

Residential Training at Dharma Rain Zen Center

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Introduction

“...There are ways for good friends in the expression of the truth to pay unexpected visits. And between friends who are unable to say anything (during zazen), although they do not expect recognition, the means are already present for their selves to be known. When there is learning in practice of knowing the self, there is the reality of expressing the truth.” Dogen, *Shobogenzo*, “Dotoku”

“Say it not so, Ananda, say it not so. Spiritual friendship is not half of the holy life, it is the whole of the holy life.” *Samyutta Nikaya*, verse 2.

More than anything else, residency at Dharma Rain is an opportunity to deepen your practice of Zen. The structure of daily life and the support of the practice forms infuse all aspects of life with the scent of zazen and the aspiration for relieving suffering. These forms and structures have been in use since Baizhang in eighth century China, with refinements and adaptations to serve a modern, Western practice that integrates monastic and lay paths, and allows people of different genders, ages, cultures, and backgrounds to train together. Roshi Kennett said that the two variables that tend to have the greatest impact on one’s practice are time and proximity to teacher and sangha - both of which are amply provided by residential practice

Although Dharma Rain is not a cloistered monastery, it is an intensive training container that can be quite challenging in its own way. It serves to simplify one’s life so that more attention and energy is available for immersion into practice and community. It is an unusual blend of a full schedule that offers ample access to senior practitioners and teachers, with a flexible commitment that allows each individual some latitude to discern what level of involvement is most appropriate for their life and practice. Lay residents are not restricted to the temple grounds or told how to conduct their lives outside the temple. Lay residents pay for room and board, and may hold outside jobs. They are responsible for keeping their own lives in order, and maintaining their commitments outside as well as inside the Center. This provides residents with the flexibility to maintain some portions of their secular life, and pushes them both to take more personal responsibility for their training, and to integrate their practice with the rest of their lives.

Our lineage’s blend of a relentless schedule, considerable visibility to the broader sangha, and significant personal responsibility for the scope of one’s practice is not right for everyone. A period of residency is not a safety net, an escape hatch, or just a convenient place or way to live; it is a time for

practicing, realizing, and expressing the Buddha way in all our activity. Residency is often a profoundly challenging and transformative time. Because of this, it is unrealistic to imagine that the rest of life will just go on as usual, and prospective residents need to be realistic about what else in life they will have to give up or scale back in order to wholeheartedly enter residential training. One also needs to be fairly mature, balanced and emotionally resourced to be able to thrive in this context. In considering a time of residential practice, it is important to fully understand the commitment and challenge that residency entails, and to be willing and able to accept the discipline of this temple's unique training matrix.

Seniority

Practicing with Seniority

Each resident is ultimately responsible for deepening their own practice. However, in a residential Zen training program we are part of a community with a clear structure and hierarchy. Many people find some karmic issues with hierarchy, autonomy, or authority to work with during residency at Dharma Rain.

In this context, hierarchy helps provide the structure and stability that communities need in order to function, and it allows each person to “do their own practice.” There is always someone senior and junior to us. There is no absolute value judgment in your position in the community - it refers to the role a person is fulfilling rather than to the person itself. Seniority is generally based on how long you've been involved, but there are many nuances, and many kinds of authority. In a given interaction, number of years in the sangha, level of discipleship, current temple positions, degree of realization, informational knowledge, task familiarity and other influences may all factor in to a perceived sense of authority. This kind of fluid system trains students to be able to pick up and set down authority with ease, reflecting the inherent emptiness of each of us as individuals. If you can learn to function wholeheartedly in such an environment you will also find yourself less attached to power, reputation and a solid identity.

When someone makes a request of you or offers guidance, the issue at hand doesn't really matter. Whether “bowing” to guidance about a work project, the cleanliness of personal space, the appropriateness of an interaction, or being on time to the Zendo, it is helpful to ask: “What can I learn from this guidance, and from my reaction to this guidance?” Notice any judgments about the guidance – “it doesn't make any sense” or “this person is just trying to control me” or “this person thinks they are better than me” – and try to set them aside with dignity. Practicing open-mindedly with hierarchy can be a profound lesson in humility, patience and letting go. It is not necessary to blindly embrace hierarchy or hide concerns. In fact, learning to raise concerns with respect and open-mindedness is a valuable skill cultivated in this process.

Hierarchy

At DRZC, the abbots are the primary authority for all matters in the temple. With the exception of this general oversight, authority in a given situation depends on the nature of the issue at hand. The Head of Residency is the frontline for issues related to the residential container and schedule. The Shuso, when s/he is present, leads the Sangha in retreats and other activities, and keeps everyone on schedule. The Tanto has authority in matters of Zendo form and ceremony. The Tenzo has authority in matters of the kitchen, food supplies and meal preparation. When in doubt about who's in charge, ask. In general, defer to other Zen Center members that are senior to you.

