

The Zen Timepiece™



The Zen Timepiece™



By

Now & Zen®

quality of thought, stillness of being

All Zen Clocks are the creation of Steve McIntosh
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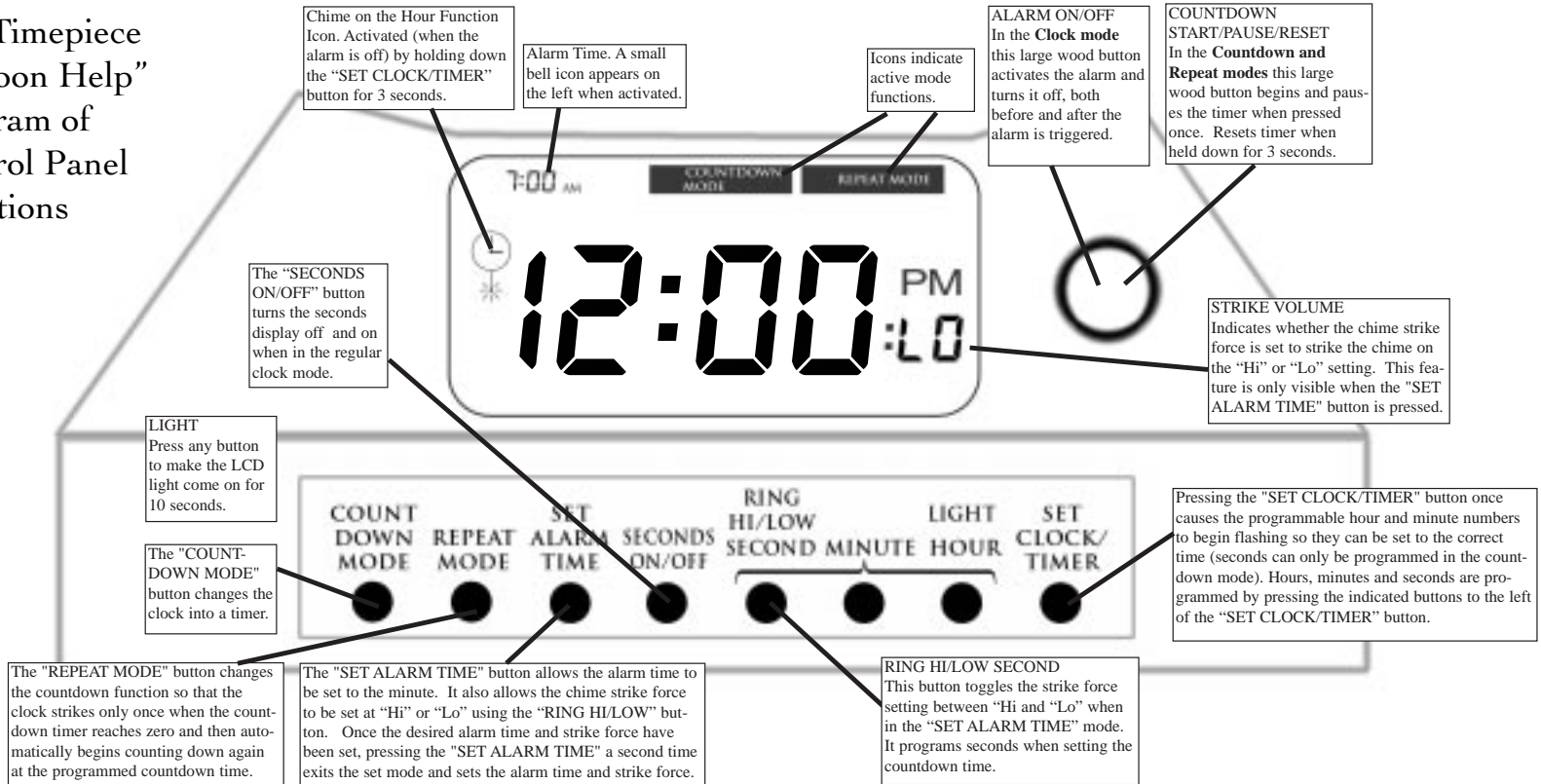
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I. INTRODUCTION

Your Zen Timepiece is designed to add elegance and aesthetic sophistication to your environment, both visually and audibly. From a visual perspective, the clock is most beautiful when its digital display ("LCD") and controls are turned to the back, as shown on the title page of this booklet. Placed in your environment with its controls to the rear, the clock performs its various functions (alarm clock, timer, or hour chime) while its technology is obscured from view, thus leaving your environment free from the visual clutter of modernity. Yet even with the LCD display turned to the front, the Zen Timepiece remains an attractive digital clock that will look good in any room.

