean those who have already gone in the current sitting block.*
- *"The line is full" or "the line is closed" means that no one should leave the dojo for dokusan until another announcement is made.*

The procedures for dokusan are designed to promote settled zazen for you and for the rest of the sesshin participants.

## **5. Sosan**

During the morning of the first and the last days of sesshin, we have our first and our last dokusan in a special procedure called Sosan. During Sosan, we go to dokusan in the order of our seating in the zendo, starting with the Tanto. The Jisha will touch you on the shoulder to call you to the line, a few people at a time. The Jisha will ring the bell once for each person. When you return from the hojo and pick up your zafu, exchange bows with the Jisha, and return to the zendo in the normal fashion.

## **V.**

## TASKS DURING SESSHIN

### 1. Monitoring work and answering questions

People may come to the Jisha with problems. Some questions will have a clear answer, and you can simply answer. Other questions may be harder to deal with, in which case, listen well without responding, and if you feel it is necessary, say, "I will get back to you about that." You can either find out what is needed or bring the question to a leaders' meeting. Listening is key; you need not necessarily always resolve people's questions. When answering someone or giving instruction, make your comments brief, but with sensitivity. Always be ready to reply in a helpful way. Here, your tone is key. Make sure any words are exchanged out of earshot of others and preferably out of sight as well.

### 2. Monitoring attendance

The Jisha assumes primary responsibility for noticing if someone is missing from normal attendance in the dojo. Keep track of attendance by looking around the dojo from the Jisha seat without calling attention to doing it. Usually the beginning of each block is the critical time, but an open awareness - a zazen that includes awareness of people's sitting is the way to keep track of attendance.

If you find that someone is missing from regularly scheduled attendance, seek him or her out. This is not a punitive action, or even an enforcement of rules. We assume that people want to keep their sesshin agreements, and that the Jisha's role is to support them. If you find someone in his or her bed, you may inquire, "Are you okay? It is time for zazen." If they are asleep, gently wake them and let them know that it is time for zazen. Discuss any attendance changes at leader's meetings.

### 3. Monitoring dokusan

#### *Bells for dokusan*

These pictographs give you a general pattern of the interplay of Nelson's bell, hits on the kansho, and stops on the kansho.



Signifies the ringing of Nelson's harness bell. Open circles are strikes on the kansho (bell).



Signifies a "stop" on the kansho.

Dokusan is typically begun with the following sequence.



The decreasing sized circles represent a progressive diminuendo on the bells. There are not precisely 9 hits, but use whatever sequence of hits “feels right” to give a smooth diminuendo.

Sosan is similar, but the sequence ends with only a single hit on the kansho.



The ending bells of dokusan are as follows:



#### *Informing cooks of the status of the line*

Tell cooks (who may not hear your announcement) the status of the dokusan line (i.e. if it is open for all, closed, or whatever it may be).

#### *Sitting and doing kinhin as you monitor the dokusan line*

Set an example for zazen when sitting out on the porch. The Jisha may do kinhin if there is time. One good way is to get up when the bell for kinhin sounds in the dojo, walk to the door of the dojo, and walk at the end of the line. You may also find that enough breaks come naturally in the course of announcements that you make in the zendo.

#### *Speaking in the dojo*

Speaking in the dojo during zazen is daunting. Be brief, straightforward, and, by all means, clear. Speak loud enough for everyone to hear, but do not exaggerate your tone.

#### *Keeping track of people left in line*

Make a written list before you dismiss the line.

#### *Sosan*

Beginning with the tanto, tap the first batch of six people. After that, summon groups of about five people. When there is one person left in the dokusan line (i.e. just when you hit the bell for the person before the last), immediately return to the zendo to summon another group of five. Be careful not to "get stuck" with a kinhin when you need to get people - sometimes you may need to summon a group just before kinhin begins.

## **4. Teisho**

At about 1:30 (after tea), we begin a period of zazen. Kinhin follows. After the bow at the end of kinhin, the Jikijitsu announces, "Prepare for Dharma Assembly." Jikijitsu then goes out to the han, strikes it once, and prepares to sound the drum. Note: Striking the han happens immediately after the bow at the end of kinhin and the subsequent announcement of "Prepare for dharma assembly".

Meanwhile, the Jisha leads preparations for teisho, directing sesshin participants to move their seats (if needed), setting up Nelson's seat and a pad opposite him, and preparing cushions for teisho guests, if any. The person assigned to do teisho set-up completes Nelson's seat by bringing the lectern and a covered teacup (filled with fresh water) on a tray. He or she places the tea tray on Nelson's righthand side and the lectern between the two pads, allowing a foot of space between Nelson's pad and the lectern.