Resident trainees encounter the Head of Residency regularly. This role is filled by one of the resident monks. The abbots ask the Head of Residency to oversee the day-to-day functioning of residential life at the Zen Center, and to “keep the container” of residential training intact when the Shuso or the abbots are not present. “Keeping the container” means to restrain our behavior according to our common aspiration. For example, during formal breakfast we remain silent and avoid eye contact, restraining our normal impulses to socialize or look around; we do this in order to center our minds and concentrate on our own practice. Sometimes the “container” is tighter than others at other times; during retreats we restrain our usual behaviors a great deal, while the container is much looser during a residential meal on day-off. However, the minimum container for resident trainees consists of keeping the

16 Bodhisattva precepts, and following the guidelines for residency. At times the Head of Residency will need to make a judgment call as to whether a particular behavior is appropriate.

Most guidance from seniors will not come from explicit requests, however. Much communication is implicit, through modeling and non-verbal cues; it will be up to each resident to learn to watch for these cues and try to move in harmony with others. This is equally true for matters of form in the zendo, conversational etiquette at the dinner table, nuances of coping with our karmic blinders and situational reactivity, work flow during kitchen clean-up, and relating with the public. The willingness and ability to be sensitive to these cues is one of the best predictors of success for someone's period of residency. Such an ability is difficult to describe or quantify, but is easily visible over time.

When someone in a position of authority makes a request of a resident trainee, it should be followed unless there is a compelling reason not to, even if there's disagreement with a particular decision, communication style, or existing guideline. Unwillingness to honor the hierarchy at DRZC may result in a resident being asked to end the term of residency. If a request or behavior by one of your seniors may be unreasonable or unethical, please discuss it with a teacher, and /or someone from the Ethics Council.

Role of Student

All residents are considered "trainees;" it is assumed that the aspiration to deepen practice and learn about our true self lies behind the wish to experience the challenge of residency. Therefore, it is important to enter residency with humility and a willingness to take on the role of student. Practice direction from teachers will almost always involve issues that arise in the daily life of the community: keeping the precepts, right speech, cleanliness, mindfulness, personal interactions, etc. Direction having to do with issues such as meditation and personal spiritual development will generally only be given by the teachers when explicitly asked for, typically in sanzen. This is not because of the relative importance, but rather the relative specificity of the kinds of instruction or feedback.

It is not necessary that resident trainees be a student of one of Dharma Rain's teachers; however, for the duration of the term of residency, they will be treated more or less as if this is the case. Sanzen (private interview) with the teachers is one of the primary ways of getting to know students, and a valuable tool for leading the community as a whole. Residents are expected to take practice direction from the teachers, and to meet with one of the teachers in informal sanzen at least once a month. Informal sanzen is required in addition to formal sanzen, because the informal setting will allow discussion of any issues that have come up in the course of residency, while formal sanzen should be limited to a brief interchange about a particular practice issue. This relationship with Dharma Rain teachers does not need to interfere in any way with existing relationships with other teachers; such commitments will be considered and respected.

There may also be *less* direction during residency than one had hoped for. One way to ensure trainees take responsibility for their practice is to put up barriers to formal practice commitments (such as having to ask for discipleship three times), and to leave it to the trainee to initiate contact with a teacher. Notice how the amount of feedback affects you at a given time; it will likely change over time. The experience of residency is different for every individual.

Formal Practice Schedule

One of the most striking aspects of formal Zen practice is its full schedule. Almost every moment that one is not asleep is committed to some deliberate and mindful activity such as meditation, chanting, work, eating or study. Everyone moves together, supporting each other and increasing the collective energy for practice. We are held accountable to the container because how we relate to formal practice affects everyone else in it. Little (if any) time is left for indulging individual preferences or engaging in activities that distract one from the deep spiritual questions before us. Such a life can be extremely difficult and demanding at times, especially if one is not used to it. This is part of our training method, as adapting ourselves to challenging and unexpected situations matures our spiritual practice.

Dharma Rain's training week begins Tuesday with a communal lunch, and continues through the Sunday morning program. In fall and spring, we have 90-day Ango periods with significantly increased formal practice. Summer and winter are lighter schedules. In general, residents are expected to participate in retreats, zazen, services, classes, meals, communal work and any other scheduled Sangha activities when they are at the temple. Please be familiar with the calendar – it is an excellent guide for what residential life is about. Note that the temple schedule includes a period of silence during the training week that lasts from wake-up until mid-way through formal breakfast.

One of our strengths is a permeable boundary between sacred and secular life, which allows residents to come and go as life requires. One enters the schedule and participates according to one's needs or responsibilities. Residents are encouraged to participate as fully as they can, and to schedule most excursions for days and times when they do not prevent attending practice events. This usually means Friday, Saturday, or Sunday evenings, any time on Monday, and Tuesday mornings. You should evaluate your situation regularly, and speak to the Head of Residency or a teacher if you need to be consistently absent from any activities or are going to be away for any extended period. When other concerns necessitate time away from the temple, please be mindful of the rhythm of the schedule and try to be unobtrusive in coming and going.