However, the Zen Timepiece's greatest beauty is in its sound. Once you take a moment to adjust the strike force and position of the bowl/gong (as described below) to your liking, your ears will be treated to the lovely tones of the bowl's long-resonating ring. We recommend you set the clock so that the bowl is sounded in the lower end of its range, because this is where it

Zen Timepiece "Balloon Help" Diagram of Control Panel Functions



Introduction

sounds the sweetest. However, it can be set to strike quite loudly if volume is required.

Your Zen Timepiece is the result of ten years of product evolution at Now & Zen, and we trust that you will find it a delight and a pleasure. Thank you for bringing this unique creation into your life.

II. OPERATION INSTRUCTIONS

Install Batteries

Using a small Phillips head screwdriver, remove the battery door on the bottom of the wood platform and install two new "C" size alkaline batteries. Be sure to install the batteries as shown on the inside of the battery case and make sure both ends of the batteries are making contact with the terminals. Battery life is typically one year with normal use, but battery life will vary depending on individual use preferences. The clock includes a "low battery" indicator (see "Power" on page 17 for details). Replace the battery door using the screws.

Getting Started and Setting the Time

When the batteries are installed the clock "powers up" displaying the time at 12:00:00 PM. First, set the clock to the correct time by pressing the "SET CLOCK/TIMER" button once, which causes the programmable hour and minute numbers to begin flashing so they can be set to the correct time using the corresponding "HOUR" and "MINUTE"

buttons (seconds can only be programmed in the countdown mode). Exit the set mode by pressing the “SET CLOCK/TIMER” button again. To set the clock’s countdown timer, press the “COUNTDOWN” button (the countdown mode is initially set at 10 seconds), then press “SET CLOCK/TIMER” button and follow the same procedure for setting the time. Please see the “Balloon Help” diagram for a quick reference to the functions of all programming buttons.

Testing and Adjusting the Sound of the Bell Strike

Your Zen Timepiece is like a musical instrument and can be adjusted to produce a wide variety of loud and soft sounds. The clock is designed so that its sound can be customized for your needs; it just takes a minute of experimentation to find the volume and timber that sounds best to you. The striking mechanism can be set to either “Hi” or “Lo”, and each of these settings can be adjusted further using the black slot knobs on the wood platform under the pyramid. Once you find a strike force setting you like, the sound of the bowl can then be “micro-adjusted” even further by moving the position of the bowl back and forth relative to the striker’s tip while listening

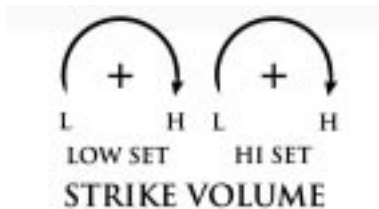
to repeated strikes. These adjustment options are explained below.

To listen to the sound of the bell continuously as you are adjusting it, set the clock to strike every 10 seconds as follows: Press “COUNTDOWN”, then press “REPEAT”, then press the LARGE WOOD BUTTON to the right of the LCD to begin the repeating strike sequence every 10 seconds. When the batteries are installed the clock is initially set to the “Lo” strike force setting, and the countdown timer is initially set at 10 seconds.

High and Low Strike Force Settings

To change the strike force from “Lo” to “Hi”, press the “SET ALARM TIME” button; you will then see the letters “Lo” in the lower right corner of the display window; then press the “RING HI/LOW SECOND” button to toggle the setting between “Hi” and “Lo”. Both the “Hi” and “Lo” strike force settings have a range of adjustment that is controlled independently by turning the black slot knobs (use a coin or a screw driver) on the wood platform. As shown in the diagram

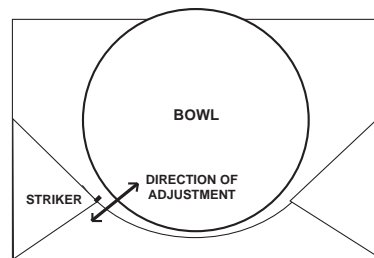
below, the left knob controls the power in the “Lo” setting and the right knob adjusts the power in the “Hi” setting.



