

How to Use MSC Teacher Online Consultation

Purpose

The main purpose of online consultation sessions is to support your early MSC teaching experience through interaction with a teacher trainer, or an experienced MSC teacher, and fellow teacher trainees. You are encouraged to bring questions, challenges, reflections and insights to the online sessions in order that we may mutually enhance our skills and knowledge.

Another purpose of these consultation sessions is to participate in the growing MSC teacher community. You will meet and learn from the experiences of new teachers around the world and contribute to the development of a professional *sangha*.

Online consultation sessions are intended as a place to support, nourish, and inspire beginning teachers. They are not an occasion for evaluation by others, although areas of development can certainly be discussed, as you wish, during consultation.

Group Teaching

To receive consultation credit toward becoming a Trained MSC Teacher, the trainee should teach a group of students rather than a single individual or a few people individually. Also, to reduce the stress of first-time teaching, trainees are advised to teach only one group until they become more familiar with teaching MSC.

Confidentiality

Participants in online consultation groups agree to maintain the confidentiality of the other teacher trainees as well as the members of their MSC groups. Toward that end, teacher trainees should not discuss the personal material shared by anyone in the consultation session with individuals outside the group, or divulge the names or other details of MSC participants that could lead to someone identifying a particular individual.

Preparation

The best way to prepare for a consultation group is to spend a few minutes contemplating what you wish to understand or learn. For example, you can reflect on what transpired in your *last group session*, noting the moments that were most salient for you—moments of insight, inspiration, challenge or concern. Or you can reflect on the unfolding process of the group over time, or changes in an individual participant. You don't need to offer a lot of detail, but are encouraged to boil your impressions down to essential points for the benefit of all the participants in the consultation group.

Participants in consultation groups are invited to identify *difficulties or concerns* as they arise so you can be supported in your growth as an MSC teacher. Also, please share experiences you are pleased with—*successes, breakthroughs, and new insights*.

You may also wish to review an *upcoming session* before a consultation meeting and ask for clarification about anything with which you may not feel entirely comfortable.

Finally, consultation groups are an excellent opportunity to discuss your *learning process as a teacher*—how you feel about your role as a teacher and changes you may notice in your teaching style.

Video

These consultations are professional meetings with colleagues from around the world. To enhance a sense of mutuality and respect, please consider the following recommendations:

1. Find a private space that insures confidentiality.
2. Log into Zoom on time, at the specified time. We are using only one Zoom "room" so another meeting might be ending just before you start.
3. Put one or two lamps behind the computer monitor to better light your face and make sure there are no bright lights, including a window, behind you.
4. Put your laptop or tablet on a stable surface so others have a steady, clear image of you.
5. Raise your computer monitor to a level where the web camera is at your eye level. You may need to elevate it with some books.
6. Move the Zoom application window to the top of your computer, just under your web camera, so you are looking into the camera (and the eyes of others) when anyone is speaking
7. Mute your microphone when you are not speaking.
8. Please refrain from eating (or other distracting activity) during online consultation.

Process

Consultation groups are an opportunity to practice embodied, compassionate listening and speaking. That means that the general guidelines for running a MSC group are carried over to the consultation groups, such as non-judgment, non-fixing, respecting differences, and taking personal responsibility for one's own wellbeing.

Although consultation groups are hosted by a teacher trainer or a senior MSC teacher, they are conducted more like peer consultation groups. We are all learning together. Also, please feel free to express yourself if the group is not meeting your needs.