This permeability of the container is an advanced practice. It requires honesty, subtlety and courage to effectively monitor one's energy level, health and life circumstances, and to adjust the level of participation if necessary. This balancing act often ends up being one of the central koans for residential trainees. People may try to attend everything as well as maintaining their outside jobs and commitments, and discover they are exhausting themselves and doing everything halfway. Then they may over-correct and distance themselves from the temple schedule, and end up wondering why they are in residency at all. Practicing with this koan cultivates the confidence and stability necessary to maintain practice throughout our lives, regardless of the external support.

Life of Service

Service includes both generosity and humility, and is an essential part of Zen practice. Sometimes our "service" takes the form of simply sitting zazen. Sometimes it means answering the phone in a friendly way. Cultivating the true spirit of service is a strong antidote to spiritual materialism and self-centeredness. Resident trainees serve the temple, fellow residents, and the greater Sangha in many ways – some obvious, and some "behind the scenes." They answer the door or the phone when someone rings or calls. They are often the last ones left in the building after an event, and make sure everything is cleaned up and secure. They provide a core of practitioners at the temple, which allows non-residents and visitors to drop in and get a dose of community practice.

At a more subtle level, resident trainees maintain Dharma Rain as a public and inviting space for members, retreatants and visitors, even after they feel comfortable at the temple and start to regard it as home. Even residential areas are public spaces, and devoted to temple use. This requires residents to be mindful both of their personal effects and their behavior. There are subtle ways of making people feel as if they are intruding, or have ended up in a space where they do not belong. Particularly when tired, unhappy, or feeling the need for privacy, it can be challenging not to sigh in frustration, show impatience, or imply that someone has interrupted or doesn't belong.

Work Practice

Work practice is an essential part of Zen training. Monks at the time of the Buddha did not work, but when Buddhism arrived in China it was no longer feasible for the monks to subsist solely through begging, for cultural and logistical reasons. Thus was born the phrase that has been part of Ch'an, and then Zen, ever since, "A day without work is a day without food." Dharma Rain's training matrix offers a lot of support and many opportunities for practice, but also requires a significant amount of volunteer labor. Staff and residents are the backbone for this ongoing effort.

Besides its practical value, work is a rich field for practice. Thoughts, feelings, resistance, and karmic issues tend to arise during work, and there's an opportunity to test the depth of our realizations. It may be relatively easy to feel serene on the meditation cushion. It is not so easy to maintain equanimity when we are working at some frustrating task that we dislike, and then get criticized for being careless by someone who we think is incompetent. Work is also a way we practice gratitude as we take care of the temple and serve others.

Some residents work or attend school outside the temple, at least part time. If so, one would be expected to continue their employment conscientiously; this can be considered a part of training and not a conflict or distraction from it. However, in addition to any outside work, it is important to find time and energy to contribute to the sangha. Like with meditation, each individual's intention and energy affects all those in proximity, and the camaraderie, intimacy, and joy that are part of residency are most apparent when each resident is generous with their effort.

All residents are expected to take on at least one temple job, in addition to any ceremonial or teaching positions. Each resident also takes on a cleaning/caretaking chore that fits with her/his schedule. For all who come to the morning program, there is a short Soji period for temple cleaning that happens right before breakfast each day. All residents are expected to help prepare at least one meal each week. In addition, all residents are asked to be available for at least one work period a week, although what this looks like may vary considerably between residents. This may seem like a lot, but many have been able to find a way to participate in this way. Sometimes it may feel like one is doing more than one's share and this is what it takes for a community to thrive. Also, please keep in mind that there are many ways to contribute, and comparing across people is often unskillful.

Community work hours at the temple are roughly from 9:30am-12:30pm and from 1:30-5:30pm, Tuesday afternoon through Saturday evening during summer and winter regular schedules. This varies slightly during Ango periods in the spring and fall. Work at the temple can include assigned temple job(s), communal projects, or general labor. The Head of Residency or Shuso will be able to help find a task when someone has time and energy for it. Work that almost always needs to be done includes cleaning, data entry, cooking, gardening, repairs and maintenance, and various special projects. Please be sensitive to ongoing work projects and be aware of who is responsible for what – e.g., if you're wanting to help in the garden, talk to the gardener.

Kitchen Practice

Trainees new to residential Zen practice may be surprised to find that the kitchen at DRZC is treated almost like a second Zendo. There are as many – if not more – guidelines for working in the kitchen as there are for moving in the sacred space of the zendo. Traditionally, the kitchen figures very prominently in the physical layout, schedule, practice and organization of monasteries. This is partly because sharing food is so deeply connecting and nourishing. The kitchen also offers a premier opportunity for mindfulness and karma practice. One of our thirteenth century ancestors, Dogen, wrote about how a true Tenzo (cook) cultivates three “minds” when providing good, nutritious food for the community: nurturing mind, joyful mind, and magnanimous mind.

