

ZEN FOR YOU

"If you are not happy, then your religion is not authentic." (Master Deshimaru)

What we all wish for

That we live in a difficult period like so many others before is no secret for anyone. Difficult on so many levels: social, economic, environmental. Difficult also because of deep mutations that occur ever so quickly. Each of us can sometimes doubt our capacity to adapt, integrate, come true and always be able to earn our living. The beginning of the 21st century is also a difficult period because of the intense stress of competition and its consequences to which increasing climate and environmental problems are adding relentlessly. Pollution makes life uncomfortable to many in most large cities worldwide. All these things can nurture an atmosphere of frustration, worries, doubt and latent dissatisfaction. We can top all that with a "crisis of values" that makes us lose our bearings and question what to teach our children. But truth be told, has it not been the case for most of human beings throughout history?

We all want to "make our way in life", to move ahead as best we can through uncertain territory. Besides our concern with personal accomplishment, we would also like to contribute to our society so that our planetary village could be the best possible.

No matter how demanding and difficult our life, we wish we could find peace, calm and inner joy. We want to be in good health and have enough energy to do everything we must do. We hope we can go through tough times without too much damage be it affective, personal, familial, economic, social or professional.

In a word, we want to be happy and make something of our life we will be satisfied with
when our time comes to depart.

One may consider this infantile and unrealistic.

Zen Buddhism sees that desire as natural, accessible and within the very nature of being human when it
is turned towards the happiness of all beings.

It is even one of the results of its practice.

Japanese Master Deshimaru who introduced Zen to Europe often said: "If not happy, not true religion."

What is Zen?

Is Zen a philosophy, a religion, a practice, a body of teaching?

It is all those things and none of them at the same time.

Buddhism, of which Zen is a branch, appeared in India about 2600 years ago, founded on the teachings of a sage who was to be known as the Buddha which means "the Enlightened One". From India, Buddhism spread throughout Asia taking various forms in various cultures.

Coming from India, Zen appeared in China under the name *Chan* and from there spread to Korea, Vietnam and Japan.

Though they share the same origin, schools of Buddhism are quite different from each other. Some accent the way of life, others the study of philosophy, still others emphasize rituals that may seem exotic or complicated to a European or Occidental.

Zen is centered on simple and bare forms
which makes it accessible and well adapted to Occidentals.

What can Zen do for you?

You will notice the beneficial effects of Zen on your health very quickly.

Scientific findings (quoted in this course) have demonstrated the benefits on your health of practicing Zazen, or "sitting meditation", notably by:

- a deep and natural rebalancing of your nervous system
- a strengthening of the immune system
- a regulating and calming effect on the cardiac rhythm, probably due to the easier breathing resulting from the relaxation of the solar plexus.
- a greater calm and clarity of mind
- a greater freedom from the stress and assaults of modern life

Practicing Zen, your mental and physical health will improve for
it is doubtlessly a powerful natural means of psychosomatic regulation.

Furthermore, *Zen helps you get back into this essential relationship with yourself, others and your environment* so you can gain better insight into your reality and the one that surrounds you.

In this way you will be able to find the relaxation, the joy and the simple communication to which we all aspire.

You will see your inner calm and your capacity for attention and vigilance develop.

You will feel less hassled by nervousness and impatience.

You will handle pressure or strong competition with less stress and anxiety, and with less expenditure of energy.

The practice will help you clarify your motives, your priorities *and to find within yourself your genuine values.*

Here are the "ten infinite merits of Zen" as described by Master Deshimaru:

1. The five organs of perception return to their original condition of spiritual calm.
2. The mind purifies itself.
3. Illusions dissipate.
4. The tendency for attachment lessens.
5. Influences lose their power.
6. Fear vanishes.
7. Compassion ripens and blooms.
8. The virtue of patience increases.
9. Wisdom manifests itself.
10. Faith deepens, and the religious spirit reveals itself.

It can happen that you realize enlightenment, but we cannot promise because for you to attain enlightenment does not depend on us. What is enlightenment? It is the manifestation of a high degree of freedom and autonomy, intelligence and kindness, wisdom and compassion, as well as a profound

understanding of ourselves and others, and the realization of our fundamental oneness with our environment. This state of mind can occur occasionally in an unenlightened person. For the awakened one, it is permanent.

Each of these points will be developed in this course.

Meanwhile, even if you do not realize full awakening, you will become a more balanced, freer, stronger, happier person who is more available to others.

For whom is *Zen for You* intended?

This course is designed for those who cannot or do not wish to join a meditation group at present because their work schedule, social obligations, home location, frequent travels or any other personal reason will not allow it. As you'll see, we have also structured the course keeping the time required by study and practice in mind.

Being aware that it provides a means to confront problems that present themselves to every one of us and to society as a whole, we wish to spread knowledge of Zen by way of this course. *Zen for You is to our knowledge one of the only Zen learning experience on the internet focusing on both distance learning and practice of Zen.*

Through this new, original, genuinely contemporary and practical way, we continue the transmission of the teachings which we have received through our lineage as has been done from generation to generation since the time of the Buddha.

