

Explorer's Guide to a Zen Life

Living a Life of Inner Peace



Welcome, Zen Explorer!

I appreciate your interest in joining me and my exploration, discovery, and living all things Zen!

My definition of Zen can be summed up as a way of life that promotes a sense of happiness and well-being with grace and ease. A Zen Life balances all components of Mind, Body, and Spirit to produce increasing mindfulness, peacefulness, compassion, gratefulness, joyfulness, acceptance, and so much more. Ultimately, we will enjoy the heck out of the crazy lives we have been granted with more meaning and purpose!

This Zen Journey starts with the desire to better yourself from within. All parts of our Mind, Body, and Spirit work together to lead us toward a happier and healthier life.

I have been on my self-discovery journey for many years. I hope to share what I have learned to make the journey toward a life of inner peace more accessible and meaningful to you. As a quick disclaimer, I am not a medical provider, have no license for anything, and am only schooled in my own research and common sense! Please check with your healthcare provider to review any health-related topic from me or anyone else. By all means, respect your intuition and health needs. Please follow along as I summarize my Zen Exploration Toolkit on the next pages.

Mind ~ Where it all starts!



- ✓ Sit in Stillness Daily ... Meditate ... Pray
- ✓ Discover and Understand all about Yourself
- ✓ Discover and Live your Values
- ✓ Find your Brave Voice to Speak your Truth
- ✓ Let the Magic of Journaling Help Guide You

Any Zen Journey will undoubtedly include some form of mindfulness. These can be formal meditations, a soothing prayer time, a meditative stroll through nature, or even a quiet reflection before bed. They can be for a few minutes to as long as you want. **It is a time to be still and connect with your inner self** and discover who you are. You can assess where you are on your journey, where you want to go, and whom you want to be. There are many sources online to learn about meditating and all sorts of apps to make the process easier. You can read my blog about Stillness and meditation on my website to start or enhance your practice at <https://www.suzenhebert.com/post/stillness>.

The benefits of meditation are enormous. Healthwise, it lowers blood pressure, boosts immunity, enhances sleep, and more. Psychologically it reduces stress, anxiety, and depression while regulating moods, promoting self-awareness, and improving memory.

I suggest you take some time to **discover your values** – those intrinsic principles that have meaning to you and how you want to live your life. A quick internet search of ‘values examples’ will get you started. Things like: Honesty, Integrity, Kindness, Compassionate, and Loving are good places to start 😊. Then you can explore how you have or have not lived up to them in the past and discover new ways to embrace them fully in the future.

As you practice mindfulness or meditation, you’ll begin to **find your brave voice** and speak your truth. Many guided meditations in our online and app world can help you meet and speak your truth. Counselors are pretty good at this too! For further inspiration, check out my musings about A Brave Voice on my website at <https://www.suzenhebert.com/post/a-brave-voice>.

Journaling is a great way to discover ourselves and keep us aligned with our journey. When we write, something opens up in us. Our hearts and minds open. We can soften a lot of the discomforts in our life and celebrate our joys by writing. Feelings, thoughts, longings, and desires can all pour out. As well as the hurt, anger, and frustrations of life. Journaling is one of the most accessible forms of self-discovery and self-expression, plus a great way to let things go. Please read about the Magic of Journaling in my blog post at <https://www.suzenhebert.com/post/the-magic-of-journaling>.

I am such a proponent of journaling that I crafted my own! It is an essential part of my day to track my healthy habits and muses. You can find it at <https://www.suzenhebert.com/zen-journey-roadmap> if you want to start or expand your own journaling practice.

Body ~ Being Healthy & Fit is Your #1 Job!

- ✓ Make Self-Care a Daily Priority
- ✓ Enjoy Nutritious Healthy Whole Foods and Drink Lots of Water
- ✓ Move every day... Combine Stretching, Strength, and Aerobic Activities
- ✓ Incorporate Breathwork
- ✓ Get Good Sleep



A Zen Journey gets stalled when we don't take care of ourselves. **Self-care is paramount** to living a healthy and happy life! You are so worth the effort. Take time to prioritize your well-being daily.

It's too easy these days to eat poorly. It seems we have junk food and fast-food restaurants on every corner, commercial, and billboard. Although they are very enticing, they are probably not the healthiest choices! You don't have to give them all up; just be mindful of when, why, and how you enjoy your food choices. **It's easy to add more fruits and veggies to your existing diet.** You might end up replacing and desiring them over the 'bad' choices as you practice this. If you need help, ask your doctor or friends which eating lifestyle they recommend. There are countless books, websites, and apps to help you when you go looking! And always have a glass of water at your fingertips. Hydrating is a crucial element in keeping our bodies running their best.

