



**Pre-Ordination Preparation Guide:**  
*How to Minimize the Struggles and Maximize the Benefit of Your  
Ordination Experience*

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## **Financial Responsibility:** *Open Some Faucets & Plug Some Sinks*

In the past, there have been a number of monks who came to ordain with some unresolved financial issues. They never expected to stay long term, yet they discovered something that drew them to staying in robes day by day (this is a much more common occurrence than you might think). However, as time went on, their financial issues kept deepening, while their meditation did the opposite. They could not focus on their monastic training with these financial responsibilities left unattended, so eventually they had to disrobe, even though they wanted to stay.

If you would like to avoid this unfortunate situation, it is a very good idea to do your best to save up as much money as possible and settle any outstanding debts before you come. If you come to ordain debt free, you will have less worries, leading to better meditation, and the ability to stay in robes longer if you feel so inclined. If you can manage to have money in savings, this will enable you to afford visas by yourself, fund travel plans after the end of the program, and have a safety net in case you incur any unforeseen expenses. In addition, adopting more financial responsibility will be another motivating factor for you to abandon any unwholesome, money-draining habits like indulging in night life, intoxicant consumption, or materialism.

Below are some ideas of how you can maximize your cash inflow and minimize your cash outflow. I have also included some ideas on how to take inventory of where you are financially and set manageable goals towards a better financial position. Apply what you connect with, and don't worry about the rest.

### **Open Some Faucets - Identify ways you can make more money**

- ☐ Pick up extra shifts at work
- ☐ Garage Sale - In addition to money you gain more space ☺
- ☐ Ask your friends or family if there is any work they will pay you to do – mow lawns, wash cars, etc – get creative



### **Plug Some Sinks- Identify the ways you spend money unnecessarily**

- ☐ going out to eat - eat at home
- ☐ spending money on leisure activities - do free activities
- ☐ buying things you don't need- don't buy things you don't need!
- ☐ monthly subscriptions: Netflix, Amazon, etc- cancel them

### **Setting Manageable Financial goals**

- ☐ Take note of the typical amount of money you **make** in a week
- ☐ Take note of the typical amount of money you **spend** in a week
- ☐ Money made – money spent = money you usually **save** in a week
- ☐ Take note of how much **debt** you have, or how much you want to have in savings
- ☐ Figure out how many weeks you have left until you leave
- ☐ Divide the amount of debt (or desired savings) by the amount of weeks left
- ☐ Here is your goal for the amount of money you should try to save each week
- ☐ Write these goals down, tape them up in your mirror, and check them off as you hit them each week. If your goal is too hard or easy to hit, adjust accordingly

## Simple Discipline: *Cleanliness, Orderliness, Punctuality*

For most of my life in America, my bedroom, bathroom, closet, and car were typically a mess. I would let my clothes pile up on my floor or bed and the trash and various other objects pile up in my car. And I never made my bed. What's the point if I'm going to get back in it again that night, right? But that all changed when Venerable Pasura said the following thing during a visit to the meditation center in my hometown in Atlanta, Georgia:

*"Your mind is an intangible thing. It's not something you can see, so it has to manifest itself in the physical world somehow. And it does that in the way that you keep your environment."*

For some reason that really resonated with me. So for the next week, I made my bed, gutted out my closet, cleaned my car inside and out, and reorganized everything in my environment. I maintained this level of cleanliness and orderliness consistently for the first time in my life. And some amazing things happened. I stopped misplacing things, like my wallet and my keys. This allowed me to make it to work earlier and much less stressed. I felt more comfortable and calm in my room and my car, which were places I spent quite a bit of time. My mood improved. My meditation improved. And my life improved. Tremendously. It showed me how something so small can actually be so big.

So, before you dive into a world of renunciation. Before you have to follow the 8 precepts. Before you have to follow the 227 precepts. You can build a strong foundation for your coming monastic discipline by implementing a simpler form of discipline in your life at home. If you were anything like I was, I promise that just a few adjustments to your habits will bring amazing benefits to your life.

### Simple Discipline for a Better Life

- ☐ Keep your bedroom clean and organized
  - Make your bed every day immediately after waking up
  - Fold clean clothes neatly and put away right after doing laundry
  - Throw away, give away, or put things you don't use in storage
  - Put keys, wallet, & other important items in same place every day
- ☐ Keep your bathroom clean and organized
  - Organize toiletries, keep toilet clean, empty trash, wipe sink clean
- ☐ Keep your car clean and organized
- ☐ Keep your desk/office clean and organized
- ☐ Clean out and organize your closet
  - Donate clothes you don't wear anymore
- ☐ Try to arrive 5-10 minutes early to every place you need to go
- ☐ [Discipline Playlist](#) – watch these videos to inspire your discipline practice



