

# Suggestions for using Zoom...

*Many thanks to all those who contributed ideas for this document – we are all in this together...*

## For group chats:

- This is not a replacement for physical groups – this is a different way of meeting;
- This is a learning curve for all of us and it is likely that there will be hiccups along the way;
- Avoid trying to make it ‘perfect’ – we are neither Instagram models nor located in a video studio;
- A suggestion is restarting the device you are using before session begins so that everything is fresh – and test your equipment – and make sure you are connected to power;
- Try to not let other participants stress you (like saying they cannot hear you – it might be them rather than you) – of course this is easier said than done; remember to centre and calm;
- It is all about practice and practice and practice – keep it simple and less often is more (Zoom has many features/options – most of which we do not need);
- Try to avoid anyone else in the home doing a sizeable download or using Skype/Zoom at the same time;
- The session has a clear leader/facilitator;
- Make sure that you are comfortable – avoid having bright lights behind you or overhead – natural light is best;
- Participants to enter the Zoom meeting ten minutes before session starts (so technical issues can be resolved and people are ready to go);
- Avoid playing music because this can negatively impact on sound quality;
- Hand gestures can be useful – like thumbs up or waving of hands (this can be a sign of agreeing) or putting finger up for question;
- Emphasise sangha and connection – this is time for strengthening community;
- How to mute and unmute – find the microphone button on the bottom right of the screen when you move the mouse (or use keyboard shortcut Alt-A; there is also a mute button when you

hover over your video or name in the participant list); ideally everyone who is not speaking is muted to avoid background noise and to allow for efficient facilitation;

- How to find and use the chat – use the “Chat” button with the speech bubble on the bottom of the screen to open up chat; you can either choose to chat with “everyone” or privately with one person;
- Note – the host has more tools than participants, but also cannot see some features, such as the “raise hand” button; they see “Manage Participants” rather than just “Participants”;
- If possible use a computer screen rather than a mobile – it is helpful to be able to see each other;
- For hosts, it is recommended that you use Zoom on a laptop or desktop rather than a phone or ipad as it will be easier to manage;
- If participants can connect to a TV screen, this could be even better picture quality – or you could use a projector and screen;
- Make sure that other programmes (like email and phone) are switched off;
- To maximise internet connection, for larger group all participants turn off cameras once session starts;
- Try to be in best place for your internet connection;
- Decent headset can be helpful – and make sure that mic works;
- During session, be reasonably still – not necessarily frozen but staying steady;
- Be conscious of not over-talking other people;
- Consciously slowing down – take a breath, feel your seat, slowing down (it is easy to be too hasty in online communication);
- Try as best as possible – it is a challenging practice! – to look at the camera as much as you can as maintaining eye contact can be a great way to keep connecting;
- With small groups (less than 12) use gallery view;
- With larger groups, the host is able to mute everyone – this is suggested once the session is under way (so allow people to say hello at the beginning and say goodbye at the end – but during the session everyone else is muted); button is below the participants icon; the host also has the ability to remove a person if they are

being disruptive (trolls are known to have come in widely shared Zoom groups);

- Two hours at most is a good length of time for this form of interaction.

### For filming sessions:

- Trial out beforehand so that you can work out where to place camera (personally I have marked the floor where I am placing the computer and it is put on four yoga blocks with camera angle slightly off vertical);
- Wear colours that contrast with background and mat;
- Try blankets/soft furnishings in room to lessen echoing and thus making sound clearer;
- Be conscious that sometimes there can be issues with sound – if possible do a trial class with someone else listening and watching on a separate device – check your microphone setting (possibly the best is computer audio rather than telephone and computer).

### Useful references

- Zoom help and one minute videos (also lots of videos on YouTube) <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us>
- This is an excellent resource list re using Zoom with some very good short videos by Daniela Welzel  
<https://embodiedfacilitator.com/resources-for-embodiment/>

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This is an evolving document – if you have any suggestions/ amendments, please email me at: [yogawithnorman@gmail.com](mailto:yogawithnorman@gmail.com)

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