**Mountain Solid, Water Reflecting Sangha**

**Facilitating the Practice**

Our group is enlivened by a rotating facilitation. We encourage anyone who has been attending regularly to take a turn at facilitating the group in order to share a heartfelt expression of how the practice rings true for you.

**Schedule:** *Arrive at least 15 minutes before 4pm. Keep each activity to 20 minutes so we can end at 5:30 pm.* *If one section runs long please try to shorten the remaining sections so we can end the first three parts in 60 minutes.*

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| --- | --- |
| 3:50 – 4:00 pm  4:00 - 4:05 pm | At 3:50 invite the bell once to begin Noble Silence in Meeting Hall  Opening the Meditation |
| 4:05 - 4:25 pm | Dharma teaching or mindfulness practice (see "What to Share" below) |
| 4:25 - 4:45 pm | [Walking meditation](http://plumvillage.org/mindfulness-practice/walking-meditation/) (see below) |
| 4:45 - 5:05 pm | [Sitting meditation](http://plumvillage.org/mindfulness-practice/sitting-meditation/) (see below) |
| 5:05 - 5:30 pm | [Dharma sharing](http://plumvillage.org/mindfulness-practice/sitting-meditation/) / Announcements (see below) |
| 5:30 pm | Departure (potluck on second Sunday) (see below) |

**What to Share**

You may share anything with the sangha which nurtures mindfulness **and** is by Thich Nhat Hanh or one of his followers. If you want to do something which is longer than 20 minutes or requires special supplies (e.g., mats), please inform the group in advance via the discussion list. The following are some suggestions.

* Note: Every second Sunday of the month, we recite the Five or Fourteen Mindfulness Trainings (text in the supplies).
* Dharma teaching (we have a small library of books and cds )
* Deep relaxation
* Touching the earth
* Mindful movement
* Singing (see - [Songs of Practice](http://knoxmindful.org/documents/thay_songs_of_practice.pdf); copies in the supplies)
* Note: the 1st Sunday of the month is when we have our book discussion

**What to Bring**

* Watch or other timer.
* The material you will be presenting. If you need an audio player bring one. We have a speaker.
* Paper and pencil for taking meeting notes.
* You may want to wear something with a large pocket for holding the bell during walking meditation.
* A peaceful heart – remember it is okay if you mess up...a lotus grows out of mud.

**The Bell**

* Please respect the bell – it is a teacher reminding you to be mindful.
* You are welcome to practice inviting the bell in advance of leading.

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* We awaken the bell before inviting it. To do this, gently tap the bell and hold the stick against it for a softer sound. To invite the bell, tap it firmly. Pause and breathe deeply until the sound completely fades away.

In general, we awaken the bell once and then invite it three times (pausing in between). See [Inviting the Bell of Mindfulness](http://knoxmindful.org/documents/inviting_the_bell.pdf) for more guidance.

**Set Up**

* Arrive at least15 minutes early.
* The building will be opened by one of the regulars who have the door code.
* Turn on the lights.
* Position the chairs in a circle.
* Get the candle, stands, lighter, snuffer, small & large bell, texts, Dana box and any other supplies from the corner closet.
* Set up the candle on the stand in the center of the circle and light it.
* At 3:50 invite the Bell to remind people of the start of Noble Silence

**Opening the Meditation**

* Note: We start with and maintain noble silence until the discussion time. Shoes are not worn within the meeting space.
* Introductory remarks and welcome. Announce that if anyone needs to leave during the meeting, to do so quietly, with a bow to the Sangha
* If there are newcomers introduce yourself and provide a brief overview of group
* Awaken the bell, then invite it three times (see above).
* Share your Dharma teaching or mindfulness practice.
* Awaken the bell, then invite it three times (see above).
* After the Dharma talk, wake the small bell, then invite the bell once and invite the Sangha to unfold and take care of their bodies. Then invite the small bell once for the Sangha to stand behind the cushions and then invite the small bell once for the Sangha to bow to one another and exit the room to the entrance hall to start walking meditation

**Walking Meditation**

* Note: We walk outside unless the weather is inclement. Indoor walking may be done in the dining room and the meeting room. If walking indoors please use a slower pace, such as one step for each in and out breath.
* Bring the small bell and a watch/timer.
* Lead the group in walking meditation (in the parking area, driveway, woods or around the building).
* If the weather is bad the walking meditation can be held in the eating area and / or around the circle in the meeting room.
* Invite the bell once during the walk; stop and take a few breaths.
* Make sure the door is closed by the last one out/in.
* As we re-enter the room after walking meditation the members return to their seats and quietly await sitting meditation

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**Sitting Meditation**

* Awaken the bell, and then invite it three times (see above).
* Sit in silence for 20 minutes.
* Awaken the bell, and then invite it two times (see above).

