



Blue Heron Zen Community's Kyol Che

Kyol Che is a traditional Korean Zen retreat that takes place annually during the three-month winter and summer periods. The name means "tight dharma" or "coming together." Originally it was undertaken by monks and nuns doing intensive sitting practice in mountain temples.

When Zen Master Seung Sahn came to the United States, he began 90-day winter Kyol Che retreats at the Providence Zen Center. This intensive "coming together" practice has opened many minds over the years, however most of us, as busy house-holders in modern American life, cannot afford either the time or money to participate in this traditional practice model.

Blue Heron Zen Community has adapted Kyol Che so we can intensify our practice and help others for a 90-day period within the reality of our own circumstances. Although we are not living in a rigorous monastic setting, we can still investigate this matter completely and find our before-thinking original nature with total assurance and dedication. And, we can also support each other in our efforts.

This year's Kyol Che Teacher will be Eric Nord, JDPSN.

You can contact him at eric@blueheronzen.org or 206.523.2799.

Kyol Che dates:

January 24th through April 24th.

Opening Ceremony: Tuesday, January 24th, 7pm

Closing Ceremony: Tuesday, April 24th, 7pm

Blue Heron Kyol Che has four areas of commitment:

1. Group Practice

An important aspect of Kyol Che is "coming together" which means practicing regularly together and supporting each other as much as possible throughout this 90-day period. You are expected to attend every Tuesday night group practice and retreat unless family or work commitments prevent you from doing so. (Please consult with the Kyol Che Teacher about Group Practice sessions or retreats that you will not be able to attend before Kyol Che begins.)

Opening Ceremony: Participants will offer up their contracts publicly and the sangha will have the opportunity to acknowledge and support their efforts.

Weekly Group Practice: All participants will meet for Group Practice every Tuesday evening from 7 to 9:15 pm. Practice periods will alternate: one week we will hold group practice with kong-an interviews and the other week we will hold workshops related to fundamental Zen teachings.

Closing Ceremony: At the closing ceremony participants, family, friends and the general public are invited to share in acknowledgements, congratulations and celebration.

YMJJ Retreats: Kyol Che students are expected to attend all retreats during Kyol Che unless pre-arranged with the Kyol Che Teacher and stated in your contract:

1. Fri-Sun, Jan. 27-29, led by Anita Feng, JDPSN
2. Fri-Sat, Mar. 9-10, led by Zen Master Ji Bong and Eric Nord, JDPSN
3. Fri-Sun, Apr. 13-15, led by Jeff Tipp, JDPSN



2. Personal Practice

In the spirit of this retreat period, we encourage you increase your daily home meditation practice. This can be anywhere from 20 minutes practice daily to whatever you (and your family/partner) can reasonably maintain for this 90-day period. (Please consult with the Kyol Che Teacher about what your personal practice will be before Kyol Che begins.)

3. Bodhisattva Action Project

This is a special personal project that is to be designed by the student and can be any community service type of project, either for the Blue Heron community or the wider city/state/world community. We encourage you to use this “work period” aspect of Kyol Che as another point to stretch, to perhaps explore an area of work that might be a little more than you habitually do, or pick something that you’ve been struggling or wanting to take on but lacked the sangha support to do it. Anything is possible! Create artwork for a fundraising event, build something for the Zen Center, take on a Zen Center job, volunteer for Habitat for Humanity, complete that project that your family has been begging you to do for years.

4. Donation and Dana:

There is no “fee” for this Kyol Che but there should be some monetary donation made to both the Blue Heron Community and the teacher. The amount is not so important as the appreciation and intent behind it. Dana can be put in an envelope and placed on the altar at our Opening Ceremony.

We invite you to participate in Kyol Che.

If you would like to participate in this year’s Kyol Che, please do the following:

1. Prior to the Opening Ceremony, consult with the Kyol Che teacher about your group and personal Kyol Che practice commitments and your Bodhisattva Action Project.
2. Fill out and sign the Contract. If you have a spouse/partner, you’ll need to review the application with them and have them sign as well.
3. Bring your contract to the Opening Ceremony. Your contract should be in an envelope and be accompanied by the donation and dana offerings.



Kyol Che Contract

If you would like to participate in this year's Kyol Che, please fill out and sign this contract. If you have a spouse/partner, you'll need to review the application with them and have them sign as well. Bring your contract to the Opening Ceremony. Your contract should be in an envelope and be accompanied by the donation and dana offerings.

Kyol Che Group Practice Commitment:

Please list any times during Kyol Che when you won't be able to attend group practice or retreats.

Kyol Che Personal Practice Commitment:

Please write down your proposed training schedule for the Kyol Che period.

Bodhisattva Action Project:

What would you like to do to help your family/sangha/community/world?

Participant Signature

Date

Spouse/Partner Signature

Date

Teacher Signature

Date