

Introduction I

Prajna Dharma Study Group Program

Deepen Your Dharma Learning and Practice, Together

Oct 2025



Why a Study Group?

This program is designed to deepen your practice through the *Three Modes of Wisdom: Listening, Contemplating, and Cultivating*. A study group helps you

- **Stay Motivated:** Studying with a consistent group fosters commitment and makes learning more sustainable, especially in the context of isolated online learning.
- **Connect Your Practice to Life:** It provides a safe space to share how you apply the teachings in your daily life, enhancing reflection and practical application.
- **Build a Supportive Community:** It's a wonderful way to foster lasting connections and create a sense of belonging with the community of Dharma brothers and sisters.

We hope this program will provide continued opportunities for learning, growth and connection!

What is a Study Group?

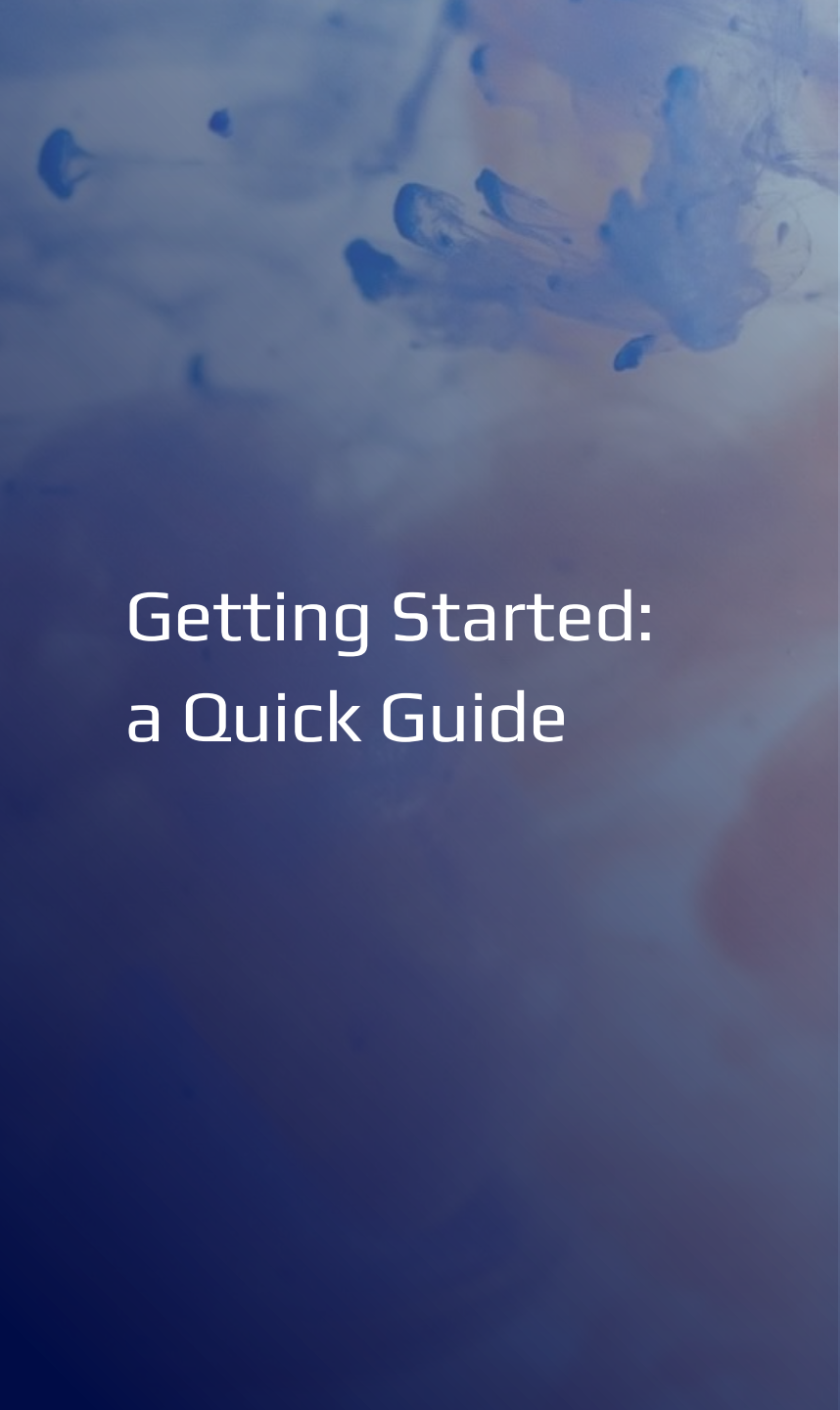
A study group is a flexible, self-organized circle of Dharma friends who meet regularly to learn and grow together