Zen for You is for any person interested in the aims we describe, without reference to age, sex, occupation, social status, cultural or religious background.

Must you become a Buddhist?

Let us look for a moment at the important question of membership in a religion.

Certainly, Zen is a branch of Buddhism, and Buddhism is often considered a religion. Must you then embrace a new religion, Buddhism, to practice Zen?

It's absolutely not about that. Buddhism, especially Zen Buddhism, has no prerequisites of any kind at all; it imposes no dogma, no belief. It is simply a precise and powerful means of personal and spiritual development. For this reason, it is widely practiced by many Catholic monks, Jesuits, Carmelites, Franciscans, Marists, as well as by Jewish rabbis and Muslim imams.

Some of these religious persons have even been authorized to teach Zen *without having to give up their Christian, Jewish or Muslim faith*. They find in Buddhism spiritual sources and new means of deepening their faith and ripening their self-knowledge.

Thus, Zen can help you, whether you are a believer or not, whether you practice a religion or not.

If you practice a religion, far from creating a contradiction with your faith,
Zen will help you to deepen it.

In fact, Buddhist tradition has elaborated a fine pedagogy and a psychology of great depth with broad and efficient means of self-development. *Zen for You* is based directly on this aspect of Buddhism while

incorporating elements drawn from modern western psychology since this course is aimed at Occidentals. Anyone can benefit from it, whatever their beliefs.

Why a course through Internet?

Perhaps you find it surprising to transmit so traditional a teaching in this manner.

Well, this is not new! In China, during the Tang Dynasty (6th to 8th century), and perhaps even before, certain masters gave instructions to their students *exclusively in written form*. Though they did not use computers then, the principle was the same. These masters only received their students after several years of practice.

Moreover, we feel that an Internet course is a particularly suitable choice for our times. Though we live in a period when we can circumnavigate the world in a few hours, paradoxically we find our time more and more taken up by our work and obligations. Perhaps that is why we try so hard to maintain our freedom of action. *Zen for You* completely meets these requirements.

It dispenses away with the need to travel and adapt to others' schedules. Each one organizes his or her own practice without having to leave home, while being guided and accompanied with attentiveness.

Who is responsible for pedagogic teaching of Zen For You

The courses *Zen For You* are now under the direction of a monk and teacher, Koya Benoît Senécal who founded and has led the Community of Meditation of Quebec City (www.comzenquebec.ca) for more than twenty years. He is the heir to and successor of the lead author of that course Claude Ryu Tai Philippe.

The commitment made by Benoît is to allow every human being to realize the *true nature of the spirit and the nature of Buddha* by the practice of Zen, this for the benefit of all beings. He ensures the teaching, the individual pedagogical follow-up and the correspondence with the students via the website of *Zen For You*.

Who created this course?

The course was originally imagined, designed and realized by Claude Ryu Tai Philippe. He began Zen practice in 1969 with Master Taisen Deshimaru, Dharma heir of Master Kodo Sawaki in the Soto Zen School. Claude Philippe was ordained Bodhisattva¹ by Master Deshimaru in 1971 and monk in 1972.

He soon became assistant to Master Deshimaru and practiced with him until the latter's death in 1982. Master Deshimaru entrusted Claude Philippe with important responsibilities, notably the organization of Zen during the first international yoga symposium at Zinal, Switzerland, in 1972, setting up and directing the first Zen summer session in France at Lodève in 1973, the organization and co-direction of a trip of 150 disciples to Japan in 1974, etc.

Beside these and other responsibilities, Claude Philippe was officially in charge of teaching the practice in the Dojo² from 1973 until the death of Master Deshimaru.

From then on Claude Philippe led numerous sessions of intensive Zen practice in France and in most of Europe. In 1978 he received from Master Deshimaru the certificate of *Dendoshi*, missionary, confirmed by the Zen hierarchy in Japan.

After the death of Master Deshimaru, Claude Philippe continued his practice alone in the spirit transmitted to him by the master.

¹ This ordination is called Jukai. Jukai means "to receive the precepts". It is for laymen and precedes ordination as a monk.

²Dojo or Zendo - room where Zen practice takes place.

Only after having seen his realization ripened and his practice perfected, he decided to teach in his own right in 1995. Between 1982 and 1995 he visited several teaching Zen centers, mostly in the United States, in order to better understand and compare the teachings offered and their adaptation to our times.

These experiences solidified his decision to teach and confirmed the strength and purity of the teaching he had received.

Claude Philippe was a professional therapist and teacher at a senior management training institute. He created and animated many personal development programs.

Except for certain periods of intensive Zen practice in Europe, Japan and the United States, Claude Philippe has always remained deeply involved in active life. From 1995 until 2011 he was exclusively working on the development of *Zen for You*.

Brigitte Roussillon, an Arts and Humanities graduate of the École Normale Supérieure de Fontenay-aux-Roses, former journalist and longtime practitioner of Buddhism closely collaborated to the writing and editing of this course.