Ingredients

At Dharma Rain, one of the residents functions as Tenzo. Though someone else may be the cook preparing a particular meal, the Tenzo oversees the kitchen, food supplies, and menus; and generally has authority in all matters pertaining to the kitchen. S/he is in charge of making sure three well-balanced, nutritious (and delicious!) meals are prepared and served at the temple each day, with the exception of day off (Sunday afternoon through Tuesday breakfast). S/he also purchases all of the food for the community, and carefully balances considerations of cost, value, sustainability, health, and morale. Heavy emphasis is placed on seasonal produce and simple, less-processed goods that can be purchased cheaply in bulk. Expensive specialty ingredients are conserved and used primarily for seasoning or garnish. The Center does not serve meat. Speak to the Tenzo about food allergies, serious intolerances, diabetes, or other dietary issues - whenever possible, accommodations will be made. Personal preferences are usually not used to make decisions about food. Fortunately, people generally find DRZC food to be plentiful,

nourishing and delicious. The food we receive is an offering from the sangha; both in the preparing and the consuming, we cultivate an attitude of gratitude and acceptance.

Procedures

You will probably need to make an effort to take on the role of student when you first enter the temple kitchen, particularly if you have experience cooking, or have strong food preferences. In the beginning, assist in the preparation and clean-up of meals and watch carefully. If you have questions, ask. Each item in the kitchen has a place, and each ingredient is used in particular ways, in particular amounts, and is treated in a particular manner. For instance, metal serving utensils are stored separately from wooden and plastic cooking utensils; dairy items are rarely used except as condiments; metal utensils are not used on non-stick surfaces; certain plastic tubs and cutting boards are reserved for vegetables; the water on the tofu needs to be changed daily, and recipes that call for deep-frying or large amounts of oil are modified so food is lightly fried or baked. People working in the kitchen wash their hands before beginning work, tie back long hair, and take direction from the Tenzo or cook in charge. This is a small sampling - don't worry about memorizing all of these details at once! Practitioners pick them up gradually by spending time in the kitchen.

Because of the amount of time required to learn how to function in the kitchen "DRZC-style," there is a lengthy apprenticeship with the Tenzo and other cooks before residents are allowed to cook community meals on their own. Kitchen work is an integral part of our practice tradition, and if someone is going to use the temple kitchen and donated supplies to provide food for the community, they need to learn how to follow our spiritual and practical guidelines. Cooking for a community is very different than cooking for oneself or a few friends. Remember the Five Thoughts: the purpose of this food is to nourish our training. Try to avoid excess in terms of ingredients and time; except on special occasions the emphasis should be on simplicity - not on large feasts, rich foods or exquisite tastes.

Personal Food

There is not room in the main kitchen for personal food items, unless you have a legitimate dietary requirement that cannot be met by the food served to everyone. If you need to eat meat, please store and eat it elsewhere. If you store food in your room or in the resident's kitchen, take full responsibility for it (i.e., make sure it is in critter-proof containers, ants and rodents can be a problem).

On days off, please make use of leftovers or fix simple meals for yourself. You can also make or find your own breakfast and snacks. Staples are generally available. Even when alone, please say the Five Thoughts before eating, and clean up the kitchen and your dishes when you are finished. Leftovers are generally available for taking, whether as a snack, for using in a different meal, or for lunch off-campus. Residents have limited snacking privileges; there will be food designated as snackable, but if extra meals are regularly needed it is most appropriate to supplement with some personal food.

There is a place to sign in for meals, please sign in (or out) in plenty of time for the Tenzo to plan around. One can also ask that a plate be saved if one is planning on a meal but won't get there on time. When making use of this option, please make an extra effort to do some clean up and attend a practice event.

Clean-up

When sharing a meal at the Center, one should be available for clean-up afterwards, unless one helped with the preparation. Kitchen clean-up is shared by all of those who benefited from the meal, including residents and visitors. If you must be excused from kitchen clean-up at one meal, please be sure to stay for it at the next meal. Our practice of "leave no trace" is particularly noticeable in the kitchen; clean up happens right after a meal (and is often started during preparation), and is not complete until the kitchen is thoroughly ready for the next meal. This is true whether it is a community meal or just a resident returning late and heating up leftovers. Please do not leave things for others to clean up.

