

# AUTUMN SESSHIN

## KODOJI

FRIDAY 24 APRIL – FRIDAY 1 MAY 2026

---



## SUBHANA BARZAGHI & WILL MOON



**A monk asked Xinghua, “What should one do when things come at you from every direction?”  
Xinghua replied, “Hold to the Centre”.**

*Sitting sesshin, in the peaceful valley of Kodoji, deepens our capacity to hold to the Centre.*

Finding freedom in the midst of adversity and surrendering up the dream of separation. When we practice together there is an opportunity to find a reservoir of peace and freedom in the midst of adversity. We live in challenging times of economic stressors, polarisation of views, political upheaval and find ourselves in the midst of an ecological crisis. There is an old saying, "May you live in interesting and difficult times." Is it a blessing or a curse to be born in such difficult times? The Chinese character for difficulty also means crisis, which translates as, 'dangerous opportunity'. To live in such times of upheaval, is also a time of reckoning, inquiry and an opportunity to wake up. The Buddha and the old Chinese masters also lived in times of despair, famine, great upheaval and war. The urgency to awaken and to act wisely and compassionately to protect and nurture each other and our precious planet is the same today as it was back then. Zen practice helps us to meet those challenges from a grounded, calm, kind-hearted presence which alleviates suffering for ourselves and others.

The practice community offers a true refuge to discover joy and the boundless nature of love in challenging times.

**Cost** Full Time SZC member \$630 Non-member \$790

Part time SZC member \$90 per day Non-member \$120 per day

**Payment due:** 10 April 2026. Payment after this incurs a 10% additional fee.

**Bookings:**

**Priority is given to full-time attendees. There is a limited number of part-time applications available.**

**Part-time applicants must commit to 5 days at a minimum.**

**Bookings and enquiries contact:**

Ryan O'Connor [ryanocona@gmail.com](mailto:ryanocona@gmail.com)

**Closing of applications:**

- All fees must be paid in full by **Friday 10 April 2026**.
- No applications will be taken after **Friday 10 April 2026**.
- No refunds are payable for cancellations after **Friday 10 April**, or if you leave sesshin earlier than agreed, unless your withdrawal is COVID-related.

**COVID safe:** The sesshin will be run on COVID-safe principles. If you experience cold/flu/respiratory symptoms in the days leading up to the sesshin, you cannot attend sesshin, and we will fully refund your fee.

**Application Form: SZC Autumn Sesshin 24 April – 1 May 2026**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

In case of emergency, contact:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**Special factors:**

If your financial situation makes it impossible for you to pay the applicable fee, please contact the sesshin coordinator no later than 3 April (i.e. 3 weeks before sesshin starts).

Medications or treatments required for specific medical conditions, allergies etc. must be brought with you to sesshin as only basic first aid supplies are available.

**Personal factors:**

Sesshin involves extended periods of sitting meditation, silence, and ritual, and can be physically demanding and emotionally confronting. For your safety and comfort, and in consideration of other participants, we ask that you let us know about any medical, physical, personal, or psychological issues that may affect your participation in sesshin. All information will be kept confidential.

**Special food requirements:** Food will be plant based. If you have allergies to any foods-please specify now, so that our food shopping can take this into account. *It is too late to tell us once you are at sesshin.*

Specify previous meditation experience: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have any medical or first aid training \_\_\_\_\_

**Attendance details:** Full time, 24 April – 1 May  SZC member  Non-member  
Arrival time 2pm on Friday 24 April, and departure time 2pm on Friday 1 May

Part time: Number of days: \_\_\_\_\_ Arrival / Departure day and time: \_\_\_\_\_

**All participants will begin sesshin together on Friday 24 April.** For planning purposes, we must have both day and time for part-time departures. When counting days for part-time enrolment, do not count the first day, 24 April as a separate day. Add it to the part-day on which you are leaving and call that one full day.

**Transport:**  I need transport  I can offer transport No. of seats: \_\_  I have a 4WD/Station Wagon

If you have your own plans or preferences about transport (e.g. travelling with another sesshin student), please give this information here. Do not leave transport information blank. If you do not give it now you will have to be asked later.

**Fees:** Full time:  SZC member \$630       Non-member \$790  
 Part time: SZC member \$90 per day \_\_\_\_\_  
 Part time: Non-member \$120 per day \_\_\_\_\_  
 Children: \$10 per child per day \_\_\_\_\_  
 Additional donation: \_\_\_\_\_  
**Total:** \_\_\_\_\_

If you wish to apply for the Anne Marie Buescher Scholarship, please check this box. The scholarship provides assistance in meeting sesshin fees to applicants who would otherwise not be able to afford to attend. If you check this box, you will be contacted by the Sesshin Coordinator to discuss your application.

