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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, seating chart and job list. Bring enough copies for all the leaders and Nelson plus at least two copies to post.
- ✧ Arrive early and preside over sesshin set-up.
- ✧ Personally set up and maintain the hojo, including lighting the candle and incense before dokusan.
- ✧ 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.** You will also bring him tea in the hojo upon arising, carry the teisho materials for him, and follow him when he exits the zendo.
- ✧ Make a list of sleeping arrangements and keep track of attendance.
- ✧ Preside over the pre-sesshin work meeting.
- ✧ Give the Jisha cautions.
- ✧ 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 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, 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. Touch base with 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 clean and free of clutter. The following items are needed: an altar and a cloth to cover it, incense, an incense bowl with ashes, long taper candles and candleholder, matches, a small statue and a small vase with a seasonal arrangement. On the floor, you will need a box of tissues, two zabuton (one for Nelson and one for the student), one buckwheat zafu for Nelson and a support cushion for the student.

Attendant Duties:

As Nelson's attendant you are 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), an oryoki set, 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 arrange the hojo altar and maintain it during sesshin. Before blocks of dokusan, you will light incense and the candle on the hojo altar. **You will bring Nelson a cup of tea first thing in the morning** (get it from the servers at 4:20-ish while they are still in the kitchen) and get him from the hojo for dharma assembly and escort him to the zendo, carrying incense and the teisho manuscript.

Sleeping Chart:

Sleeping arrangements are normally assigned by the Jisha in advance of sesshin. If this does not apply, the Jisha should ask each person where they are sleeping at the beginning of the work meeting before jobs are assigned and write it down so that s/he knows where to look for

someone in case they do not appear for scheduled zazen. 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 (meal) and Jisha (dokusan) prior to the start of sesshin.

Work Meeting:

The work meeting takes place towards the end of 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 pointers on 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 help 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. Leaders can fill in if choppers or dishwashers are unable to complete their tasks in the time allotted. 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.

Yaza:

On the last night of sesshin, an exception is made 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 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 should 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 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. 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. If the Tenzo is inexperienced, phone them 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.
4. Make sure that folks new to the East Rock Sangha are able to arrive on time or early. Newcomers need time to settle in. 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. Confirm the head server is comfortable with the Umpan sequence to announce meals. Offer instruction and/or practice, if necessary.
6. The Coordinator will have 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 and hojo (see above). **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. Making 10 copies of the blank chart. Fill in provisional seat assignments in pencil. Review seating with Nelson. Revise the chart after consulting with Nelson. Create additional charts for Nelson and all four leaders. Bring several blank charts in case last-minute changes need to be made.
4. Create a sesshin schedule. Make 2 copies to post and one for all leaders and Nelson.
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:

Pack and make sure you have all the copies of the seating chart, job assignments, and daily schedule.

Plan to arrive at sesshin as early as possible, and no later than 2:00pm. The leaders' meeting needs to start by 3:00pm in order to have the supper/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 (Jikijitsu)
- 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, and Head Server)
- 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, altar arrangement, and cushions (Jisha)
- Post job assignments, seating chart and sesshin schedule near the zendo. Post the sesshin schedule in other places as well such as 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 make decorative arrangement (Tanto)
- Put flowers on the kitchen altar, if making one. (Tanto)
- Identify people who will be responsible for the following tasks and give them instructions before (preferable) or at the work meeting (Jisha):

Sutra book distributor – decide where to keep the books in the zendo

Dharma Assembly Set-up - locate the covered teacup, lectern, and where the extra zabuton is located

Drinking water – locate two pitchers, fill them with water, provide paper cups and markers to write names on cups

Leader's Meeting:

Give Nelson and each leader one copy of:

- work assignments sheet
- seating chart
- sesshin schedule

Call to their attention any last-minute changes.

III. WORK MEETING

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

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

Welcome

Where to store personal items

Location of toilets and 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 water, cups, and markers for identifying cups have been set out. Identify their location and the location of medical supplies.

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

Job assignments, schedule, and seating chart: Point out the location of the seating chart, job assignments and schedule. Read the job assignments out loud and have people identify themselves. If sleeping places have not been assigned, ask people where they are sleeping and write these down. You can make notes on your copy of the seating chart.

Health and miscellaneous cautions: Encourage all to wash hands frequently. For wintertime cautions, ask people to sneeze into the crook of their elbow. If someone wants to use throat lozenges, they should unwrap them outside the dojo.

