



Daily Dharma Program

Odds are good that most of us do not have a daily Dharma practice. Most likely we are so busy most of the time we rarely even think of the Dharma. But the truth is, we do have time and “Daily Dharma” can help you find the time to bring the Dharma into your daily life.

Our Daily Dharma Program is a way for a person to develop an individual spiritual practice in one’s home. It is important to remember that one’s individual spiritual practice should not be considered as replacements for formal retreats or group meditation practice. Individual practice should be done in addition to attending retreats and participating in group-facilitated practices. What is even more important to recognize is that studying the teachings via reading books, listening to Dharma talks, participating in discussion groups is not enough. The teachings have to be backed by some kind of practice.

There are a variety of practices that different approaches emphasize; e.g. sitting meditation, chanting or oral recitation, mindfulness practices, etc. All of these have value. One great characteristic in Buddhism is that there is not a strong attitude of exclusivity among the different approaches where one approach proclaims that their way is the only true way. It is said in Buddhism that there are 84,000 paths to the top of the mountain. This means that each person must tread his own unique way in life. This is true even if he or she is a follower of a particular sect or approach. Truth is dynamic and the ways it is experienced and expressed are always changing according to time, place and person. It is from this kind of context that we offer a particular kind of daily practice. It is an “open-ended” freestanding practice that can be done in addition to or in conjunction with other kinds of practices. We encourage individuals to modify what we offer. Needless to say, successful individual practice requires taking responsibility for how one’s practice develops; you have to take the initiative. How might a program like ours fit in with your current spiritual path and aspirations?

Although a lot can be gained from participating in a local Sangha’s activities, practical considerations (e.g. geographical, scheduling conflicts, social constraints) may limit one’s involvement in organized group activities. Yet, to practice on one’s own is not easy. Sometimes all you need is a small push to make it happen. Our program provides just a little structure to get you started.

We suggest the practice of putting your hands together, palm-to-palm. This act is called “anjali.” in Pali, the ancient language of Buddhism. In Japanese, it is called “Gassho.”

We recommend establishing a daily Gassho practice. Our 21-Day Program of putting your hands together in daily Gassho is a simple program that anyone can do—yet even the simplest act is often difficult to establish as a daily habit. The 21-Day Program provides a definite structure that can help you get started. The beginning of any endeavor is usually the hardest. The important thing is to begin!

Having made the decision to begin, it is important to emphasize that you must take the lead in customizing what kind of practice would be meaningful for you. You should know that your practice will always be a “work-in-progress.” Look over the attached information on our overall “Daily Dharma” Program. Let us know your ideas and we can jointly work out the details.