

DHARMA COUNCIL MEETING

May 11, 2023

The Dharma Council provides oversight and stewardship of Dharma presentation and practice at DRZC to support its core mission and values.

In Attendance: Daikō, Jyōshin, Sanin, Thomas, Gabe

Absent: Christina, Kengan, Ilko

Facilitator: Daikō

Location: Uji

Recorder: Gabe

Agenda

1. Tiny Meditation
2. 60-Second Check-in
3. Approved Minutes from prior meeting
4. Next Meeting Date: June 8, 2023
5. Member Concerns
6. Updates on action Items from previous meeting(s)
7. Questions/Topics for Today's Meeting:
 - a. Event Request
 - i. Background: The Godo submitted a request for an event by Roshi Al Rapaport (see 5/11 email to DC from Kengan). Roshi Rapaport is the founder of Open Mind Zen International, a network of Zen groups in the US and Europe and is Secretary/Treasurer of the LZTA. He would offer a training on the Zen Dialogue method of developing awareness of unconscious aspects of self. Requesting approval for a Friday evening and all day Saturday workshop in spring or early summer, 2024. Teacher fee: \$500 plus air fare from Florida.
 - ii. *Summary of Main Discussion Points:* Multiple senior DRZC teachers had a good experience learning about this method from Roshi Rapaport earlier this year. We could ask other centers to publicize if we want to make sure it is fiscally neutral or profitable.
 - iii. *Decided:* The DC is supportive of this offering.
 - iv. **Action Item: Gabe will let the Kanin know about DC approval of this event and ask that it be added to next year's budget and ask the Godo to coordinate with the Shika on communication with Roshi Rapaport re: calendar, publicity, etc...**
 - b. Updates to the chant book

- i. *Background:* The DC approved proposed changes to wording in the chant books to support inclusivity. What is the status of implementing changes?
 - ii. *Summary of main discussion points:*
 1. The current understanding of DC leadership is that DRZC will print new chant books (versus adding changes into current chant books).
 2. We are unsure if relevant staff have been informed of this plan and received the list of language changes in order to update the digital file.
 3. There are other potential updates that should be considered before printing new books - e.g. mismatch between the cadence indicated in the written version of Universal Gateway Chapter and how it is currently being chanted; potential for adding in the chants from the Daigen Shuri ceremony
 - iii. **Action Item(s): Daiko will check in with Kengan and Genko to determine current status of the process, as well as who should be informed/involved in order to capture other useful updates in the next printing.**
- c. Dharma Cloud Day Update: How did it go? What did we learn? Feedback from participants? (Daiko)
- i. *Summary of main discussion points:* Overall positive feedback. Based upon sentiments expressed by some participants, discussion groups were given a very open prompt - to share about their sanghas and practice. Afterward, there was some feedback that this part of the day was too unstructured, could have been clearer, could have benefitted from more facilitation and focused topics.
 - ii. **Action Item(s): Daiko will share the feedback compiled from the post-event survey.**
- d. Health of the Sangha. Any observations on trends or other items of note? (Standing Agenda Item)
- i. *Background:* Thomas (in his capacity as Zoom Jisha) was given feedback by a senior member about two issues:
 1. Audio quality: The member expressed concern that despite recent acoustics upgrades, it often remains difficult to hear - especially during Q&A. They suggested that giving folks more guidance on how to properly use a handheld mic might help.
 2. Confidentiality: The member questioned our practice of asking people to state their names before asking a question, suggesting that this unnecessarily undermines confidentiality in posted audio recordings and might deter some members from asking questions.

- ii. *Summary of Main Discussion Points:*
 - 1. There has been a good deal of positive feedback about recent acoustics improvements. It's hard to know how widespread continued difficulty hearing is.
 - 2. Sharing names can support sangha building. Perhaps a gentle invitation versus a strong request to share names might help (e.g. "if you'd like to share your name, please do so")
 - 3. It's important for us to follow through with implementing the DRZC Media Policy to inform folks about audio recording.
- iii. **Action Item(s): Gabe will add agenda item to check in on the status of operationalizing the media policy at DC next meeting. Gabe will talk with Kengan regarding Temple Officers reviewing how audio in the Sodo is going.**

8. Recurring Monitoring Reports and Announcements:

- a. Temple Officers: 1) DC Mandate now visible on DRZC website "Organizational Model" 2) Planning for summer pilgrimage is going well 3) the Tanto is developing a plan for communicating zendo form to new and existing sangha 4) a Sunday lunch is on calendar for May after service 5) We discussed letting sangha know our processes for emergencies, fires, etc.
- b. Dharma Rain Active Transmitted Teachers: No update
- c. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: 1) DEI is planning to develop an equity lens/tool per request of the board. This could be something the dharma council might consider using also when making big decisions, policies, etc. 2) Gabe and Tsuho had wanted to hear what the DEI committee was thinking in terms of continued leadership engagement in equity work, after the Tusk training that occurred awhile back. The DEI committee plans to discuss this at their summer retreat in August. 3) There was a suggestion that all leadership roles at DRZC should have some required DEI-related learning/training during onboarding. DEI committee is willing to create a list of resources but each leadership body should decide for itself what to require of new members. This may be part of a bigger discussion about how new leaders are onboarded and how leadership transitions occur.
- d. Other Reports/Announcements: Jyoshin will lead a "form" training in late August.

9. Action Item Assignments and Deadlines