



12 STEP SANGHA MEETING FORMAT

Everything that the leader says is in italics. Everything that the group says is in bold italics.

1) Opening Statement:

“Welcome to 12-Step Sangha, Meditation for Recovering People. Now would be a good time to turn your cell phone off. There are two bathrooms through the other room at the rear of the building. If you parked to the east of this building— please move your car so it won’t be towed.

Our meeting is open to people with any addiction from any recovery program. Our meeting is intended to be supplemental to, and not a substitute for, your regular recovery program. Our purpose is to integrate 12 step principles with Buddhist practices to end the suffering of ourselves and all sentient beings.

For the privacy of our members, we announce ourselves by first name only, without disclosing our particular addiction. Please join me in reading the Anonymity Statement.

Anonymity is of immense spiritual significance and is a sacred trust basic to our fellowship and its survival. So please respect everyone's need for confidence and privacy. Who you see here and what you hear here, let it stay here when you leave here.

My name is _____

Step 11 says, "We sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with a Higher Power as we understood it, praying only for knowledge of our Higher Power's will for us and the power to carry that out."

The format of this meeting is 5 minutes of breathing meditation, followed by a short reading of today's topic. Then we sit silently for 15 minutes to contemplate the topic. I'll ring the bell at the beginning and end of the meditation periods. After the meditation people will share briefly on the topic, as it relates to recovery. The Dharma teacher shares last.

During the meditation period we ask that everyone be quiet and still out of respect for the practice. If you need to leave, please do so silently. If you have questions, there is often an informal discussion after the meeting."

2) Instructions for Breathing Meditation;

Please join me for 5 minutes of shamatha or "Calm Abiding" meditation to focus the mind. For those who are new to meditation, here are a few guidelines: Sit with your back straight, neck and shoulders relaxed, feet on the floor, eyes either open or closed. Breathe naturally. Notice where the air enters your body and put your attention there. Now you can count your breaths up to four and backwards down to one. When your mind wanders or you lose your place, gently begin your attention back to the breath and begin again at one."

Bell begins 5-minute meditation. . .

Bell ends 5-minute meditation.

3) Reading of selected topic from 12 Step or related Buddhist Literature by volunteer.

“Now we’ll meditate silently on the topic for 15 minutes. Begin with Shamatha or “Calm Abiding” meditation and then from a place of non-judgmental calmness, reflect on the topic.

Bell begins 15-minute meditation. . . Bell ends 15-minute meditation.

Then read the following aloud:

“The meeting is now open for people to share about their experience with the meditation on this topic, as it pertains to their recovery. Here are some guidelines for sharing:

- *If you share please keep it down to three minute or less.*
- *Please refrain from offering advice or criticism on what other people share.*
- *Please give everyone a chance to share before sharing a second time.*
- *Please refrain from a focus on “outside issues”— politics, personal conflicts, or self-promotion.*

The Dharma teacher shares last after reflecting on everyone’s input.”

Dharma Teacher shares during last 5 minutes:

The Dharma teacher will now share Buddhist principles related to the reading

Closing Announcements:

“In the 12 steps, the 7th tradition says that we are entirely self-supporting through our own contributions. In Buddhist practice, this is called Dana. The word literally means “generous heart.” This practice is part of the path to enlightenment by letting go of self-centered craving through giving generously to others. The Dana Bowl is near the door. We suggest a donation of \$5.00. Your donation goes toward rent, literature, and other costs of the meeting.”

Conclusion of Meeting:

“Please join me for the Serenity Prayer and the Closing Dedication.”

May I realize the serenity to accept the things I cannot change; courage to change the things that I can; and wisdom to know the difference:

We dedicate the merits of this practice to all suffering addicts. May everyone be free of suffering, and the causes of suffering. May everyone enjoy happiness, and the causes of happiness. . . Keep coming back, it works.”