

## APPENDIX A: BASIC FORMS

### A.1 Seated Meditation

- Postures
  - Half lotus: 1 leg crossed over the top of the other
  - Burmese: legs folded flat on the ground, 1 in front of the other
  - Seiza: kneeling on the lower legs, sitting on an upturned cushion
  - Royal ease: 1 leg folded on the floor; the other leg upright and bent at the knee, foot flat on the floor; hands folded on the upraised knee
  - Using a chair
    - sit as straight as possible, away from the back of the chair
    - sit with feet flat on the ground; if they don't reach, put a cushion underneath the feet
- Hand positions
  - About 3 finger-widths below the navel, the hands are horizontal, palms upward, left over right, finger joints matching and thumbs just touching, creating an empty oval in the middle; OR
  - About 3 finger-widths below the navel, the hands are clasped one over the other, palms flat against the body, thumbs tucked inside
- Gaze
  - Eyes partially open & looking downward, about 3 feet in front of the cushion
  - Soft focus; don't stare
  - Remove eyeglasses; don't wear contacts, as the eyes will dry out
- Staying comfortable
  - Check that the back and neck are straight, shoulders and arms relaxed, jaw and hands unclenched, eyes in soft focus
  - Breathe into any area of discomfort, letting the attention follow the breath
  - Move discretely as necessary
  - Change positions from period to period; move to a chair
  - Don't skip walking and moving meditations
  - During walking meditation, leave the hall to stretch or do yoga
  - In extreme cases, take a break from sitting

### A.2 Basic Meditation Practices

- Types
  - Breath counting: silently count 1 to 10 on the exhales; repeat the cycles; if the mind wanders, return to 1 and begin again
  - Watching the breath: focus one's attention there, coming back to the breath whenever the mind wanders
  - Mindfulness: Noting physical sensations, emotions, and/or thoughts as they arise, and then returning to the breath
  - Visualizations: such as lovingkindness or tonglen meditations
  - Just sitting: Sitting in still awareness, without any object of attention
  - Working with a koan or koan-style inquiry
- Guidance: Talk with the teacher or meditation instructor

### A.3 Walking Meditation

- Basic Form
  - When the bell ends a meditation period, bow and stand up (slowly if your legs are asleep); stand in front of your cushion with your hands folded at the solar plexus
  - At the bell, bow, turn to the left, and begin walking
  - Walk close together and slowly, with an even, steady gait
  - Eyes are lowered, hands folded at the solar plexus
- Long afternoon walk
  - People are free to drop their hands to their sides or stretch their arms behind them, and to look around
  - People may walk with more space between them

### A.4 Entering and Leaving the Hall

- Entering the Hall
    - On coming through the door, pause to bow towards the altar and then walk to your seat
    - Bow to your cushion; turn 180° (in the direction of the altar), bow to the hall, and sit down, facing the center of the hall
  - Rakusu wearers
    - First time in the hall each day: Kneel facing your cushion, take out your rakusu and either place it on your head or hold the pine twig to your forehead, say the rakusu verse silently with your palms together, put on the rakusu, and sit
    - Subsequent times: Sit in the usual way, take out your rakusu, touch the pine twig briefly to your forehead, and put it on
- VERSE OF THE RAKUSU

This is the robe of freedom,  
the bare field, the blessings.

I receive the Tathagata's  
teaching  
which wakes all beings
- During walking meditation
    - Get into the walking line as usual; leave the line when you come to the door
    - When returning, step into the hall and wait until your place in the line comes around, bow, and step in
    - If the clappers have sounded for people to return to their seats, wait at the door until after everyone bows, then return to your seat
  - After meals or at the end of the evening
    - After everyone is standing, bow when inkin rings once
    - Turn, (put bowl set away,) and straighten your cushions
    - Stand facing in with hands folded at the solar plexus
    - When the inkin rings once, bow with hands in the same position and leave the hall
  - There is no need to bow at the doorway when leaving the hall