**Deadlines**

Organising a sesshin at Kodoji requires a large amount of volunteer labour, and late changes cause much extra work for volunteers and/or extra costs for SZC.

We ask you to carefully note the following deadlines and provisions, to which no exceptions will be made.

- Fees are payable by **10 April** (two weeks before sesshin starts). Applications or payments received after this date incur a 10% additional fee.
- No applications will be accepted after **10 April** unless a cancellation occurs. Applicants who have not paid by **10 April** will have their places cancelled.
- Except in the case of unforeseeable emergencies, no refunds will be made if you cancel after **17 April** or if you leave sesshin earlier than your nominated time.

Please return your application as an email attachment to:

Ryan O'Connor [ryanocona@gmail.com](mailto:ryanocona@gmail.com)

**Payment**

Please make your payment by electronic funds transfer to:

Sydney Zen Centre limited    Pay ID: [info@szc.org.au](mailto:info@szc.org.au)

In the EFT description box, please give your surname followed by the tag 'SE'

**Completed application forms**

When you email your completed application form please attach a copy of your payment receipt. When we have processed the applications, Ryan will confirm if you have a place, and provide more information about Kodoji, and what you should bring to sesshin.

**Backup plan / cancellation of sesshin**

If flooding prevents us from accessing Kodoji, our backup plan is to relocate the sesshin to our Annandale zendo during the daytime, with early morning and evening blocks online. We will provide a refund option for participants who might find these arrangements impractical.

If we are forced to cancel sesshin, e.g. because of COVID restrictions, we will refund sesshin fees.



## **Cancellation policy, Etiquette on Retreat, & Duty of Care**

### **Cancellation Policy – If you need to cancel your booking:**

A full refund will be offered up to 3 weeks before the retreat. If the cancellation is within the three weeks leading up to the retreat, you will receive a 50% refund, except that cancellations in the final week will receive a 30% refund. However, cancellations made from **Wednesday 22nd April 2026** will not be refunded. Sesshin organizers are not responsible or financially liable if you are unable to arrive at the retreat or need to leave the retreat in the case of natural disasters and other unforeseen circumstances, including travel restrictions and cancellations.

### **Cancellations by sesshin organisers in the case of severe weather, natural disaster or other unforeseen circumstances beyond our reasonable control:**

If there is cancellation of the retreat due and where rescheduling this retreat is not possible, we will refund monies less any costs incurred such as administrative/insurance fees. SZC's terms and conditions are available on their website. ***We recommend you obtain travel insurance to protect yourself against unforeseen events.***

We, the teachers/leaders/organisers/Sydney Zen Centre, accept no responsibility or liability if there are changes to travel, injury, or loss of personal property. In attending the retreat, you accept that you are responsible for your actions and your psychological and physical wellbeing. We will do what we believe is needed and reasonable to ensure a safe, comfortable and fulfilling retreat experience. Please acknowledge that you have read and understood the terms and conditions of attending the retreat and that the retreat team from Sydney Zen Centre is released from liability.

### **Etiquette on Retreat:**

The retreat will be run under the protection of the five precepts which form an ethical foundation to create a safe and supportive environment for the practice community. All participants including teachers are invited and encouraged to abide by the five retreat precepts. I take up the Way of:

1. Cultivating kindness and restraining from harmful actions.
2. Cultivating appreciation and generosity with possessions and restraining from taking what is not freely offered.
3. Cultivating inner joy and contentment and restraining from sexual expression.
4. Cultivating truthful and appropriate communication and restraining from speech that distorts or is damaging.
5. Cultivating clarity and restraining from habits that create dullness or heedlessness.

### **Duty of Care:**

- I accept that this is a silent retreat and I commit to upholding silence, except for the times allocated to group discussion, interviews and essential communication about retreat jobs.
- I understand that there is no mobile phone coverage at Kodoji Temple, it is out of range. There is a land line for emergency use. You can speak to a leader if you need to make an important call to check in with elderly parents, children or people with special needs.
- I agree that if I choose to leave sesshin for any reason, I am required to check in with the leaders and teachers before leaving. We have a duty of care for all participants.
- I accept that if there is a failure to uphold these ethical agreements, I may be required to leave the retreat at the discretion of the teaching/management team. There will be no refund.