Precepts

The Bodhisattva Precepts, or moral guidelines of Mahayana Buddhism, form the foundation of our spiritual practice as Buddhists. The occasion of formally becoming a Buddhist is marked by "taking" the Precepts, which means one commits oneself to following them as completely as possible. Most residents will have formally taken the precepts already, or do at the first opportunity. The guidelines for residential training are fundamentally about how to keep the Precepts in this particular setting. Developing our sensitivity to keeping precepts and our integrity around challenges to them is a practice that gets ever more subtle, and is beyond the scope of this document. The Ten Grave Precepts are listed below:

Do Not Kill – Cultivate and Encourage Life

Do Not Steal – Honor the Gift Not Yet Given

Do Not Misuse Sexuality – Remain Faithful in Relationships

Do Not Speak Dishonestly – Communicate Truthfully

Do Not Become Intoxicated – Polish Clarity, Dispel Delusion.

Do Not Dwell On Past Mistakes – Create Wisdom From Ignorance

Do Not Praise Self or Blame Others – Maintain Modesty, Extol Virtue

Do Not Be Mean with Dharma or Wealth – Share Understanding, Give Freely of Self

Do Not Indulge Anger – Cultivate Equanimity

Do Not Defame the Three Treasures – Respect the Buddha, Unfold the Dharma, Nourish the Sangha

Because of the importance of honoring the Precepts in our practice, it is not considered appropriate for resident trainees to break governmental law while in residency, even away from the temple grounds, and doing so can be grounds for termination of residency. This is because, at the very least, such activity would encourage or necessitate dishonesty.

Part of the resident's orientation includes the booklet "Zen Practice in Community: Precepts and Ethics in Sangha Relationships." It includes explanations of various sangha relationships, levels of involvement and the expectations that go with each, as well as grievance and reconciliation procedures.

Sangha Treasure

The treasure of Sangha - the community of Buddhist practitioners - must be experienced to be appreciated. Doing deep, transformative work in the midst of others sharing the endeavor is challenging and rewarding. This intensive, shared experience forms bonds at a level that is hard to describe, but easy to recognize. Buddhism, especially Zen, has made use of community since its inception. Our 16 Bodhisattva precepts are analogous to the early Bhikkus' practice of ethics, but the Vinaya, the 350 rules of conduct, in Zen became the schedule and community.

Sangha manifests in many ways besides the sharing of silence during meditation in the Zendo or the explicit discussion of Dharma. Despite our many differences, as fellow practitioners we share many basic intentions, vocabulary and values. These commonalities permeate each aspect of community life and separate a training environment from a typical communal living situation. We learn more about our current limitations by having to display our practice throughout the day, in a wide variety of contexts, both formal and informal. Meals, tea times and social events serve an important purpose in learning who we are and creating Sangha.

Communal Zen practice has been likened to cleaning potatoes. Dumping potatoes together in a big pot of water and knocking them against each other cleans potatoes quite well. Our primary teachers in residential practice may end up being our fellow residents; simply by being well intentioned but fallible humans who "push our karmic buttons." If we take responsibility for our reactions to them, we have the

opportunity to discover, explore and untangle our own unresolved issues. Outside of community, people have more choice about whom they interact with, and therefore may not end up being challenged as deeply.

This is not an easy practice. In fact, difficulties arising in the interpersonal realm are probably the primary reason people leave or become disappointed with community life. One has to be ready to discover new things about impatience, judgmentalism, insecurity, fear, grasping, and idealism, etc... Upon making these discoveries, one is expected to keep the precepts carefully, and not indulge in anger, blaming, or inappropriate use of sexual energy. Serious interpersonal issues certainly arise in communities and need to be addressed, but taking responsibility for our own part is always the first step.

It is also important to be considerate of and sensitive to the needs of others. With many people living in a relatively small space, it is essential to be very considerate of the amount of “space” we take up. We make our presence known and felt through such things as the volume of our voice, the harmony of our expressed mood with the general mood of others, our tendency to impose a topic of conversation on others, the physical space we give others, where we put personal possessions, etc... Living at Dharma Rain means living in a public space, one that is specifically devoted to spiritual practice. Any habits, behaviors, or mannerisms that consistently hinder this purpose need to be tempered or adapted. It can take a lifetime to develop skill in these subtle interpersonal dynamics. This is a challenging practice, but if everyone does their best, is patient with themselves and others, and accepts guidance in these areas, it generally works out.

Zen training, particularly residential training, means to live deliberately. We manifest both our tangled karma and our relationship to the absolute in all our interactions, and throughout our lives. Every aspect of our daily life is relevant, especially the simple, mundane, routine. We try to keep the atmosphere clean, uncluttered, quiet and orderly. If we are not sure how to proceed, we try to remember to ask ourselves, “How will this affect myself, others, and my environment?” We line up our shoes to keep them out of the way, we take only as much food as we can finish at a given meal, and we pour extra grey water on outdoor plants. These kinds of practices are done for practical reasons, but even more importantly they are done to cultivate a spirit of meditation, harmony, gratitude and generosity within - for the sake of self and other.