Movement is lubrication! When we don't move our joints, they get stiff, inflexible, and painful. As we get older, we naturally lose our flexibility and strength. Even our heart needs exercise too! The benefits when we move and exercise are countless. We don't have to run marathons – just 30 to 60 minutes of light exercise most days will help. Walking the dog or any stroll can also be done mindfully and meditatively. Yoga covers just about everything. The weight machine keeps our muscles fit. Find what works best for you, mix it up, and keep it up!

Breathwork is another great thing to incorporate into your daily routine. It involves **breathing in conscious and systematic ways.** It can provide a multitude of benefits such as relaxation, greater awareness, and increased focus and is often used in concert with meditation. There are many different types and methods, so find one that suits you best.

Don't forget about a **good night's sleep!** Living life to its fullest is challenging if you are not consistently rested. Try to turn the tv off earlier, put the electronics to bed way before you, take a soothing bath, or read a few pages of a relaxing book before bedtime. When you go to bed a little earlier, you might even wake more refreshed and have time for meditation first thing in the morning 😊.

In addition to providing a safe place for thoughts and reflections, My Zen Journey Roadmap Guided Journal is a great way to **keep track of your healthy habits.** Find it here at <https://www.suzenhebert.com/zen-journey-roadmap!>

Spirit ~ Discover Your True Self, Your Universe!



- ✓ Listen to Your Heart
- ✓ Discover Your Higher Power, Your God
- ✓ Trust in the Universe & Your Wisdom
- ✓ Follow your Intuition
- ✓ Be your Authentic Self
- ✓ Practice Gratitude & Spread Kindness
- ✓ Hone your Empathy for Others
- ✓ Avoid Judgement and Be More Tolerant

The highlight of a Zen Journey is expanding your Spirit. When you **listen to your heart**, you can fill your spirit's needs and your soul's desires. You will discover your higher power, your God, your Self. You can find books to read, classes to take, deeper meditation sessions, religious services, group meditations, yoga classes, prayer sessions, retreats ... the list is as endless as your individual needs and preferences.

By listening to your heart and expanding your spirit, you will begin to look at things differently. More compassion, acceptance, and love will start filling you up and flowing out. **Trust that the Universe has your best interests in mind.** It will give you wisdom along the way. It will become your intuition – follow it closely!

By enriching your Spirit, you will become more and more of your authentic self. You will be able to **speak your truth freely.** When you practice gratitude and kindness, you become more open and loving. You will value the worthiness of everything and everyone.

As you hone your empathy for others, your patience and compassion will expand as you relate to everyone around you. **You will be more understanding of different points of view.** You will begin to see the bigger picture in everyday situations. You will be able to respond rather than react. As you avoid judging yourself and others, you will become more tolerant.

Your inner peace and happiness will grow as you practice all these things. Your love for yourself and others will blossom. You will become Zen.

How Well are you Living a Zen Life?

Take the following quiz to see how well you are currently living a Zen Life:

		Often	Rarely	Not at All or I Don't Know						
MIND	I meditate 1 to 2 times per day	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>						
	I live up to my values	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>						
	I speak my authentic, brave voice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>						
	I journal routinely	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>						
		BODY	I eat healthy most of the time	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
			I exercise regularly	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
			I practice breathwork	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
			I get good sleep most of the time	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
				SPIRIT	My heart feels open	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
		I trust in the universe and/or my god	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
		I listen to and follow my intuition	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
		I am grateful	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
		I spread kindness	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
		I am empathetic of others	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
		I am tolerant of others	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
		I avoid judgement	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
		Totals								

If you total 13 or more under the Often column, you are well on your way toward living a Zen-filled life! Keep up the excellent work!

If you total 8-12 under the Often column, you are experiencing quite a few Zen qualities in your life. Keep sprinkling in more and more for added peacefulness and happiness!

If you have more Rarely and Not at All's, your timing is perfect to start a Zen Journey towards inner peace and happiness!

Consider your score in each Mind, Body, and Spirit category for insight into areas to concentrate on ☺.

Thank you for taking the time to explore my toolkit. I hope it ignites some piece of your soul to journey along and live a life of inner peace.

For more inspiration and to follow along on my journey with me, check out and sign up on my website at <https://www.suzenhebert.com>. You will find my random muses in my blogs, Zen Journey Roadmap Journal, favorite quotes, photos, and other creations. I look forward to your company along the path!

Namaste and enjoy the journey, my friend!

SuZen Hebert

