

Dharma Sharing

In the practice of Mindfulness which **Thây, Thich Nhat Hanh**, has taught us, great importance is placed on sharing and exchanges during an evening of meditation, a day of mindfulness or a retreat. We share our experience of the practice, our understanding of the teachings or we ask questions in order to better understand them and to apply them wisely.

Dharma sharing is a chance to benefit from the experiences and the realizations of others. Thây emphasized the *personal* nature of our sharing and, just like the Buddha, he discouraged philosophical or metaphysical interventions which only distract us and turn us away from our concrete daily practice.

- The facilitator is not a “therapist.”
- Their role is to be present in mind and in body.
- Through attentive listening, along with the Sangha they welcome the sharings of those who choose to express themselves.
- Neither the facilitator nor the participants presume to take on the task of trying to resolve any problems that are brought up.
- The facilitator can invite those who have not yet shared to do so.
- If intense feelings arise during a sharing the facilitator can invite the bell in order to bring the speaker as well as the group back to mindful breathing and can propose a peaceful song appropriate to the situation.
- The principle of confidentiality of all that is expressed during the sharing is an absolute must and is to be strictly respected.

The participant

- Names himself or herself while speaking.
- On Zoom, writes their full name on their window.
- Join hands in a lotus bud to ask for the floor, express a comment or offer a song, and awaits the bell master's invitation.
- Joins their hands again when they have finished speaking.
- Speaks of their concrete experience and their individual practice by avoiding metaphysical or political subjects.
- Addresses the group in general and not to anyone in particular.
- Is aware that sharing is also the practice of Loving Speech and Deep Listening.
- Avoids direct dialogue, spontaneous interjections and personal requests (chatting) which will be delicately interrupted by the sound of the bell.
- Is aware of the passage of time and of the participants who have not yet taken the floor.
- Avoids speaking twice as much as possible. (They can do it, if all those who wish to speak have already done so, and if the circumstances invite them to do so.)
- Show respect to the group and to the speaker by listening attentively.

- Don't forget that everything that is said during Dharma Sharing is confidential and must remain so.
- If, after sharing, they wish to continue the conversation with a person in particular about their sharing, they must ask permission beforehand.