



Fifth Precept Sangha

Day & Time: Every Monday @ 8:00PM GMT
Online location: Skype
Skype ID: fifth.precept

Virtual Sit-and-Share Recovery Meeting Format

Presenter, please follow this format closely.
 Everything that you say is in *italics*.

8:00 – Request that everybody’s **microphone is muted** and read the opening aloud.

Welcome to this Sit-and-Share mediation meeting of the virtual Fifth Precept Buddhist Group.

This is a Peer Led group that is open to people of all backgrounds. The group is founded on the principles and practices of Truth and Truthfulness, Generosity, Harmlessness, Loving-kindness, Forgiveness, Mindfulness and Meditation; and Fellowship. This Sangha is grounded in the Universal principles of compassion and interdependence.

This meeting is open to any individuals aspiring to live their lives in harmony with the Five Precepts; that is –

- *To refrain from harming ourselves or others by our thoughts, our words or our actions.*
- *To refrain from taking anything that has not been freely given;*
- *To refrain from sexual and sensual misconduct;*
- *To refrain from false speech, harsh speech, gossip and slander.*
- *To refrain from taking alcohol and other drugs that lead to suffering.*

Importantly - as part of our shared practice together - we abandon any attachments to negative self-views by announcing ourselves by our first name only. In the spirit of this intention, I will introduce myself as _____ ... and I wish you all a very good evening!

Being respectful of our practice; and to avoid unplanned interruptions, interference and background noise during the meditations, reading and sharing periods, you are kindly asked to mute your microphones until you are invited to share or converse.

Statement of Anonymity and Confidentiality

In order for this group to be a place where we can feel safe to share about our practice, to share about our spiritual aspirations or to share our personal stories; and to create an atmosphere of openness, we ask that -

- *who you see here remain anonymous,*
- *and what you hear here remain confidential.*

Tonight's meeting will begin with 10-minutes of serenity breathing meditation. I will then read tonight's topic for reflection and we will settle into 5-minutes of silent but active contemplation. You will then be invited to 'share' your thoughts on the topic.

In the meantime, please join me now for 10-minutes of serenity breathing meditation to calm the breath, relax the body and quiet the mind.

Ring the bell (x1) to begin the 10-minute 'serenity' meditation.

For those who are new to meditation, here are some guidelines:

- *For the next 10-minutes, you are invited to cultivate and to practice 'calm and pleasant abiding' in the here and now.*
- *There is nowhere to go - there is nothing to be done - there is no one 'special' to be or to become.*
- *Sit with your back straight, feet on the floor.*
- *If it is comfortable for you, let your eyes gently close.*
- *Take 2 or 3 deep breaths in... and long breaths out; feel the breath in the whole body.*
- *Let your face be soft and your jaw relax.*
- *Let your shoulders drop back to open up the heart area; let your arms and hands rest easily.*
- *The instructions for the cultivation of Serenity are quite straightforward –*
 - *"Breathing in, I am fully aware that I am breathing in."*
 - *"Breathing out, I am fully aware that I am breathing out."*
- *We are invited to bring a friendly, affectionate interest to each and every breath.*
- *If your mind wanders away from your breath, just make a friendly, gentle, silent, non-judgmental note of "not-breath" and return your full awareness to your breathing.*
- *Our whole practice is grounded on Loving-kindness; so, you are encouraged to smile inwardly and outwardly; you are encouraged to take delight in this moment – this only moment.*

8:10 – Ring the bell (x3) to end the 10-minute 'serenity' meditation.

Read the prepared meeting topic, (for examples see www.5th-precept.org/html/topic_basket.html)

[OPTIONAL : You may introduce or explain why you chose this topic]

and then read this aloud:

We will now contemplate and reflect silently on this topic for about 5 minutes. You will then be invited to 'share' on the topic, as it relates to your aspirations, or as it relates to your practice or to your experience on this path of harmlessness. If you wish to share at that time, please make me aware.

Ring the bell (x1) to begin the 5-minute topic contemplation.

Here are some guidelines:

- *Sit with your back straight, feet on the floor.*
- *If it is comfortable for you, let your eyes gently close.*
- *Breathe naturally.*
- *From a place of non-judgmental calmness, reflect on the topic.*
- *Be gentle with yourself.*
- *If you get lost, just practice serenity breathing meditation again to become calm and focused.*
- *Befriend your practice – befriend yourself.*

[OPTIONAL : After a minute or two, it may be appropriate and helpful to 'drop' one line from tonight's topic into the mediation].

8:15 – Ring the bell (x3) to end the 5-minute meditation. Read the topic again, without commenting. Then read the following aloud:

www.5th-precept.org

As tonight's presenter I will share last. You are now invited to share for a few minutes your thoughts about tonight's topic. Text-book answers are not necessary for sharing, but your own experiences and understanding are most welcome. There are no wrong answers, only your personal wisdom. Would anyone like to start?

8:55 – The presenter shares.

9:00 - Close topic discussion and announce 30-minute silent [or guided] meditation:

There will now be a 30-minute silent [or guided] meditation.

9:00 – Ring the bell (x1) to begin the 30-minute [silent/guided] [serenity/insight] meditation.

9:30 – Ring the bell (x3) to end the 30-minute meditation.

9:30 – Announcements

- *Host/leader for next meeting*
- *Any other business*
- *Volunteer to read the Dedication of Merit*

Dedication of Merit

(Volunteer reads dedication of merit)

Please join me in the dedication of merit by repeating after me, the following aspirations:

*We dedicate the merits of this practice
to all suffering beings.
May everyone be free of suffering,
and the causes of suffering.
May everyone enjoy happiness,
and the causes of happiness.
Keep sitting; and keep smiling.*

[09:30 - 10:00 - Q&A and discussion, if requested.]

Version V12 (27-05-2019) was inspired and adapted from [Wat Thamkrabok Tudong Sajja contemplations](#); [Against-the-Stream Refuge Recovery Meeting format](#); [Awakin Wednesday Gatherings](#); 'How to start a 12-step Sangha Meeting' (Darren Littlejohn) and the [Buddhist Recovery Network](#) (Kevin Griffin).