Mindfulness and attention to detail is the kind of discipline we all must practice to keep the space of DRZC open and inspiring to the other residents, members and visitors. The following guidelines address particular needs for mindfulness and consideration in residential life:

- *Health and hygiene:*
 - To avoid spreading germs; residents wash hands after using the toilet, blowing their nose, before handling food or working in the kitchen. The face is covered when sneezing or coughing by aiming into the crook of your elbow, rather than the hands.
 - If ill, residents recuperate away from others to minimize exposure to the illness, do not help in the kitchen, and take needed time to rest. Medical practitioners should attend to serious injury or illness.
 - Dharma Rain does not have medical insurance for residents, except for monastics. Please take full responsibility for your health, both long- and short-term, by maintaining a healthy lifestyle and being conservative about avoiding accidents and injuries.
- *Visitors:*
 - Residents are encouraged to take the first step in welcoming new participants. If a new person is around, please introduce yourself and help them find what they need.
 - Guests of residents count as visitors. The Head of Residency should be notified before inviting guests. It is generally not appropriate to have guests who are not interested in the practice, although family visits are acceptable.
 - Residents are responsible for their guests’ behavior (respect for temple schedule and culture), logistical impact (signing them in for meals, figuring out sleeping arrangements), comfort (not expecting other residents to entertain them, keeping them informed about what is happening around them) and financial obligation.

- *Right Speech:*
 - In a diverse environment such as Dharma Rain, please be very careful in discussing politics or other divisive topics. Language that leads to discrimination or prejudice on the basis of age, appearance, disability, economic status, gender, origin, race, religion or sexual orientation is to be avoided.
 - Oversharing personal details, or excessively dramatic, emotional, cynical, or sarcastic speech is discouraged.
 - If you do not have immediate use of a personal space at the Zen Center and need to have a private conversation with someone, do not do so in a common space that others may wander into or want to use – take a walk, go out to a coffee shop, or find some out-of-the-way spot where you will not be obtrusive.
 - Talking during noble silence and during sesshin should be as minimal as possible and isolated from the practice container if at all possible.
 - Working silence (i.e., only functional, necessary communication) with roommates is suggested as a baseline, to ensure that all parties have adequate space for solitude and decompression. If a conversation seems to need to happen, either take it out of the shared room, or explicitly confirm that it's OK to proceed.
- *Day off:*
 - Day off is generally from Sunday early afternoon through Tuesday late morning. Please use this time to rejuvenate from the last week and prepare for the next training week. This is a good time to do necessary off-campus errands and trips, and catch up on mundane affairs of life (laundry, bookkeeping, sleep). It is also a good time to nurture spheres of life that may get less attention during the training week, by engaging in social time, art practice, getting exercise and spending time in nature.
- *Vacation:*
 - Vacations that impinge on the training week should ideally be scheduled during summer and winter periods, not during spring and fall Angos. Residents are encouraged to take a week or two off-campus each year. Sesshin or retreats do not count as vacation.
 - If you are leaving for an overnight, let the Head of Residency know and sign out on the meal calendar.
- *Respect & decorum*
 - Clothing – no shorts or revealing clothing in the zendo, no offensive language or images on clothes.
 - Be mindful that many other people live at the temple. Walk softly and use doors, tools, voices, and media quietly. Particularly after 10:00pm and before 5:00am, assume people are sleeping and be extra quiet.
 - Intoxication is counterproductive to developing self-control, the mind of meditation, and the clarity required to see through our delusions. The following behaviors are not permitted:
 - use of prescription drugs or other substances for recreation;
 - use of illegal drugs;
 - regular or excessive alcohol or marijuana use;
 - any alcohol use on campus without permission of the abbot(s);
 - attendance at practice events while under the influence of alcohol or drugs;
 - any noticeable intoxication.
 - Tobacco use is strongly discouraged for residents, as it can create a barrier to others accessing the dharma, and does not model an appropriate level of respect and care of the body. Smoking is not allowed anywhere on the Siskiyou campus.
 - Possessing weapons, acts of aggression, threats, pornography use, discriminatory language, and illegal activity are incompatible with deep practice. Such activities are inappropriate during a period of residency, regardless of whether they are covert or overt, or on or off-campus.