The writing and development of the *Zen for You* course has been in the works for more than five years.

Peggy Crawford (1918-2015) translated the course to American English. She was a great practitioner and a well-known photographer.

Marcia Borges de Barros translated the course to Brazilian Portuguese. She has also practiced and taught Zen for many years. At the time of her translation work she was a government employee in Brasilia.

Claude Philippe and Brigitte Roussillon have made the course *Zen For You* accessible to everyone while maintaining the essence of the teachings of Buddhism and of the practice of Zen in particular.

Since 2011 Koya Benoît Senécal ensures not only the direction of *Zen For You*, but also updates the course on a yearly basis. Lessons, texts and suggested practices are constantly revisited, corrected, and refined and reframed in a contemporary context, all the while making sure that the essence of Zen remains unadulterated and accessible over time.

The spirit of *Zen for You*

We are Zen practitioners and it is to help others enter the practice and the Way that we have set up this course and that we keep updating it. We are not trying to teach you to become "Zen scholars." Many academic Buddhism specialists publish studies on the fine philosophic distinctions between this or that school. Such research may be interesting, but that is not our purpose as it has no connection either with our qualifications or our motivation.

Our concern is to communicate what will help you the most in your personal and spiritual development.

The teachings we have received personally and the understanding we have gained through our personal experience of Zen are the basic ingredients of *Zen for You*.

We are not in business nor in publishing. We did not want this course to be distributed by a large publishing house, mainly for two reasons:

- Broad promotional efforts might have stimulated an avalanche of requests that we could not have handled with the quality of individual attention we consider essential.
- We would have run the risk of being bounded, with regards to commercialization, distribution, or the way we interact with the students, into compromises that would not have suited us.

We rather define ourselves as craftsmen with all that could mean in terms of independence and taste for work well done on a small and human scale. This allows us to tailor our work to each person who comes to us.

What can you expect from *Zen for You*?

- *A new light and stronger, more positive outlook on your life and surroundings.*

This can help you bring about changes in your life and your way of being that you may already be wishing for. *Zen for You* integrates the fundamentals of Buddhist practice and psychology, perhaps the deepest that exists, with the modern developments of western psychology.

Here you can find help in clarifying and pacifying yourself in order to be better and truer in your inner and outer life.

- *A simple access to the understanding and practice of Zen*, with the certainty of important spiritual and personal progress so that you will become what the Chinese master Lin Tsi ("Rinzai" in Japanese), called "a true man" or "a real man". The possibility of "entering the stream" is given to you. In traditional Buddhist thought, which includes the notion of reincarnation, it is said that he who has entered the stream *never goes backward again* so long as his practice remains authentic and sincere. Even if he does not attain realization in this life, he will continue to progress in future lives, until he achieves enlightenment.
- *An authentic teaching*, transmitted without interruption from the Buddha twenty-five centuries ago to us through the masters of the lineage, the last two of whom were Master Kodo Sawaki (1880-1965) and his disciple Master Taisen Deshimaru (1914-1982) who was the master of the main author at the origin of the teaching of *Zen for You*.
- *Counseling and individual follow-up* developed at each step by means of the questionnaire accompanying each lesson. Your answers to the questionnaires amount to reports on how the study and practice of your last lesson went for you. The questions asked to pertain your practice, its successes and difficulties and any information you may need.

In a form akin to a personal program, you will receive answers as well as precise, individual directions on what practice to undertake next.

You have total freedom regarding your rhythm of study and practice. (Nevertheless, we advise you to spend no less than one month on a lesson and, if possible, no more than three.)

Lessons 1, 2 and 3 constitute a springboard featuring preconditions that will allow you to take on the actual Zen practice in optimal conditions, physically and psychologically. Depending on your personal experience, they can be studied more rapidly than the following lessons. Beginning with Lesson 4 and until lesson 9, we enter into the deeper aspects of zen practice and suggest you devote the necessary time to each lesson.

- *An answer to a question you may be asking yourself:*

As we said at the beginning, the world situation is troublesome. Many of us ask ourselves what we can do. It is easy to feel caught in a situation from which there is no escape:

- either we refuse to participate in this poorly functioning world at the risk of being marginalized or swept into anarchy, fundamentalism, or even terrorism.
- or we adapt, maybe over-adapt, to the world as it is at the risk of feeling we lose part of our soul and maybe contribute to society's downfall.

Zen offers a solution to this dilemma. It is the middle way:
as we find a satisfying level of participation in the world, we integrate personal ethical values, and, with the inner clarity that comes from practice, answers capable of changing social structures, people and the whole of society can emerge.

What is the necessary motivation?

This course can be approached on different levels. In Japan, some people practice Zen simply to maintain a good health.

Perhaps what motivates you is to feel more comfortable with yourself, more at ease in your relationships and in better shape to succeed in your work.

Perhaps you have a taste for inner exploration and religious experience.

Perhaps you aspire to the ultimate realization, to the awakening that will permit you to live in complete unity with others and the entire universe.

These different motivations arise from different levels of consciousness, *but all are valid*.

