

Announcement concerning the teacher-student relationship

From September 2014 I am going to establish the teacher-student relationship with me as a Zen teacher. Those who are interested in it are requested to read the following explanation and, if the interest still remains intact, to fill out the *application form* and to send it to me by email or personally give it to me. Then we will soon find a suitable opportunity to privately talk about the application.

August 22, 2014 / May 8, 2020 / September 28, 2021

M. SATO

What does the teacher-student relationship with Sato principally entail?

Establishing the teacher-student relationship serves the purpose of making the Zen-Way clearer, so that it may help the practitioner follow the path with more assurance, since the responsibility of the teacher and the engagement of the student are mutually and more visibly defined. Concretely, this relationship consists of the following points:

1. M. Sato as a Zen teacher bears the entire responsibility of the Zen teaching through the entire time of teacher-student-relationship. During this period the student is basically obliged to follow the Zen instructions given by M. Sato as the teacher, and not to accept the personal instructions of any other Zen teachers (i.e., through dokusan).
2. The teacher-student relationship can be freely abolished by M. Sato based upon whatever reasons that might arise. The student, on his or her side, has the freedom to terminate the present teacher-student relationship with M. Sato with whatever reasons and, for example, go into a new teacher-student relationship with another teacher if the student clearly expresses this intention to M. Sato.
3. Those who want to work with M. Sato with the hope of encountering the kensho experience and/or taking up the post-kensho course of koan study of the Zen community “Sanbozen” are basically expected to go into the teacher-student relationship with him. On the other hand, this binding teacher-student-relationship is automatically terminated at the end of the koan training (with the completion of the koans in the *Denkoroku*) – with the possibility, however, that the so completed teacher-student-relationship can be voluntarily renewed or extended. However, those who want to practice under him without the particular aim of attaining the so-called kensho can also be his students. (Furthermore, those who have completed the koan schooling either with M. Sato himself or with any other teacher can take the 2nd koan study, i.e. a deepening revision of the koan course, with M. Sato without (re-)establishing a formal teacher-student-relationship with him.) In any case, a personal conversation with Sato in advance should take place, which should lead to a decision whether that person becomes a student or not.
4. The formal teacher-student relationship will be put into effect through a *shōken*-ceremony (*shōken* literally means „encounter each other“); how this ceremony takes place will be explained

in the personal conversation which precedes the ceremony.

5. Basic priority will be given to the formal students in case of allowing further participants in a sesshin or zazenkai from the “waiting list.”
6. The teacher-student relationship with M. Sato presupposes that the student has already become a member of the Zen community „Sanbozen“ (cf. <https://ssl.sanbo-zen.org> ; the annual contribution of the membership fee is US\$ 50 as of now.).