**Dharma sharing / Announcements/ Closing**

* Read or summarize the laminated sheet of Dharma sharing instructions
* Assess the size of the meeting and ask for members to limit their sharing to 2 or 3 minutes as appropriate
* Invite each person to introduce themselves by bowing in and giving their first names and to briefly share what is in their heart pertaining to the practice and then bow out or to simply bow in and state their name and bow out if they choose.
* Start the Dharma Sharing time by inviting the bell 3 times
* After everyone has had the opportunity to share close with inviting the bell 3 times
* Ask if there are any announcements, etc. Also ask newcomers if they want to be added to the mailing list (see below)
* If you want you can offer a Metta, a song or other brief closing
* To close the meeting awaken the bell, then invite it three times (see above)..
* If it is a second Sunday, invite everyone to enjoy a vegetarian potluck in the eating area (see below).
* Note: Include upcoming events, decisions, etc. in the meeting notes

**Clean Up**

* Extinguish the candles
* Put the bell, candle, lighter, texts, and any other supplies away in the corner closet.
* Reposition the chairs.
* Turn off the lights. Reset the thermostat to the temperature it was when you arrived. Turn off the fan if it is on.
* Make sure that all doors and windows are locked (carefully follow the instructions on the main door and test that it is locked).

**Book Review and Discussion**

* When the Sangha is reviewing a book the order of meeting is changed and the following outline is followed on the first Sunday of the month

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 3:50 – 4:00 pm  4:00 - 4:05 pm | At 3:50 invite the bell once to begin Noble Silence in Meeting Hall  Opening the Meditation |
| 4:05 - 4:20pm | Sitting Meditation |
| 4:20 - 4:35 pm | [Walking meditation](http://plumvillage.org/mindfulness-practice/walking-meditation/) |
| 4:35 - 5:20 pm | Book review and then discussion (popcorn style) (note – no Dharma Sharing) |
| 5:20 - 5:30 pm | Announcements and closing |
| 5:30 pm | Departure  **4** |

The facilitator will start the session with a review of the chapters covered. Then they will facilitate the discussion time by asking the members to discuss the readings, sharing their insights, reactions, questions and what seems important to them about the readings.

**Potluck**

* We share a potluck every second Sunday of the month at the end of the meeting.
* Newcomers do not need to bring food to participate - there is always more than enough.
* Make sure your dish is vegan or vegetarian (eggs and dairy are okay). Please know all the ingredients to accommodate those with dietary restrictions or preferences.
* Full kitchen facilities are available if you need to use the stove, oven, microwave, dishes, or utensils.
* Before eating, Wake and then invite the Bell three full times - Stop (not pause) on the 3rd bell. Then Recite the Five Contemplations with the Sangha. (Text in the supplies). Invite the Bell 1 full time. Note: We do not maintain noble silence during the meal.
* To clean up: check that the stove and oven are off, wash all the dishes, wipe the tables, take care of the leftovers, and turn off the lights.
* Make sure that all doors and windows are locked (carefully follow the instructions on the main door and test that it is locked).

**Mailing List / Meeting Notes**

* Our [group.io](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/knoxmindful/) group is used as our email list.
* If newcomers want to join the group they can give their email address to the leader or Jim. The applicant will then receive an invitation from group.io to join our group
* Note: The mailing list is restricted and new member’s invitation acceptance needs to be approved - Jim can do this.
* Send out the meeting notes by the next Friday (after any newcomers have joined the mailing list).
* Include upcoming events, decisions, a quick outline of the meeting and any brief reflections in the meeting notes.

**Questions?** If you have any questions, please contact any member of the Caretaking Committee. For assistance with the distribution list contact Jim.

12/10/2024