Motivations for beginning practice may vary widely. *All are legitimate*.

As your practice develops, your motivation might change. Perhaps you will realize that the reasons you had to begin the practice were not exactly the ones you had thought.

How is the course organized?

The course consists of 9 lessons, each one matched with a personal program of work.

The assessment questionnaire from the beginning and the questionnaires that we send to you with each lesson allow us to establish a specific and personal program .

Each lesson consists of three main parts respectively entitled *Study*, *Practice*, and *The Spirit of the Way*.

• Study:

In this section we examine different points of Buddhist teaching that will open your mind to reflection and a new vision of life, free of preconceived notions that may unconsciously limit you.

Even though we may sometimes explain theoretical ideas, we never remain in abstraction, for our objective is always to provide you with specific elements to help you concretely in your life.

• Practice:

While intellectual interest may be useful as a first approach, especially to Occidentals who love "to understand" before doing. Some people are okay with this, but in general what brings real change is to act, i.e. practice. Gradually each lesson presents or deepens practices that we propose you to try following the recommended pace on your personal program.

Our core proposal is, of course, composed of pure Zen practices. Claude Philippe's long experience as a psychotherapist and teacher as well as our experience as western practitioners brought us to occasionally suggest practices coming from Buddhist schools other than Zen; we also propose some exercises created contemporarily in Occident. The Occidentals of today do have, at times, specific difficulties with the practice that the Oriental masters of the past did not foresee.

As you will see, the suggested exercises that are not specifically Buddhist aim at easing your access to actual zazen practice.

• ***The Spirit of the Way:***

With each lesson we offer a selection of text excerpts that shed more light on our subject. These excerpts are expressly chosen for their coherence with what is taught in the two first parts of a lesson (Practice and Study).

Some are classics, *sutras* for example, transcriptions of the teachings of the Buddha by his disciples, or topics addressed by masters and students of the Soto lineage over the centuries. In a way these are sources. Other texts, written especially by contemporary teachers for occidentals will help you integrate these teachings into your life.

These texts will be from time to time accompanied by commentaries from the author of *Zen for You*.

Besides the great cultural interest of these texts, you will find a contextualization of what is explained in the lessons as well as a source of inspiration and constant motivation.

Perhaps some of these excerpts will interest you so much that you will feel like reading the entire text and make it your bedside reading!

To get an overview of the entire course, please see below the tables of contents for all the nine lessons:

Table of Contents Lesson 1

INTRODUCTION

1. Structure of the Course
2. Rhythm of Work
3. *Interactions with Zen For You*

LESSON 1

Study

What is Zen?

Zen Modernity:

- Tolerance
- Ecumenism
- Openness
- Respect of Others
- Respect of Nature
- Non-dogmatism
- The Opposite of a Sectarian Attitude
- A Way for the Occident?

Zen and Health

- Physiology
- Psychology

The True Medicine of Suffering

Healing the Body and the Mind
 The *Four Noble Truths*
 Why So Much Emphasis on Suffering?
 Desire, Pleasure, and Suffering

Where Does Zen Come from?

Our Standing in the Tradition
 The Silent Enlightenment
 Why Practice?
 Who was the Buddha?

Practice

When and Where to Practice?
 The Body
 The Breath
 Lying Free Breathing (LFB)
 Flexibility
 Regulating Tonus
 What is Tonus?
 The Concept of Non-Functional Tension (NFT)
 Tonus Exercise 1
 Posture
 The Stop

WISH FORMULA – *DHARANIS* (OPTIONAL)

THE WISH FORMULA AND THE *DHARANIS*

Your part: *This act in itself sets in motion a realization energy*

Our part: *The Answer*

ITS NOT ABOUT BELIEVING, BUT ABOUT KEEPING TRUST IN LIFE IN ANY CIRCUMSTANCE

TO COMPOSE YOUR WISH FORMULA

DO NOT FORGET

The Spirit of the Way

Meow!! (Taisen Deshimaru)
 The Concept of Body-Mind (Pasternak)
 The First Teaching of the Buddha
 Beginning Zen Practice

IMPORTANT NOTICE

VERY IMPORTANT - PROCEDURES TO CONSULT IF NEEDED

1. How to send your wish formula if you want it
2. How to answer the questionnaire at the end of each lesson, and receive the next one

LESSON 2

Study

The Relationship with Oneself

The Conscious and Unconscious Minds
 To Be Honest with Oneself

Not Judging Yourself
 Be Your Own Friend
 To Act with Clear Intention
 How Practice Helps

The Relationships with Other People

How Can We Improve Our Relationships With Others?
 What Can We Do from Now On?
 Ethics and Compassion

Relationship to the environment

The Viewpoint of the Astronaut
 Collective Responsibility
 What Are We to Do?
 The Profound Connection Between the Three Relationships

Where Does Zen Come from? (Continuation)

Zen in the Many Buddhist Movements
 An Idea that Swept Over Asia
 The history of Zen
 Zen in the West

