



## Fifth Precept Sangha

**Day & Time:** Monday & Thursday @ 7:30 PM (UK)

**Online location:** Zoom  
**Meeting ID:** 553 721 188

## Virtual Sit-and-Share Recovery Meeting Format

Presenter, please follow this format closely.

Everything that you say is in *italics*.

7:30 – Sign-on to Fifth Precept Sangha Zoom Account ~ welcome guests until the meeting start time.

8:00 – [Click on **Participants** > select '**MUTE ALL**'] Read the opening preamble aloud.

*Welcome to this Sit-and-Share meditation meeting of the virtual Fifth Precept Buddhist Group.*

*This is a Peer-Led group - or Sangha - that is open to people of all backgrounds. The group is founded on the principles and practices of Truth and Truthfulness, of Generosity, of Harmlessness, of Wise Heartedness, of Forgiveness, of Mindfulness & Meditation; and of Fellowship. This Sangha is grounded in the principles of compassion and interdependence.*

*This 'Sit-and-Share' meeting is open to any individuals aspiring to live their lives in harmony with the Five Universal Precepts; that is –*

- *To refrain from harming ourselves or harming others by our thoughts, by our words, or by our actions.*
- *To refrain from taking anything that has not been freely given;*
- *To refrain from sexual and sensual misconduct;*
- *To refrain from false speech, harsh speech, gossip and slander.*
- *To refrain from taking alcohol and other drugs that lead to suffering.*

*As part of our shared practice together - we abandon any attachments to negative self-views by announcing ourselves by our first name only. In the spirit of this intention, I will introduce myself as \_\_\_\_\_ ... and I wish you all a very good evening!*

*Your microphone is currently muted, and being respectful of our practice; and to avoid unplanned interruptions, interference and background noise during the meditations, reading and sharing periods, you are kindly asked to leave your microphone muted whenever you are not actively communicating with the meeting.*

*Please feel free to leave your video camera on or off for all or part of our meeting however if you are not sitting in one place or you intend to get up and move about then it would be appreciated if you could switch your camera off.*

## Statement of Anonymity and Confidentiality

*In order for this group to be a place where we can feel safe to share about our practice, where we can feel safe to share about our spiritual aspirations and where we can feel safe to share our personal stories; and to create an atmosphere of openness, we ask that -*

- *who you see here remain anonymous,*
- *and what you hear here remain confidential.*

*Tonight's meeting will begin with 10-minutes of serenity breathing meditation. I will then read tonight's topic for reflection and we will settle into 5-minutes of silent but active contemplation. You will then be invited to unmute yourself and 'share' your thoughts on the topic.*

*But first, please join me for 10-minutes of Serenity breathing meditation to calm the breath, relax the body and quiet the mind.*

## Serenity Breathe Meditation

**Ring the bell (x1) to begin the 10-minute 'serenity' meditation and read the following guidelines...**

*For those who are new to meditation, here are some guidelines:*

- *For the next 10-minutes, using mindfulness of breathing, you are invited to cultivate serenity of body and mind. You are invited to practice 'calm and pleasant abiding' in the here and now.*
- *For the next 10-minutes, there is nowhere to go - there is nothing to be done - there is no one 'special' to be or to become.*
- *Take an upright, dignified posture... a posture that represents your Heart's desire to awaken.*
- *If it is comfortable for you, let your eyes gently close.*
- *We might start to settle into our meditation by taking a very full, very deep breath in... [pause] ...and a very long slow breath out... [pause] ...and another very full, deep breath in... [pause] ...and a very long slow breath out; feeling the breath in the whole body.*
- *Now allow your breath to settle down naturally.*
- *Let your face be soft and allow your jaw to relax.*
- *Let your shoulders drop back naturally to open up the heart area.*
- *Let your arms and your hands rest easily... in your lap or on your thighs.*
- *The Buddha's<sup>1</sup> instructions for the full awareness of breathing say we should breathe in with mindfulness and breathe out with mindfulness, so we might silently note to ourselves -*
  - o *"Breathing in, I am fully aware that I am breathing in."*
  - o *"Breathing out, I am fully aware that I am breathing out."*
  - o *...or we might simply notice with full awareness... 'in'... [pause] ...'out'*
- *We are invited to bring a friendly, affectionate interest to each and every breath.*
- *When you notice that your mind has wandered away from your breath, just smile... ... make a friendly, gentle, silent, non-judgmental note of "not-breath"... ... and then return your full awareness to your breathing.*
- *Our whole practice is grounded on kind-heartedness; so, you are encouraged to smile inwardly... and you are encouraged to smile outwardly; you are encouraged to take delight in this moment... to take delight in this only moment.*

