

## WORKSHOPS AT THE CENTER:

*a practical introduction to Zen*

Seven times a year the Rochester Zen Center offers a full-day introductory workshop taught by the Abbot, Roshi Bodhin Kjolhede (pronounced "COAL-heed"), and his senior students. Because beginning in Zen isn't as simple as deciding to attend a new church on Sunday, the introductory workshop is aimed at providing a useful introduction to Zen Buddhism, demystifying the religion and giving basic instruction on how to practice *zazen* (Zen meditation). It's a unique opportunity to learn first-hand from seasoned practitioners at one of the country's largest and oldest Zen centers.

*How is Zen different from other forms of Buddhism?*

*Can I practice Zen and still keep my own religion?*

*Do I have to sit cross-legged in order to meditate?*

These and other questions are addressed during the schedule of lectures, demonstrations, and guided meditations. Workshop participants have several opportunities during the day to ask Roshi Kjolhede and others questions, including specific inquiries about their own spiritual practice.

The workshops are scheduled on Saturdays and begin at 9:30 a.m. at the Zen Center's city center near downtown Rochester. The day's schedule is roughly as follows:

### Morning

Roshi Kjolhede opens the workshop with an introductory lecture on the principles of Zen and a discussion of Zen meditation. Following the lecture, *zazen* postures, methods of breathing, and methods of concentrating the mind are demonstrated and explained. The demonstration is followed by two 20-minute rounds of guided meditation.



### Lunch

A vegetarian lunch is served at 1:00 p.m. This is a good opportunity for informal discussions with Zen Center staff members and volunteers and for viewing the photo exhibit of Zen Center activities that is displayed in the lobby.

### Afternoon

Yoga and other stretching exercises that are helpful for meditation are demonstrated and explained. Next there are one or two more 20-minute rounds of guided *zazen*, after which Roshi Kjolhede speaks on integrating Zen practice with daily life and how to deal with various mental states that may arise during *zazen*. He also offers advice on finding and working with a spiritual teacher. Light refreshments are served at the conclusion of the workshop – usually around 4:15 p.m. Membership information is distributed to those who are interested, and sitting cushions, books, incense, and other items are available for sale.

Workshop participants are invited to attend the next morning's (Sunday) sitting, which includes a chanting service as well as a *teisho* (Dharma talk) given by Roshi Kjolhede. On a regular basis, the Center's Tuesday night sittings are designated as "beginners' nights." The rounds of *zazen* are shorter than usual, and during the sitting there are opportunities for group or individual instruction.

## WORKSHOP REGISTRATION

Zen Center workshops are open to interested adults; those under 18 may be accepted on a case-by-case basis. Regrettably, infants and small children cannot be accommodated during the workshop, although with prior notice arrangements can be made for nursing mothers.

You may register online at [www.rzc.org](http://www.rzc.org) or by calling the Zen Center for a workshop schedule and application. Since space is limited, please be sure to make a reservation. You may assume you are accepted unless you hear to the contrary. If you need to cancel please let us know as soon as possible; the workshop fee may then be refunded or applied to a subsequent workshop.

For *zazen*, it's best to wear loose-fitting clothing; it's difficult to meditate comfortably in jeans, for example. Clothing should be subdued in color. Please do not wear a top that bunches at the neck, such as a hooded sweatshirt, or that leaves the shoulders near the neck bare.

## Roshi Bodhin Kjolhede



### Location:

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Rochester, NY 14607

585-473-9180 P

585-473-6846 F

Email: [receptionist@rzc.org](mailto:receptionist@rzc.org)

[www.rzc.org](http://www.rzc.org)

### Time and cost

Registration begins at 9:00 a.m., and the workshop formally convenes at 9:30, concluding around 4:30 p.m. Please see the registration form for current fees. The cost of the workshop includes lunch.

### Accommodations

Dormitory accommodations (without meals) for workshop participants are usually available at the Center for \$25 a night. Please call ahead to reserve. If you wish to stay in a hotel near the Zen Center, you may call the Center's receptionist for guidance.