Practice

Posture
 Shallow and Deep Breathing
 Seated Free Breathing (SFB)
 Mental attitude
 Flexibility – Stretching
 Tonus Exercise 2
 The Stop 2
 A Friend Who Wants You Well

The Spirit of the Way

Interbeing
 Nun Ryonen
 Attention to Oneself and to Others (The Buddha)
 Here and Now (Master Deshimaru)
 Five Billion Precious Human Lives (The Dalai Lama)

LESSON 3

Study

The Spirit of Awakening

What is the Spirit of Awakening?
 The Conditions of the Awakening Mind

Taking Refuge

What is Taking Refuge?
 In What Do We Take Refuge?
 Faith

Transmission

Tradition
 Historical Research
 Modes of Transmission that Have Existed

Practice

Free Breathing, Lying Down or Seated
 Zazen
 Tonus Exercise 3
 PFT (Stop)
 Make Peace
 The Morning Taking of Refuge
 Comments on the Dedication

The Spirit of the way

The Parable of the Arrow
 The Leaves of the Sinsapa Tree
 Fukanzazengi (Dogen)
 Taking Refuge (Pema Tulku Wangyal)
 The Cosmic Life (Master Deshimaru)

LESSON 4**Study***Functions of the Mind*

The Ordinary Mechanical Level
 The Functional Level
 Altered States of Consciousness
 Beyond Thought and Non-Thought

Two Types of Meditation with or without Formal Support

Meditation with Formal Support
 Meditation without Formal Support

Shikantaza, the Practice of Our School

The Source of Shikantaza
 Anapanasati: Buddha's Practice
 Comments on the Anapanasati Sutra

What to Do with the Mind in Shikantaza

Body: Be Aware of Your Posture
 Breathing
 Mind and Thoughts in Zazen
 Don't Run Away
 Beware of the "Blank State of Mind"

*Conclusion**Transmission (continued)*

The Reform
 Our Point of View on the Question

Practice

Recapitulation
 The "3 BR"
 Zazen: The Attitude of the Mind
 Taking Refuge
 The Inner Phrase
 Make Peace
 Actions to Help and Protect

The Spirit of the Way

The Benefits of Attentiveness (Sogyal Rinpoche)
 Hui-Ko Cuts Off His Arm
 To Think without Thinking (Master Deshimaru)
 The Great Dragon
 Meeting a Master (Deshimaru / Sawaki)

LESSON 5

Study

What Makes Hurt Us So Much?

The Poison of Anger

Anger Strictly Speaking
 Resentment
 Hostility
 Is There Such a Thing as a Righteous Anger?
 Good or Bad anger?

The Poison of Attachment

Countless Faces
 Can We Live without Attachment?
 Attachment and Possession
 Attachment and Desire
 Are There Healthy Attachments?
 Attachment to Our Own Suffering
 The Psychic Larsen Effect: How We Perpetuate Our Suffering
 Practice and Non-Attachment

The Poison of Ignorance

Illusions
 Fear and Ignorance

Remedies for the Three Poisons

Avoidance
 Zen: Integration and Transformation

Here and Now

To Live in the Future, to Live in the Past
 To Live in the Present

The Four Great Vows

Practice

Recapitulation
 Centered Walking
 Taking Refuge, the Ceremony
 Zazen
 PPS
 The "Friend Who Wants You Well" and "Make peace"

The Spirit of the Way

The Merchant and the Courtesan (Kalou Rinpoche)
 Cook Potatoes (Thich Nhat Hanh)
 Saving All Sentient Beings (Maezumi Roshi)
 Helping Others (Master Deshimaru)

LESSON 6

Study

All That Exists Is Interdependent

A Web of Causes, Effects and Impermanence
 What Is the Essence of Things?
 What is "Emptiness"?
 A Few Thoughts on the West and Emptiness
 What Are We in This Emptiness?

Self and Ego: Are They the Same?

How Both Ego and Self Are Formed
 Is it Possible to Have a Healthy Sense of Self and Still an Ego?

How Can We Go Beyond Our Ego?

Remedy for the Ego: Practice
 Reinforce the Self or Dissolve the Ego?
 From Unity to Dualism to Unity

Practice

Centered walking
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 Zazen
 Spiritual Practices
 PST

The Spirit of the way

Sutra of the Heart of Wisdom
 Comment by Thich Nhat Hanh
 Comment by Master Deshimaru
 Comment by Han Shan
 Why We Have to Practice (Dogen)
 Buddha and the Woman Who Had Lost Her Child
 Man or Woman?

LESSON 7**Study**

Karma and the law of cause and effect

Karma and Reincarnation

The Popular view of Reincarnation
 The Profound Buddhist Point of View
 Is it Necessary to Believe in Reincarnation?
 Can One Retrieve Former Lives?

What is Karma?

Reincarnation: Good or Bad News?
 The Role of Karma
 Karma and Illnesses
 Collective Karma

Is All Suffering Karmic?