**8:15 – Ring the bell (x3 long gaps) to end the 10-minute 'Serenity' meditation.**

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<sup>1</sup> Anapanasati Sutta: Mindfulness of Breathing <https://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/mn/mn.118.than.html>  
[www.5th-precept.org](http://www.5th-precept.org)

## Topic Contemplation

Read the selected topic (for examples see <https://5th-precept.org/topics-for-contemplation/>)

[OPTIONAL: You may at this point briefly introduce or explain why you chose this topic]

and then read this aloud:

*We will now contemplate and reflect silently on this topic for about 5 minutes. You will then be invited to 'share' on the topic, as it relates to your aspirations, or as it relates to your practice or to your experience on this path of awakening. If you wish to share at that time, please make me aware.*

Ring the bell (x1) to begin the 5-minute topic contemplation.

*Here are some guidelines for our contemplation meditation:*

- *Take an upright, dignified posture... a posture that represents your Heart's desire to awaken.*
- *Once again, if it is comfortable for you, let your eyes gently close.*
- *Breathe naturally.*
- *From a place of non-judgmental calmness, reflect on the topic -  
>>> Read the topic again<<<*
- *Remember to be gentle with yourself.*
- *If you get lost, just practice Serenity breathing meditation again to become calm and focused.*
- *You re invited to befriend your practice – to befriend yourself.*

[OPTIONAL: After a minute or two, it may be appropriate and helpful to 'drop' one line from tonight's topic into the mediation].

8:20 – Ring the bell (x3 short gaps) to end the 5-minute meditation.

Read the topic again, without commenting. Then read the following aloud:

*As tonight's presenter, I will share last. You are now invited to share for a few minutes your thoughts about tonight's topic. Text-book answers are not necessary for sharing, but your own experiences and understanding are really most welcome. There are no wrong answers, only your personal wisdom. Would anyone like to start?*

8:50 – The presenter shares.

8:55 - Close topic discussion.

8:55 Announce the closing silent [or guided see next page] meditation:

*There will now be a 5-minute silent [or guided] meditation.*

8:55 – Ring the bell (x1) to begin the 5-minute [silent/guided] [serenity/insight] meditation.

OPTIONAL >> Wise-Heartedness Meditation <<

Here are some guidelines for our Wise-Heartedness Meditation:

- Take an upright, dignified posture... a posture that represents your Heart's desire to awaken.
- Once again, if it is comfortable for you, let your eyes gently close.
- For this meditation, we might imagine that we are breathing in and out through our Heart.
- You are now invited to recite some or all of the following aspirations like a silent whisper at the back of your mind...
  - **May I find stillness...** in the midst of chaos.
  - **May I be at ease...** in the midst of discomfort.
  - **May I be safe & well...** in the midst of uncertainty.
  - **May I live with kindness...** in the midst of all that is difficult.
  - [pause and repeat above phrases if time allows and/or close with the following phrases]
  - **May I find stillness.**
  - **May I be at ease.**
  - **May I be safe & well.**
  - **May I live with kindness.**

9:00 – Ring the bell (x3 short gaps) to end the closing meditation.

9:00 – Announcements and Dedication of Merit

- Host/leader for the next few meetings
- Any other business

### Dedication of Merit

Please feel free to join me now in offering the benefits of our practice here together to others by repeating after me...

*We dedicate the merits of this practice  
to all suffering beings.  
May everyone be free of suffering,  
and the causes of suffering.  
May everyone enjoy happiness,  
and the causes of happiness.  
Keep sitting, and keep smiling.*

Meeting Ends... but Zoom Room stays open for community connection until the last person leaves or 09:30 PM, whichever is earlier.

Version V17 (03-07-2020) was inspired and adapted from [Wat Thamkrabok](#) Tudong Sajja contemplations; [Against-the-Stream](#) Refuge Recovery Meeting format; [Awakin Wednesday Gatherings](#); 'How to start a 12-step Sangha Meeting' (Darren Littlejohn) and the [Buddhist Recovery Network](#) (Kevin Griffin).