

O-An Zendo's Dōkusan Guide

Dōkusan is a one-on-one meeting with a transmitted Zen Priest and Dharma Teacher. At O-An Zendo, only Meidō Barbara Anderson, Roshi, our Guiding Teacher, can offer and meet with practitioners for Dōkusan. Anyone is welcome to ask for Dōkusan with Roshi, even those who are not sangha members.

Dōkusan is a face-to-face meeting with a Zen Priest and Dharma Teacher to discuss your practice life. It covers the three core areas of practice: Samadhi (Meditation), Sila (Ethical Conduct), and Prajna (Wisdom).

Dōkusan is offered by appointment and in person. If circumstances do not permit travel to the temple, an online or phone meeting can be arranged. You may write to Roshi at banderson@oanzendo.org to request an appointment.

Prior to requesting Dōkusan, you are encouraged to ask yourself if it is necessary or appropriate to discuss the issue with a Dharma Teacher. For example, occasional mild discomfort while sitting probably does not merit Dōkusan. However, if you find it challenging to maintain a sitting posture, have questions concerning meditation methods, or desire guidance in establishing a continuous practice, a Dōkusan discussion might be very helpful. In addition, some immediate ethical dilemma involving Buddhist Precepts or a deeply felt, personal question or confusion arising from a Dharma talk or Zen teaching might warrant a Dōkusan meeting.

Regularly scheduled meetings (e.g., once a month or every two weeks) may be appropriate if you are receiving Precepts. If you have questions about frequency, please discuss them with Roshi.

Usually, Dōkusan lasts 5 to 15 minutes and no more than 30 minutes.

Finally, Dōkusan is private and confidential within limits. A Zen priest is a mandated reporter, and confidentiality is limited—specifically when one expresses an intention to harm oneself or others.