The feeling of guilt

Karma and Practice

Primary Karma and Secondary Karma
 The Act of Practice

Practice

Centered Walking
 Taking Refuge

Zazen
 Purifications
 PPS (Phase 3)
 Prostrations
 Ceremony

The Spirit of the Way

Platform Sutra
 When I'm Hungry, I Eat
 The Cats' Martial Arts Convention

LESSON 8

Study

Is Awakening Sudden or Gradual?
 The Eightfold Path or the Way of Integrity
 The Paramitas, the Bodhisattva's Path
 Merits and Wisdom
 Without Goal or Profit

Practice

Kin Hin
 Zazen
 Purifications
 The Prostrations
 PPS and Zazen

The Spirit of the way

Text of the Buddha on the Eightfold Path
 The Paramitas (Chögyam Trungpa)
 Without Spirit of Attachment or Hope of Gain (Dogen)
 Mushotoku, with Neither Goal nor Profit (Master Deshimaru)
 Suggested Thoughts for an Ill Bodhisattva (Vimalakirti)

LESSON 9

Study

The Bodhisattva in the Tradition

The Great and the Small Vehicle
 Buddhism and Faith
 The Bodhisattva's Prescriptions

The bodhisattva ideal and you

Dying well

Death, A Subject to Avoid
 Preparing for Death Through Practice
 Living Close to Death
 Important Practical Measures to Take Before Death

God

Ultimately, no Birth nor Death

And Now?

Practice

Kin Hin, PPS
 Difficult Situations
 Zazen

How Can You Evaluate Your Practice?

The Spirit of the way

The Realm of the Bodhisattva (Vimalakirti)
 The Bodhisattva's Freedom
 Bodhidharma's Last Teaching
 Death of the Buddha
 The Moment of Death (Sogyal Rinpoche)
 The Moment of Death (Huang Po)
 The Parable of the Raft
 ZenKi: Every Moment Is a Moment of Plenitude (Dogen)
 Beginner's Mind

How much time will my practice take?

Your personal program will require about 20 minutes. If possible, go through it every day, but at the very least, do it at least four days a week.

Obviously, you can only achieve the desired results if you are sufficiently determined and willing to persevere in your study and practice of the entirety of the teachings of *Zen for You* as laid out in the program.

In the first pages of this document we have stated outcomes you can expect if you practice. They may have sounded like an exaggeration. It is not the case. However, this process is not miraculous: even with our expertise and support, your progress will still depend on you.

If you decide to take this course, we urge you to follow it seriously, for it is the only way will to reap its benefits.

During the study of *Zen for You*, you will be able to join a group practice if you wish (also see the activities on the website www.comzenquebec.ca.) In addition, if some intensive practices are organized by our group, we will notify you so you can join us if you want.

In any case, commit firmly to studying *Zen for You* for its entire duration.

What our students think of *Zen for You*

Here are a few testimonials from our students who have given their permission to have them read "as they are." That's why we didn't correct mistakes and simply copied and pasted the comments here.

Mr. F., Student

Excerpts from the final evaluation:

- The entire course: excellent
No truths set forth, but a simple mirror turning each one towards his own reality.
- The section "Study": good
Information is given progressively. This is very good because it is sometimes a bit disconcerting at the beginning for an occidental.
- The section "Practice": good. Clear, structured, progressive.
- The section "The spirit of the Way": excellent. Goes right to the point, without detours.
- "The three best points of this course":
 1. clarity
 2. simplicity
 3. no proselytizing (course without regulations, but precise)

Miss P., teacher

"I find this Zen practice, associated with psychoanalysis which I am just terminating has beneficial effects in my life. (Lesson 2)

Madame L., nurse

"Taking refuge was often practiced in the evening, like a prayer, but I do not manage to pronounce the words Buddha, Dharma, Sangha. I replaced them by Master or Lord God, but I have the impression of surrendering everything that was heavy to carry in this way and thus to be more at peace." (Lesson 3)

In the general evaluation at the end of the course:

"The teaching is simple, theoretical and practical at the same time, within reach of any person interested in it. I find the part "Study" excellent, with a simplicity and depth of content rarely found in books or other teachings."

Mr. L., psychologist

These changes occurred with the help of the course:

"A significant lessening of inner tension, less inner talking, ability to keep silent and listen before beginning to speak, greater sensitivity to self and others.

"It seems to me that during times of listening to others, that my mind was clearer, with fewer quick judgments, a sort of attentive patience. It seems to me there was a bit warmer availability, because I have more confidence in myself."

(general evaluation on completion of the course)

Mr.S., designer

General evaluation at the end of the course:

"The three best points of this course:

1. no standardized answers
2. the graduated teaching
3. the honesty, with no proselytizing or commercialism

"Sigmund Freud said: 'With words we can make our fellow-men happy or push them to despair.'"

"I thank you profoundly for the attention you give me. And I am pleasantly surprised by the warm tone of your letters."