- Possession of weapons on temple grounds will result in the termination of residency and expulsion from the residency program.
- *Media*
 - Recreational media use may be done in private during free time or in communal living space on day off. Use of temple TV is only for day off, movie night, or Dharma School overnights.
 - If you are using a temple computer for personal reasons, limit the amount of time you spend at a stretch, and use it during low-traffic times.
 - Above and beyond the previous guidelines, being mindful of the effect computer use or on-line activity has on one's whole being is important, as is moderating such activity so it doesn't distract from the rest of life.
- *Caretaking*
 - Temple property should be respected, skillfully cared for, returned to its home after use. This includes tools, office supplies or equipment, kitchen supplies, library materials, furniture, etc. Consumable materials should be used frugally. Residents may make limited use of temple property for occasional personal use if they take full responsibility for it, e.g., replacing damaged equipment, chipping in for consumables used, etc.
 - Take responsibility for things – leave no trace, clean up areas used, replace things that are empty, deal with hazards or spills, let people know if there are problems you can't deal with. A temple becomes a sacred space because people treat it as such.
 - Do not leave personal items in public spaces – this fosters an uncluttered atmosphere that is conducive to meditation and welcoming to visitors.
- *Pets:*
 - Residents are discouraged from having pets, due to their potential distracting influence on the practice container, and their physical influence on the facility. Working animals, as opposed to companion animals, are of course welcomed.
 - New pets are not allowed for any residents except monastics who have finished five years of practice post-ordination, and then only with the permission of the abbot. Under some circumstances, a resident may be allowed to enter with a pet. Pet owners are entirely responsible for the care, feeding, training, cleaning up after, exercising, and the general deportment of the animal. Any damages must be fixed or items replaced, at the owner's expense, without delay. An animal that causes consistent disruption, or exhibits any aggression towards other animals or humans will have to leave. Individual guidelines or restrictions will need to be worked out in each instance, and pet owners are responsible for ensuring that these are followed and that their pet is a positive addition to the residential community and temple.
- *Relationships:*

Another way members of a community need to take each other into consideration is being careful with sexual energy and attraction. In American culture this realm of experience is usually considered intensely private, so it can be difficult for people to accept guidance in anything relating to it. However, it is not uncommon for someone living in community to develop an attraction to someone else in the community, and this can make it difficult to focus on training and take full advantage of the opportunity that residency offers. Initial phases of a love interest tend to dominate one's consciousness, regardless of whether there are actual romantic or sexual relations, mutual attraction, or even mutual awareness of the "relationship." This imbalance of attention, while natural and appropriate in many contexts, distracts from intensive internal practice, and can cause a disproportionate amount of external ripples through the community. Although this is especially problematic if the people in question are both residents, it also may be problematic if a resident takes a special interest in someone in the broader Sangha, or even someone not associated with the Sangha at all.

For these reasons, we emphasize that residency is a time to focus on practice and that it is not a good time or place to seek or develop a new romantic, sexual, or exclusive relationship. All residents must take responsibility for how they speak to and interact with

other sangha members and residents in order to keep these relationships clear of any overt sexual energy. This includes active or passive flirting, innuendo, immodest dress, spending excessive time alone with another resident, indulging in fantasy or objectification.

If an attraction or relationship possibility shows up, it should be discussed with one of the teachers as soon as possible. Although speaking to a teacher is advised, revealing one's attraction to the object of that attraction is an attempt to further a romantic relationship, and may be felt to be invasive. If the developing relationship is clearly both mutual and wholesome it is possible that your best interests will be served by moving out of residency to give more attention to the developing relationship. If the potential relationship is not, steps can be made to prevent further energy from being diverted in this manner. Monks who have finished their initial five years may be ready to reintroduce this aspect of life into their practice, if so, this would be an issue they would work with their teacher on.

If two people with a healthy and committed relationship wish to enter residential training together, that would be a possibility. They would need to submit to the above standard of behavior between the two of them while in public, and at all times with others.

Types of Residency

- **Visitor** Visitors are those who are guests of the temple or a resident. This could include a resident's family members, a teacher from another lineage, a sangha member in crisis, a person on private retreat keeping their own schedule, etc... In most cases, they are not expected to be part of the formal container. They are not required to attend events, meals, or contribute a certain amount of work practice, although they are welcome. However, if they attend meals, kitchen cleanup may be appropriate. The cost is more than the regular nightly rate. Visitors, or their hosts, should make arrangements several days ahead.
- **Part time Resident** Similar to a resident, except that during the time they are physically at the temple, they are expected to participate fully in the schedule. This includes practice events, work, and meals. A part-time resident pays the normal nightly and meal rate, as is used for retreats. Part-time residents must go through an application process if it will be a regular event, but not if their times in residence are only occasional. Once approved, part-time residents could be at the temple for up to three nights a week. A specific room is not normally guaranteed, and part-time residents often use a dorm room. Part-time residents should not be on campus on day off, except under special circumstances. There is no time limit on part-time residency. Only members are considered for part-time residency.
- **Resident** Residents are those who live full-time at the temple, but have outside work, school, or other obligations that require significant time. Residents may live at the temple for up to three years at a time, pay normal room and board, have an assigned room, may store limited belongings on campus, and have several obligations. Residents need to be members of Dharma Rain, and should contribute at least one work period a week to the temple, in addition to having a temple job and residential chores. They should also help cook at least one meal a week, come to either the full Sunday or Wednesday program, and participate in at least three sesshin a year. Residents in dorm rooms must attend sesshin whenever they are offered. Finally, during Spring or Fall Ango, residents are expected to attend one meal and one practice event daily. If they are not able to do this in a given week, they are responsible for speaking with the Head of Residency about their situation. The Head of Residency will meet with residents every 4 months the first year, and yearly thereafter, to discuss any issues, challenges or celebrations about residential training that are present for the resident or community.
- **Oblate** This category is for residents who are ready to immerse themselves in practice, and are a dependable presence at Dharma Rain. The minimum term is six months, and may last indefinitely, although a review every year is required. Oblates are full-time on the schedule, which may run from 4:30 in the morning to 10:00 at night at times. They hold