At the same time, the Tanto prepares the altar, lighting the tall candle (in addition to the votive candle) and two sticks of "waiting incense," then remains at the altar, holding an unlit stick of long incense. Jisha goes out and ushers in any guests. When everything is ready and the zendo is settled, Jisha approaches the altar as the Tanto lights the incense. The two bow to one another, and Tanto hands Jisha the stick of long incense. Jisha exits to the hojo to escort Nelson to the zendo.

The Jikijitsu observes the Jisha's departure and, as the Jisha nears the hojo, hits the drum 3 strong, well-spaced blows. The third drumbeat is the cue for the Jisha to knock three times on the door of the hojo and for the Ino to say, " Please stand." The assembly rises, and the Ino begins a series of alternating loud and soft claps with the clappers.

Meanwhile, Nelson answers Jisha's knock. Jisha opens the door, and the two bow across the threshold. Nelson passes his teisho folder to the Jisha, and they bow again. Jisha begins walking back to the zendo as Nelson steps out, slips into his footgear, and follows. At the door, Jisha removes footgear and turns to meet Nelson. On Nelson's arrival, they bow to one another, then Nelson enters the zendo with Jisha following. As soon as Nelson enters, Ino stops clapping (preferably on a loud clap) and puts down the clappers, picking up the inkin.

As Nelson walks to the altar, Jisha places the teisho on the lectern, then steps briskly to Nelson's right side with the incense. After Nelson makes a standing bow, he reaches toward the Jisha for the incense. Jisha places the stick before him so that he can easily take it. Nelson accepts the incense without bowing and proceeds to offer it, centering it between the two sticks of waiting incense. Without a pause, Jisha goes back to his/her seat. Nelson's bow after placing the incense cues Ino to sound the inkin for raihai.

All make bows together -- 3 full prostrations and a standing bow before the altar, then (after Nelson has made his way to his seat) a final standing bow to one another. Everyone sits formally. Ino prepares to lead the gatha "On Opening the Dharma." When Nelson comes to gassho with his kotsu, Ino begins the gatha.

At the end of Teisho, when Nelson comes to gassho with his kotsu, Ino begins the "Shiguse-ganmon" (Great Vows for All in Sino-Japanese). Raihai follows. Everyone waits in Kinhin mudra till Nelson walks to the door, Jisha picks up Teisho book at the lectern and follows Nelson out the Zendo. Everyone straighten the cushions, the lecterns and tea cups are removed and guests leave the room. (Jiki should show guests out the zendo by gesturing if guests doesn't seem to know.) When all is settled, Jiki starts Kinhin.

## **5. Taking care of the Hojo altar**

The Jisha takes care of the altar - incense, ashes, flowers, water, and general tidiness - during sesshin. The lunch break is a good time for a thorough cleaning so that there is a new set-up for afternoon dokusan.

## **6. Ceremony to end the day (Sho-kai-jo)**

After the last zazen of the evening, the Ino leads the sangha in bows and chants. At the beginning of the third repetition of the Great Vows, the Jisha gets up and goes to the deck where he or she leads the Sho-kai-jo with the Jikijitsu.

## **7. Ceremony to end the sesshin (Dai-kai-jo)**

After the chanting of the closing ceremony, the Ino will lead the Great Vows for All. At the beginning of the third repetition of the Great Vows, the Jisha gets up and goes to the deck where he or she leads the Dai-kai-jo with the Jikijitsu.

## **8. Yaza (late night sitting)**

You will be asked to explain yaza during the Roshi's remarks on the last night of sesshin. Cover the following points:

**What:** On long sesshin, participants are given special permission to stay up and sit after the formal day is complete. It is not mandatory or even encouraged. Trust your gut instinct about whether it is better to stay up or go to sleep.

**Where:** Depends on facility. Emphasize that sleepers get priority because they are following the schedule.

**How:** no incense, candles, bells, lights, timers – just you and your zafu on your own timing

**Procedure:**

- Make bed
- Toilet
- Go to sitting place (if no zafu, take yours)
- Sit

**To relieve legs:**

- Absolutely quiet kinhin
- Stand at place
- Stretch out legs and switch seating position

**When done –** silently return to sleeping places

## **ONGOING CHANGES AND NOTES**

Sesshin forms and procedures evolve over time, and new circumstances call for new forms. Make notes, with date, when, as Jisha, you run across new forms and changes that need to be passed on.

This page can be used for those notes. Please do not change the manual itself.