Mr. P., director of research

"I continue to meditate regularly, and I read 'The Song of Enlightenment' by Kodo Sawaki. During my vacation, inspired by meditation on the shores of a lake in the Tarn I composed a small poem:

"Fog runs over the lake

The sun sinks through the clouds

Everywhere circles in the water." (Lesson 8)

Mr. Z., auctioneer

"I have the feeling, perhaps absurd, that my practice liberates energies that unblock all sorts of situations for me as well as for the people around me. I am convinced that this is no coincidence but is the effect of what I have undertaken with you. But how can thought, mental activity act on matter to the point of changing the givens of an existence that seemed immutable? I have a lot of trouble explaining that to myself, even though I have a deep inner conviction about it. It is not a matter of conceptualization but actually something that I feel strongly, the sincerity of which I have no doubt. I feel troubled. My former convictions have been swept away in spite of myself. (Lesson 5)

"I have integrated into my daily life different exercises that I practice almost as a reflex whenever the need arises. I must say that I find them very effective, particularly to calm anxiety and stress. They don't cause any particular problem for me." (Lesson 6)

"I found the section 'Spirit of the Way' excellent. I appreciated the different points of view from various Buddhist schools of practice. They converge towards the same goal: well-being, letting go.

“The three best points of this course:

1. the gradual progression of the teaching
2. its 'ecumenism'
3. the absence of rigid dogma”

(Excerpts from the general evaluation at the end of the course)

Mr. S., Health practitioner

“Framing my practice with learning the preparatory exercises your program prescribes has been very beneficial. In fact, I have been stimulated to take greater charge of my physical and psychic health. Moreover, I notice a new attitude towards my life emerging whether in chaos or tranquility. In short, life is manifesting and expressing itself.” (Lesson 1)

“For a very long time I have wished to be aware of and experience a freshness and opening in the practice of Zen in general. Finally! Tenderness, compassion, and, without forgetting it, the reality of this world (mine and others') which are part of the most fantastic materials of personal growth, love, compassion, but especially and above all of opening and acceptance of self and others infuse your document. I thank you a thousand times for your presence and for this teaching in my life.” (Lesson 3)

“In all humility, meditation practice demands much letting go. I often jump without a parachute...and I am not dead yet ... life is generous and lets us live.

I particularly liked the last texts on the Eightfold Path (the Right Way) and the Six Paramitas (skillful means or transcendent virtues.” (Lesson 9)

Miss B., secretary

General evaluation

I am very satisfied with this course. I learned to accept events and my feelings, good or bad, and to face up to them. I understand that nothing is either solid or written in stone. I also learned to step back from events and not to act stupidly under the influence of my emotions.

My relationships with people have become sweeter, more open and more tolerant. Difficult situations don't last as long as they used to. I “ruminate” less...

I find the course excellent. It allows us to evolve in a positive way (inwardly and outwardly, in every area...)

The *Study* section gives explanations and interesting information's about Zen and Buddhism which help us to understand better and to deepen our practice.

The different exercises presented in the *Practice* section help in everyday life and improve Zen practice. Everything is clearly explained in the diagrams (Zen posture...)

The *Spirit of the Way* section is well named. The texts help us little by little to feel and understand the spirit of Zen, necessary for a strong practice.

Thanks to the Zen For You team for your help, your advice all through the course.

Confidentiality

We do not communicate any personal data including email addresses entrusted to us by our students without their permission. All information is strictly confidential.

How Zen for You and the Meditation Community of Zen Québec Operates

The legal, financial and pedagogical support for the course *Zen For You* (ZFY) as well as the responsibility and direction of the Meditation Community of Québec (www.comzenquebec.ca.) have been provided by Koya Benoît Sénécal for more than 20 years. Proceeds from online subscriptions to ZFY are earmarked to the running cost and updating of ZFY (payments to various contributors and service providers, mainly in information technologies) and to the various activities provided by the community (session of initiation to meditation, meditation sittings, retreats, etc.)

So, What Now?

Registration and Subscription Fees for *Zen For You*

To register for the course, please refer to the indications given on our web site <http://www.zenpourvour.org> or <http://www.zenforyou.org>. at the section "Register now".

The price per lesson includes:

- the lesson itself
- studying carefully the answers to the questionnaire that you send back to us with each request for a new lesson
- establishing your individual program, answering your questions and offering individual counsel

The whole elements above represent the assistance and the pedagogical guidance.

Important Note:

If we could observe the ancestral tradition of Asian countries, these lessons would be free.

Unfortunately, it cannot be the same in Occident. The teachers are not supported by civilian institutions, non-profit associations or sponsors, and a zen community like ours must face a certain amount of charges.

Wanting to preserve, as much as possible, the traditional spirit, we defined conditions as flexible as possible, so everyone wishing for it can follow our program *Zen For You* which is composed of 9 distinct lessons.

Structure of the *Zen For You* Course: Parts 1 and 2

To facilitate the learning pace of everyone in *Zen For You* and taking into account the personal experiences of our students, the course in two complementary parts, lessons 1 to 3 for Part 1 and lesson 4 to 9 for Part 2. Both parts are essential to complete the whole formation.