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 to cover their post-sesshin clean-up assignments.*

Arrange for people to meet with work group:

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 them or the jisha if they can't find their work leader.*

- Servers meet in the zendo. (Meet with 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 or the Tenzo. (See Dishwasher's Duties instruction sheet.)
- Choppers meet with the Head Chopper where they will be working, usually the kitchen. (See Head Choppers Instruction sheet.)
- Zendo cleaner meets with the Jiki in the zendo.
- Dharma Assembly set-up persons and sutra book distributors meet with the Jisha. (See Teisho Set-up and Sutra Handout instruction sheets.)
- (Often this is part of the Cautions rather than the Work Meeting, especially if we are in an unfamiliar space) The Jisha will meet with newcomers to go over the Dokusan procedures. Actually take them to the hojo. 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 meet in the zendo. When the densho sounds, we move into silence for zazen and sesshin cautions.

IV. CAUTIONS

1. Introduction

Explain that the Jisha is responsible for overseeing work, monitoring attendance, and supervising the dokusan line. If people need help related to one of these things, they should see the Jisha. Unexpected incidents or problems that arise during sesshin should also be reported to the jisha.

2. Work

Work is 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 the Jisha.

The Jisha may mention that the kitchen is a practice place, and that only the Tenzo, cooks, dishwashers, and servers should use the kitchen.

3. Attendance

The Jisha keeps track of where people are during sesshin. Unless you've made a special arrangement, everyone will be in their assigned seats for every zazen period, meal and sutra service. Explain any deviations for the specific sesshin. For example, "On the weekend, we will have some changing of people occupying the middle row".

"If you do not show up for zazen on time, as Jisha, it is my responsibility to find you. If you are sick, forgot your alarm clock, or have some other concern about your attendance, 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, put your name on the back with masking tape (found in the kitchen)."

"Attendees are responsible for helping 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 or wear an apron."

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

4. Dokusan

Describing dokusan procedures may not be necessary if newcomers have been briefed beforehand. Reminders of key points should suffice. You can best convey these by illustrating them.

There are four times one can go to dokusan: 1) when the Jisha rings the kansho at the start of dokusan; 2) when someone rings the kansho to go to dokusan (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 to the room; 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 without bowing to the line, put your zafu down in the line, bow, sit down, and continue your zazen.

Except for sosan (when the jisha will ring the bell for you), when you reach the front of the line, pick up the mallet 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 the altar. It can be either a full bow or a standing bow. Decide which practice you will do, and stick with that.

With hands in gassho, walk to the zabuton where you will sit, and bow again. This is a bow exchanged between you and Nelson, and may again be full or standing. 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. If there is a support cushion nearby, you may place it under you.

State the practice you are working on and make your presentation or say what is on your mind. Sometimes we may have nothing to say - that is a fine presentation. Nelson may have something to say to you. The tradition is to encourage 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 mutual, 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 outside the hojo, with hands still in gassho, walk back to the zendo. **Enter the zendo without bowing**, walk to your seat, bow once to your seat and then once to the sangha, and sit down. The time just after dokusan may be a critical point for your zazen so always return to the zendo directly. 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 in line when the dokusan block ends, the Jisha will write down your name and then bow at the head of the line to signal you to return to the zendo. Before the next block, the Jisha will tap you on the shoulder in the order you were in line. This is the signal to retake your place in the dokusan line. If you do not want to return to the line, simply remain seated when you are tapped.

Leaders and cooks have been instructed to go to the head of the line when they want to go to dokusan - leaders during any sitting block and cooks during their cooking block. Their 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 for them when you hear Nelson's bell, and let them go before you.

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

It may make 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" implies that those who have already gone in that block should not go again. "All" does not apply to 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 zendo for dokusan until another announcement is made.*

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

5. Sosan

On the first and last day of sesshin, we follow a special dokusan procedure called sosan. During sosan, we go to dokusan in the order of our seat in the zendo, starting with the Tanto. The Jisha will touch people on the shoulder to call them to the line, a few people at a time. The Jisha sits at the head of the dokusan line holding the mallet and rings the bell once after Nelson's bell. When the Jisha rings the bell for you, follow the same procedures as for regular dokusan. When you return from the hojo, after you have picked up your zafu, exchange bows with the Jisha and return to the zendo.

V. TASKS DURING SESSHIN

1. Monitoring work and answering questions

People may come to you as 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 carefully without responding. You may 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 and express them with sensitivity. Always be ready to respond in a helpful way. A kind, respectful 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 whether someone is missing from their seat in the zendo. Keep track by looking around at the beginning of the block, especially early morning, without calling attention to it. Maintain an open awareness - a zazen that includes awareness of people's sitting - at other times.

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.

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

Signifies a "stop" on the kansho.

Dokusan is typically begun with the following sequence.