numerous temple jobs, participate fully in practice events, work and meals. Oblates are allowed to take the minimum amount of time from the formal schedule to maintain their life, which may include paid work elsewhere. This personal time should impact the formal schedule as little as possible, and generally be less than 12 hours a week, and less than 8 hours from the temple work week. Oblates go through a normal residency application process. Minimum qualifications would include being a resident for more than a year, or, for lay disciples, being a resident for six months. Oblates are provided room and board, but are not given health insurance.

- **Monk/Priest** Monks function somewhat like oblates, with the addition of formal requirements (such as ordination), a much longer trial period, a much longer commitment, less privacy or autonomy, and gradually more ceremonial and teaching functions. Their health insurance is provided.
- **Special Needs** This could include residents with disabilities, on hospice, etc. Conditions would be determined on a case-by-case basis.

Applying for Residency

If interested in residential training at Dharma Rain Zen Center, there are several things to do. First, talk to people who are in or have done residency and ask what it is like. Second, talk to the Head of Residency about whether one might qualify for residency at this time, and to help determine whether it is something one would actually want to do. If residency seems like a real possibility, carefully read this document and review the residency application. When an application is completed and submitted, the applicant will be interviewed by the Residency Review Committee. The Committee may accept an application, in which case a move-in date will be negotiated, based on available rooms. The Committee may also ask to postpone residency or request an applicant to reapply at a later date. Please do not take this personally; members of the Committee have many years of experience with DRZC residential life, and may be able to see how residential life would be inappropriate at this time. Reasons to postpone residency include health problems, heavy outside responsibilities, a lack of clarity about what residential training is about, or even the potential for a particularly problematic interpersonal conflict with a current resident.

Upon entering residency there is a probationary period of up to a year. Continuation of participation in the residency program is dependent on compliance with residency guidelines and with the specific agreements made with the resident.

Mental health is important; residency is not a good fit for everyone. When appropriate, a resident or residency applicant may be asked to authorize a dharma teacher to contact the resident or resident applicant's therapist.

Minimum recommendations for residency are:

- membership and familiarity with Dharma Rain Zen Center (typically 6 months or more of regular participation in Zen Center formal practice activities), or residential practice at another Buddhist sangha with a positive recommendation from the guiding teacher.
- a meditation practice of a year or more
- an understanding of the principles of training used in Zen monasteries (on which our residential program is based). This includes being acquainted with the guidelines in this document, and willingness to observe them. Doing so will strengthen your practice, and help support the practice of those around you.

Orientation

The following topics should be covered in a new, or returning, resident orientation, along with a thorough tour of the facilities:

- General
 - Fair-housing laws don't apply to a religious institution. The residency program is not a room rental; it's a training venue. Residents may be asked to leave at any time, at the request of the abbot or Head of Residency.
 - Temple organization as necessary. Residents should be familiar with the Mandala Model, Ethics Booklet, current themes or issues in the sangha, and know whom to contact if they have questions.
- Facilities
 - Brief introductions to the following areas, a sketch of how they are used, cared for, and practice forms that should be known. More explanation and learning will happen real time, rather than in an orientation: Laundry; Office; Sewing area; Barn; Garden/Landscape supplies; Preschool spaces.
 - Etiquette and current policies for temple phones and internet use.
 - Any specific information about care and use of the living areas – bathrooms, rooms, residential common areas, residential kitchen.
 - Car and bicycle parking, both for resident use, as well as awareness of temple use and impact on surrounding area.
 - Security, locking doors, nighttime lighting, and closing rounds.
- Crisis situations
 - Suicide/crisis calls or visits happen from time to time, and residents should be prepared to take initial stock of such a situation if they answer the door or phone. Residents should know whom to contact, what initial questions to ask, how to get more information/resources, how to record the event, and the location of the binder "Documentation of At-Risk Interventions."
 - Emergency procedures in the case of fire, earthquake, power outage, mechanical malfunction, etc. Residents should know where first aid, lighting, and other supplies are located, as well as how to shut off electricity and water.
- Moving In
 - Chores/Soji tasks for residents. Also other duties shared among residents.
 - Current day-off procedures, expectations, issues.
 - Storage facilities. Bringing furniture is discouraged and space to store items not in use is limited.
 - Introducing any pets that may be in residence at the time.
 - Fees for room, board, retreats, other programs.
 - Meal times and protocol if necessary.
- Contract – Read, understand and sign Residency Agreement