1. The first part is composed of lesson 1 to 3 (Studies and Preliminary Exercises of the Zen Practice) which can be taken one at a time or altogether in your first payment. For some of you, this part will be quickly covered because of previous personal experiences (a knowledge of yoga, for example), but it is important to have assimilated all the suggested practices of each of these lessons before you move on to the next part.
2. The second part is composed of lessons 4 to 9 (Studies and Central Practices of Zen) which are also available individually, lesson by lesson, or in a package of 3 consecutives lessons (Strong Determination or S.D. formula).

Thus, prices and conditions are as follows³:

1. No charges or membership fees to register for *Zen For You* (which includes the analysis of the preliminary survey).
2. First part: Studies and Preliminary Exercises of the Zen Practice (lessons 1 - 3)
 - a. One-time fee for lessons 1 to 3 altogether = \$225 Cdn* or ~ €162
 - b. Individual fee for each one of lessons 1 to 3 = \$75 Cdn or ~ €54
3. Second Part: Studies and Central practices of Zen (lessons 4 - 9)
 - a. Individual fee for each one of lessons 4 to 9 = \$75 Cdn or ~ €54
4. For those who want to support us with a contribution to *Zen For You*
 - a. Benefactor = \$120 Cdn or ~ €88
 - b. Donating Member = Indicate the amount that you have chosen
5. Option "STRONG DETERMINATION - S.D."

You took the decision to follow the whole lessons of *Zen For You*. For this decision to be beneficial, you must be **absolutely determined**. To help you in this determination, we offer you the payment option "Strong determination - S.D". After the first part or the lessons 1 - 3 for \$200

³ Note: see the summarized table next page; page 31.

Cdn or ~ €144, if you choose the S.D. formula the price for each group of 3 lessons (4 - 6 and 7 - 9) will remain at \$200 Cdn or ~ €144.

The positives aspects of this option are:

- It attests to a strong determination from you. Experience proves that this determination modulates deeply your relation to the practice and to the study that you chose to undertake today. It will assure you a more careful and regular practice, but also that you will go all the way to actualize your choices and achieve your goals.
- In the end, a strong determination gives you powerful leverage to realize the objectives you have set for yourself at the beginning for this practice.
- The total price of the regular formula of *Zen For You* being \$675 Cdn or ~ €486 and the total price for the S.D. option being \$600 Cdn or ~ €432, economically speaking the latter offers an undeniable interest.

Note: It must be said that the provided elements and the quality of the follow-up offered to our students are not influenced by their choice of a regular subscription or of the S.D. formula.

6. Payment modalities for *Zen For You*:

1. By regular mail: write to us at the address indicated below (point 7): payments, shipping of lessons and personal questionnaires and exchanges will be made via mail.
2. Online via the *Zen For You* website: all correspondence, lessons, personal programs and payments will be made via your personal account on the *Zen For You* website.

7. Finally, payments can be made in two ways:

1. Via regular mail: By sending a bank draft or an international money order in Canadian dollars (Cdn) issued by a banking institution from your locality and in the name of **Benoît Senécal**

Mailing address: **Zen For You**
 M. Benoît Senécal
 C.P. 43010
 Lévis (Québec)
 Canada G6W 7N2

2. Online via the *Zen For You* website: by making your payment with PayPal when your register on the *Zen For You* website (see in the payment section of your personal account).

*A receipt will be automatically sent to you by email after payment.

IMPORTANT: We do not accept minors (less than 18 years old) without their parents' authorization. Payments, whether via a bank draft, money order or PayPal must take this prerogative into account. We consider payments made by one of those methods as the proof of parental consent.

Summary table about the modalities and the cost of the program ZFY

Programs of ZFY lessons	Number of the lessons	Cost-(Can)\$ - Euro For each lesson	Option – FD Ferm Determination
Preliminary Studies and practices	1- 2- 3-	\$75 Cdn - € 54	\$200 Cdn - € 144
Studies and practices at the hart of zen practice	4- 5- 6	\$75 Cdn - € 54 per lesson	\$200 Cdn - € 144 for 3 lessons
Studies and practices at the hart of zen practice	7- 8 - 9	\$75 Cdn - € 54 per lesson	\$200 Cdn - € 144 for 3 lessons
Total for 9 lessons	9 lessons	\$674 Cdn - € 486	\$600 Cdn - € 432

One last word

Traditionally, during the Tang dynasty in China, and later in Japan and Korea, things were happening in this way: when someone wanted to enter the practice, he introduced himself at the door of a monastery and asked to be welcomed. The door would remain shut for three days, sometimes longer. During the wait, from time to time monks would go outside, bully the would-be novice, tell him than Zen was not made for him and strongly advise him to go away... This brutal way of acting was full of wisdom and motivated by deep reasons.

We are living now in a different era and culture and we will not inflict you to stay three days behind a stubbornly closed door... The door can open up right now for you. You can come in if you want.

The sooner you will begin, the faster you will see your life change if you practice properly.

With kind regards,
 Benoît Koya Sénécal, Teacher and Pedagogical Lead of *Zen For You*
 Claude Ryu Tai Philippe, Author of *Zen For You*
 and all of the pedagogical team of *Zen For You*.

The 1st of decemer 2020.