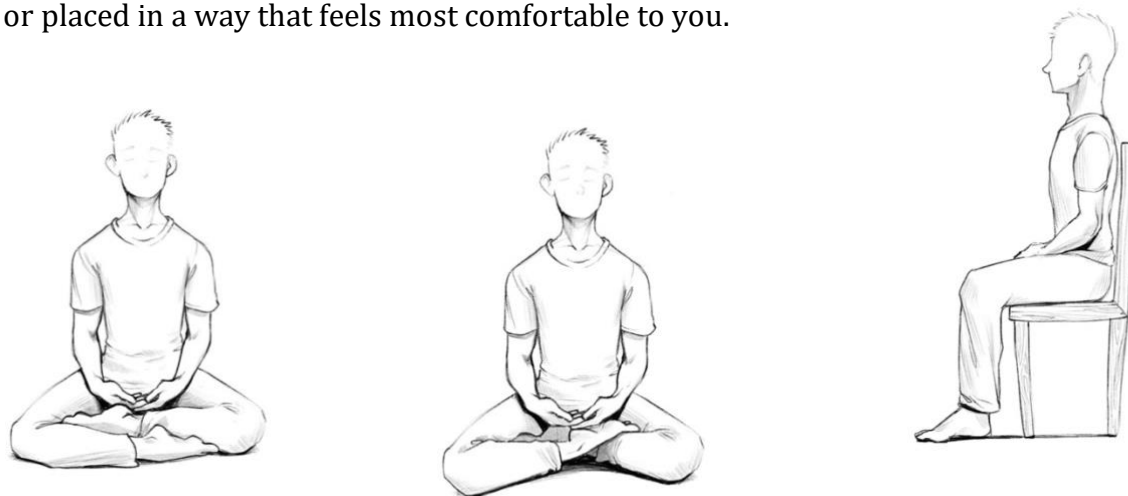
# Shower the Mind

## *Start a Daily Meditation Practice*

Establishing a daily meditation practice will help you develop your practice more quickly once you come to ordain. For the sake of preparation, practicing consistently is more important than the specific method you use. So if you are already comfortable using a certain technique, you may continue with that. However, if you would like to start practicing the Middle Way or Dhammakaya method, then you may meditate with the playlist below.

[Guided Meditation Playlist](#)  
[Guided Meditation Playlist 2](#)

While meditating, we recommend sitting on the floor on a cushion to elevate the hips with the right leg over (or in front of) the left leg like the pictures shown below. However, the most important thing is that you are comfortable. So, if you cannot sit comfortably on the floor, you can sit on a chair. Regardless of where you are sitting, you should have your back straight with a relaxed spine – not hunched but also not overarched – in order to promote awareness. If you sit on a chair it is good to scoot your butt back to the backrest to allow for a more erect posture and have the soles of your feet planted on the ground. You may rest your hands softly in your lap with the right over the left and the index finger of your right hand touching the thumb of your left, or placed in a way that feels most comfortable to you.



### Steps to Showering the Mind Properly

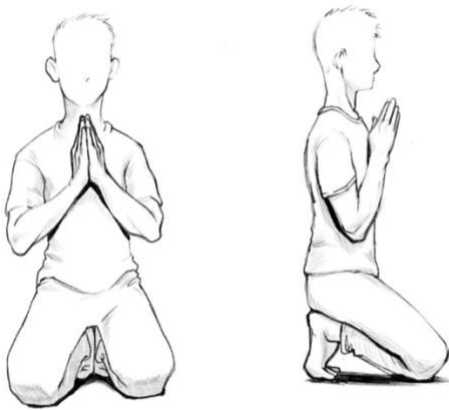
- ☐ Set aside an area for your meditation practice – could be right next to your bed
- ☐ Find a comfortable cushion, blanket, or chair to sit on
  - Experiment with the thickness of cushion to optimize comfort
- ☐ Find a time of day that is best for your practice
  - Things to consider: your availability, how quiet is it, your energy level
  - Usually first thing after waking or right before bed are convenient times
  - If needed, wear headphones and listen to playlist above or nature sounds on *Insight Timer* (free app) to block out noise from your environment
- ☐ Start with an amount of time that you can commit to every day
  - Can be 5 min to start with. Once this is easy, increase time incrementally
- ☐ [Benefits of Meditation Playlist](#) – scientific videos on meditation to motivate you

## Preparing the Body

### *Yoga and Stretching to Reduce Physical Discomfort*

During the training, you will be required to kneel and sit in unfamiliar positions. As a result, your body will likely be sore. However, you can reduce the amount of physical discomfort you experience by doing the targeted stretches and yoga found in this section. The more work you do to prep your body for the positions you will have to be in, the easier it will be for you to meditate and have an overall better experience

Arguably the most painful position that you will be required to be in – at the beginning and end of every session, for about 10 minutes during morning and evening chanting, and about 15 minutes for your ordination day – is the kneeling position shown below. This position still causes my feet discomfort after 2 years as a monk, but you just have to do it, so it's better to build up some tolerance to it before you come ☺



[Short Video of How to Position Your Feet](#)

[Foot Stretches to Counteract This Pose](#)

The second most troublesome position that you will have to sit in quite often is sitting sideways as shown below. Ironically, this is the position you sit in when the teaching monk tells you to “sit comfortably”. For westerners who didn't grow up sitting on the floor often, this one definitely isn't comfortable, especially if your hips are abnormally tight.

#### **Preparing the Body**

- ☐ Practice the kneeling as shown above every day for as long as you can stand it to build up your tolerance to this position.
- ☐ Do foot stretches to counteract the kneeling
- ☐ Practice vids from link below for hip flexibility
  - [Yoga for Hips](#)
- ☐ Practice the videos from the following playlist for any other bodily pains and to promote general flexibility
  - [Short Vids - Beginner Yoga Playlist](#)