- As a group facilitator, take the initiative to gather a small group of friends for regular group discussion, either online or in-person.
- Your group is free to set its own pace and meeting cadence.
- Your group can either choose to follow a new live course, or review a past course together.
- The program provides a direct channel for your sharing feedback and submitting questions for Jianhu Shifu.

How Prajna Dharm Support Study Groups?

Prajna Dharma provides dedicated support to help your group succeed and sustain:

- **A Setup Toolkit:** We provide guidance on how to form your group and get started.
- **Course Materials & Guides:** You'll have access to course recordings and lecture notes through the YouTube channel as everyone else. **In addition**, Study Groups will be provided course-specific discussion guide, homework questions, reference answers, and quizlet cards. Also we can prepare for additional supporting materials upon your request.
- **A Direct Q&A Channel:** We collect questions from all groups for **dedicated Q&A sessions with Shifu**, as well as provide **direct channel** for individual students to submit questions or feedback to Shifu.
- **A Platform for Connection:** We help facilitate experience sharing and mutual inspiration among all the study groups.



Getting Started: a Quick Guide

Here are the key recommendations for launching your group:

- **Group Size:** 3-8 people is ideal.
- **Cadence:** Meet weekly or bi-weekly.
- **Duration:** Aim for 60-90 minutes.
- **Format:** Online or in-person meetings both work well.
- **"Question Board":** Use a shared document (e.g. google doc) to note key points and questions for Shifu.
- **Pacing:** Choose a pace that is comfortable for everyone.



Tips for a Thriving Group

Here are some best practices shared from past experience

- **Give your group a unique name** to build a sense of identity and belonging.
- **Take turns facilitating discussions** once your group is established to cultivate ownership.
- **Rotate** so everyone has a chance to speak up.
- **Plan your schedule** together, remind topics and questions for the next session, manage time to avoid run-over, align on holiday breaks. A balanced approach, “not too tight, not too loose”, is key to long-term success and sustainability.
- **Update the Question Board** frequently to share back with Shifu
- **Arrange offline gatherings** when possible, such as tea or a group meditation, to deepen your connection and Dharma friendship.

Welcome your ideas and inputs!



Guidelines for a Supportive Space

To create a safe and focused environment, we ask all groups to honor these principles:

- **Stay Focused:** Focus on the week's lesson plan and homework questions for discussion. Avoid off-topic conversations like politics, superstitious topics, or other religions. Experiences or questions about unusual spiritual experience should be directed to Shifu, not discussed in the group.
- **Listen Respectfully:** Avoid subjectively judging anyone's sharing and contribution. Do not interrupt others (except occasional gentle reminder from the facilitator to keep on topic and timing)
- **Ensure Confidentiality:** What is shared in the group stays in the group. Respect the privacy of your Dharma friends.
- **Embrace the Community:** Abide by local laws and regulations. Be mindful and respectful for local custom, culture and diversity.

Sample agenda for a 60-90 minute Study Group session

Opening	• Start with a short meditation or chanting	5 minutes
Review	• Briefly revisit a key point from the previous session	5 minutes
Core discussion	• Take turns answering mandatory questions	25-35 minutes
Open Sharing	• Discuss optional questions or examples in daily life and meditation	10-15 minutes
Feedback	• Feedback for the session • Finalize questions for the “Question Bobard”	10-20 minutes
Closing	• Dedication of Merit • Announce next date/agenda and community news	5 minutes

May all sentient beings achieve Buddhahood