The decreasing circle size represents an accelerando. There are not precisely 9 strikes. Use whatever number feels right to give a smooth accelerando.

The sosan sequence is similar but ends with a single kansho strike, not two. See diagram below.



The ending bells for dokusan and sosan are as follows:



To move from sosan directly to dokusan, close out sosan with the ending bell sequence. Nelson will then ring the harness bell. Open the dokusan line immediately on hearing his bell.

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 when you are monitoring the dokusan line

Set an example for zazen when monitoring dokusan. The Jisha may do kinhin as she wishes when there is time. When the bell for kinhin sounds in the zendo, you may walk to the door of the zendo and walk at the end of the line if there is time. You may also find that breaks come naturally in the process of making announcements to the zendo.

Speaking in the zendo

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

Keeping track of people left in line

Write down people's names in order before you dismiss the line.

Sosan

Beginning with the tanto, tap the first batch of six or so 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 caught by a kinhin when you need to get people - sometimes you may need to summon a group just before kinhin begins.

4. Dharma Assembly

After tea at 1:20, we begin a period of zazen. Nelsons sits this period in the zendo. He will exit at the end of the period, before the clap to start kinhin. **The Jisha does not follow him** (this is the only time the Jisha does not follow as he exits.) After the final bow at the end of kinhin, the Jiki announces, "Prepare for Dharma Assembly." Jiki then goes out to the han, strikes it once, and then moves to wait by the drum. Note: Striking the han happens immediately after the announcement, "Prepare for dharma assembly."

Meanwhile, the Jisha oversees preparations for teisho, directing sesshin participants to move their seats if needed, helping to set up Nelson's lectern, seat and covered teacup (with tea or water) on the right side of his seat, and a zabuton opposite him. The lectern goes between the two zabuton, allowing a foot of space between Nelson's pad and the lectern. The Jisha then prepares seats for teisho guests, if any.

The Tanto prepares the altar, lighting the tall candle (in addition to the votive candle) and two small sticks of "waiting incense," then remains at the altar, holding an unlit stick of long incense. The Jisha goes out to usher in any guests. **Before seating them, ask if they wish to speak with Nelson after dharma assembly.** He normally makes time to receive guests afterwards.

When everything is ready and the zendo is settled, the Jisha approaches the altar as the Tanto lights the long 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 Jiki observes the Jisha's departure and, as the Jisha nears the hojo (estimate this, if needed), hits the drum with 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.

When the Jisha enters the hojo to get Nelson, the two make a standing bow to each other at the threshold. Nelson passes his teisho folder to the Jisha (he will rotate it so it faces up for the Jisha), and they bow again. Jisha leads the way back to the zendo as Nelson follows. At the zendo door, Jisha steps aside and waits. On Nelson's arrival, they bow to one another and Nelson enters the zendo first 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 is walking to the altar, the Jisha places the teisho materials on the lectern (with spine facing left), then steps briskly to Nelson's right side with the incense. Nelson makes a standing bow. Jisha puts the stick in front of him so 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, the 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, the Ino begins the gatha.

At the end of teisho, when Nelson comes to gassho with his kotsu, Ino begins the "Shiguseganmon" (Great Vows for All in Sino-Japanese). Raihai follows. Everyone waits standing, with hands in shashu mudra, as Nelson walks to the door. The Jisha picks up teisho from the lectern and follows Nelson out the zendo back to the hojo. Bow to each other at the doorway and hand Nelson the teisho materials with the spine facing to your right (rightside up for him). In the zendo, everyone straightens their cushions; lecterns and tea cups are removed and guests leave the room. (Jiki should gesture or guide guests out of the zendo if they seem uncertain.) When the room is settled, the Jiki claps to start 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 the hojo is ready for afternoon dokusan.

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

Terminate dokusan by 8:45pm at the latest. After the last zazen period of the evening, the Ino leads the sangha in bows and chanting. At the beginning of the third repetition of the Four Vows, the Jisha goes out to lead the Sho-kai-jo with the Jiki.

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

At the end of the closing ceremony, the Ino will lead the Four Vows. At the beginning of the third repetition of the Four Vows, the Jisha goes out to lead the Dai-kai-jo with the Jikijitsu.

8. Yaza (late night sitting)

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

What: Participants are given special permission to stay up and sit after the formal day is complete on the last night of sesshin. 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:

- Set up bed
- Wash up, brush teeth, etc.
- Sit at your place in the zendo or take your zafu to a different spot

To relieve pain in your legs, you pay periodically:

- Practice quiet kinhin
- Stand at your place
- Stretch out your legs and/or switch your seating position

When done silently return to your bed.

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. Give your notes to the head of the Jisha pool who will make the changes.