



CREATIVE BRIEF: PUGET SOUND ZEN CENTER

Why a logo?

Currently PSZC is not presenting a cohesive visual presence to the Sangha or to the community at large. A well-defined identity is a powerful and positive statement that connects the heart of the Zen Center to the many contexts in which it exists. It generates clarity that expresses the philosophical foundations that underpin the practice, reflects the PSZC's story and the newly expressed values that the Center aspires to.

An identity gives the Sangha something distinctive that will help the PSZC become more recognizable. By having a consistent design applied through signage, promotions, and posters, and fundraising items such as t-shirts and cards, the Center will become more visible both locally on Vashon and further afield through the newsletter and website.

The Survey

All the current board members, and all but two of the previous board members from the Zen Center, met on August 19, 2012 to discuss and prioritize values of the Zen Center. They were then sent a follow-up survey to comment further on these values, and their hopes for the perception of the Zen Center within the Sangha and in the community at large.

Everyone who attended the meeting participated in the survey. The results were indicative of a wide range of opinions, which could point to a potential need for central focus to the organization. This is also an opportunity for the group to become clear about the priorities for the coming year, based on the underlying values that were selected at the meeting.

While there were a couple of responses of feeling confusion with the process, the entire group seems able and willing to work with it and let go of any preconceived ideas.

The section on perception highlights the continual dilemma faced by the PSZC to balance the desire to welcome in a wider membership yet at the same time keep the seriousness and intent of the practice itself. The prioritization of the values was similar to the meeting:



Meeting:

1. **Connection**
2. **Not two**
3. **Intention**
4. **Impermanence**
5. **Love**
6. **Stillness**
7. Community
8. Breath
9. Passion

Survey:

1. **Intention**
2. **Not two**
3. Breath
4. **Stillness**
5. Community
6. **Love**
7. **Connection**
8. **Impermanence**
9. Passion

From the Survey:

How do you want the PSZC to be perceived outside the Sangha?

- Inclusive, committed, loving, happy, healthy, nourishing;
- An interesting spiritual community;
- Accessible, rich tradition to explore, with many options of study & participation;
- A place for all people that want to meditate, a place where (serious) zen practice can have many different looks and intensities, that follows a long, specific tradition. An open place where you can be silent with lots of nice people. A place for the whole family;
- An active community of folks who care about improving the self, the Sangha, the Island and the world;
- A welcoming place that has something to give;
- A welcoming, helpful group of fellow travellers providing a shared, "Zen-like" practice space; serving as a forum for ideas and learning for those seeking kindred spirits and possibly guidance as they explore their personal path and awakening;
- Friendly, welcoming, a place you can drop in and try out; where you don't have to be a card-carrying Buddhist;
- Certainly a welcoming community, and a place to seriously consider life's deepest questions;
- Community members who support a way of life that offers relief from unhappiness;



Design Brief:

“In a ‘look’ for the center (not necessarily just a logo) I think I’d like to see serious practice, serious intent, and our human side, a lighter touch, a vibrant connected community. Also both traditional images (incense, Buddha...) and non-traditional (Zen Jam, Family Zen for instance...sitting in blue jeans....)” ~ Survey Participant

Design and develop a clear identity for the Puget Sound Zen Center that reflects its core values, philosophy and aspirations, using the feedback from the survey and the discussions from the meeting as a foundation for concept development.

The values have been distilled down to four core guiding principles, with three strong secondary ideals:

1. Connection · Impermanence · Intention · Not Two
2. Breath · Love · Stillness

The design should have the following attributes:

- Simple;
- Clean;
- Have a sense of authenticity and integrity;
- Initiates connection;
- Sparks recognition;
- Tie visual presence and the center's core message together with consistency and clarity;
- Expresses the essence of the Zen Center in a graphic way.

Themes to be considered include:

- The unique location of the space and environment;
- Honoring the Rinzai tradition;
- Exploring the duality/threshold of developing both a serious, deep practice and welcoming those who are less committed;
- Visually expressing the core principles.

While not wishing to exclude graphic ideas, the survey results suggested avoiding the somewhat clichéd ‘zen’ images of lotus flowers or the enso.



The identity will be a 'symbol' connected to a typographic solution, which should first work in black and white, before any color-ways are considered. Applications for the logo will include, but are not limited to:

- Website
- Signage
- Newsletter
- Postcards, brochure and other promotional materials
- Ads
- Fundraising Materials / Offerings

The final graphic will help represent the uniqueness of this Sangha and the deeper tradition from which it grows. The launch of the new identity will bring clarity of intent to the organization as it aligns the Center's values and purpose.

Action Steps:

This is a tentative timeline that can be adjusted if the need arises. However to meet a deadline of the beginning of November for launch, it is important to go through approval processes in a timely manner.

- Sept 17: Design Brief and survey report submitted;
- Sept 21: Comments on brief returned and/or brief signed off
- Oct 5: Initial concepts submitted for review;
- Oct 10: Comments and amendments on initial concepts back to B&M;
- Oct 17: Amended visuals submitted;
- Oct 22: Comments and amendments on revised concepts back to B&M;
- Oct 29: Final presentation of concepts;
- Nov 5: Final approval of concepts and development of graphic standards.

The design process should be completed in time for the 10th Anniversary newsletter. Following that, the new identity will rollout across all applications as the need arises, with the priorities focused on signage and the website.

Approved by:
On behalf of the PSZC

Date:



CREATIVE ADDENDUM: PUGET SOUND ZEN CENTER

Living Zen

Puget Sound Zen Center's three main objectives:

Create the Environment

A welcoming and inclusive community that opens the Puget Sound Zen Center to as many people as possible, from the simply curious to the deeply committed.

Deepen Awareness

Making the practice of Zen Buddhism more widely accessible while maintaining the integrity of the Rinzai tradition. The center is a place for serious individual study, group practice, and family involvement – embracing deep contemplation and joyful celebration.

Inspire Mindfulness

Through practice, programs and precepts we hope to inspire and involve our Sangha so each person may discover their own path to living Zen through meditation, mindfulness and compassion.

Concepts to support design directions:

“An active community of folks who care about improving the self, the Sangha, the Island and the world.”

- *Living Zen;*
- *Puget Sound;*
- *Impermanence;*
- *Inclusive meditation;*
- *Stillness and compassion;*
- *Mindful intention;*
- *Interconnected community;*
- *Contemplation and celebration;*
- *Levels of involvement/commitment;*
- *Both/and (deep and lite, serious and fun, inclusive and individual...);*
- *'Shin': 心, "heart" 真, "true" 伸, "extend" 慎, "humility" 信, "belief"*