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# *Introduction to the Three Treasures Sangha*

## ***Three Treasures Today***

We are a lay Zen group affiliated with the Diamond Sangha, an independent lineage founded by Robert Aitken Roshi, a dharma heir in the Sanbo Kyodan (Harada-Yasutani-Yamada) lineage. Our members are Buddhists and non-Buddhists who practice together in a way consistent with Zen Buddhist practice. Robert Aitken founded the Buddhist Peace Fellowship and those in his lineage consider peace and social justice work important vehicles for practice.

## ***Early History***

Traditionally, training in Zen is under a roshi, whose function is to guide and inspire students along the path to self-realization. In 1978, a group invited Robert Aitken Roshi to lead a Zen retreat for Christians in the Seattle area. Several retreats later Aitken made arrangements for his dharma siblings Willigis Jager (a Benedictine priest) and Joan Rieck (a former Maryknoll nun) to undertake teaching responsibilities for this group. Feeling that neither path was being well served in combination, these teachers advised the group to split according to interest in contemplation or Zen. Father Willigis led the contemplative group, Joan Rieck the Zen group—the latter became Three Treasures Sangha of the Pacific Northwest.

## ***Our Teacher***

Eventually Joan Rieck's teaching responsibilities in Germany prevented her continued leadership of Three Treasures Sangha so Jack Duffy became the sangha's teacher in 1992. He was given permission to teach by Aitken Roshi and received full transmission in June 1997. He has practiced Zen for 28 years, studying with Robert Aitken, Joan Rieck and Thich Nhat Hanh. Duffy Roshi's spouse, Eileen Kiera, is a dharma heir of Thich Nhat Hanh and teacher for The Mindfulness Community of Puget Sound. They live with their daughter, Naomi, in a semi-rural area north of Seattle where Jack works as a psychotherapist.

## ***Our Practice***

Our practice consists of sitting meditation (zazen) which may include breath counting or koan study, walking meditation (kinhin) between periods of zazen in which we continue zazen, practice-related interviews (dokusan) with the teacher, listening to dharma talks (teisho) and chanting of Buddhist scriptures (sutras). For greater detail, please see additional Three Treasures publications, including *Regular Dojo Procedures*, *Bibliography of Suggested Readings* and *Reflections on Our Practice at Three Treasures Sangha*.

## ***Practice Opportunities***

Regularly scheduled opportunities include twice weekly sitting, zazenkai (all day sitting) once each month and sesshin (three- and seven-day retreats) several times each year, as well as various retreats led by Duffy Roshi in other parts of Washington state. These weekly and monthly sittings are held at the Seattle Practice Center, while longer retreats are held at a rural facility. Refer to the publication entitled *Scheduled Practice Opportunities and Annual Calendar* for more specifics on dates and times.

## ***Our Practice Center***

In 1997, Three Treasures Sangha, together with The Mindfulness Community of Puget Sound, purchased a double lot located in the north Rainier Valley area of Seattle at 1910 24th Avenue South. One half of the property holds a modest house that we currently use as our space for sitting meditation. The other half of the property has been transformed into a garden for walking meditation. Remodeling of the house is planned to make the Practice Center more comfortable for all who use it.

## ***Connecting with Us***

For information on orientation to our practice as well as membership and fees, call 206 324-5373 and leave a message. This telephone number is the Practice Center answering machine; your call will be returned. Please plan to attend orientation before practicing with us, especially if you are a beginner or have not meditated with a Diamond Sangha group before. You may also request a complimentary copy of our newsletter with a call to this same number. Our web address is <http://three-treasures-sangha.org>.