Find the “Sweet Spot” Position of the Bowl

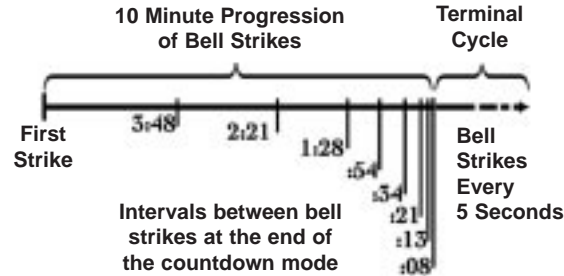
Once you have adjusted the strike force power, continue in the “REPEAT” mode (striking every 10 seconds) and move the bowl back and forth relative to the tip of the striker to find the “sweet spot,” as shown in the diagram below. For maximum volume in the “Hi” setting, keep the bowl at least a centimeter from the striker tip. For a softer strike, position the bowl within a millimeter or so from the tip. Overall, the most beautiful sounds are achieved in the “Lo” end of the clock’s range.

TOP VIEW



Setting the Alarm Time

In addition to activating the “Lo” and “Hi” strike force adjustment, the “SET ALARM TIME” button also allows the clock’s alarm time to be set to the minute. Once the desired alarm time has been set using the “HOUR” and “MINUTE” buttons, pressing the “SET ALARM TIME” a second time exits the set mode and sets the alarm time. The alarm is turned off and on by pressing the LARGE WOOD BUTTON to the right of the LCD. When the alarm is activated a small bell icon appears in the upper left corner of the clock’s display.



When the clock's time reaches the alarm time and activates the alarm, its signature "progressive awakening" strike sequence begins with a single bowl strike. Then automatically, three and a half minutes later, the clock strikes again ... then in two minutes ... then in one minute ... so that you are awakened gradually over ten minutes as shown in the chart above.

Countdown Mode

The "COUNTDOWN MODE" button changes the clock into

a timer. Once in countdown mode, the "SET CLOCK/TIMER" button allows the countdown time to be set to the second. When the countdown timer reaches "zero" seconds, the clock strikes once and begins its automatic ten minute strike progression sequence (the same as its alarm progression described and charted above). The significance of the clock's "Golden Ratio progression" is described on page 31.

When in the countdown mode, pressing the LARGE WOOD BUTTON once begins the countdown, pressing it a second time pauses the count, pressed a third time, the countdown resumes. Holding the LARGE WOOD BUTTON down for 3 seconds resets the timer to the pre-programmed countdown time.

Repeat Mode—Interval Timer

When the clock is in the countdown mode, pressing the "REPEAT MODE" button changes the countdown function so that the clock strikes only once when the countdown timer reaches zero seconds and then automatically begins counting down again at the programmed countdown time. When in the

Operation

repeat mode the clock will continuously countdown to zero seconds, strike once, and repeat the programmed countdown. As in the regular countdown mode, pressing the LARGE WOOD BUTTON once pauses the count, pressing it a second time resumes the repeating countdown.

Strike on the Hour Function

In the clock mode, holding down the “SET CLOCK/TIMER” button for three seconds (when the alarm is not set) will activate the hour chime function. This causes the clock to strike once on the hour, every hour. When the hour chime function is activated, a small “grandfather clock” icon appears in the upper left of the display. Holding down the “SET CLOCK/TIMER” button again for three seconds turns off the hour chime function and its icon. When the alarm is activated, the hour chime function is automatically turned off until the alarm is turned off (so you can sleep!).

Alarm Terminal Cycle

At the end of the clock’s ten minute strike progression sequence (in either the clock or countdown modes), the clock will be striking every 6.5 seconds—this is the “terminal cycle”

Operation

wherein the strikes will continue at 6.5 second intervals for about another five minutes, unless the strike sequence is shut off by pressing the LARGE WOOD BUTTON.

Power

If you use alkaline batteries (recommended), battery life will typically last one year with everyday use. If the chime on the hour function is used continuously, this may cause the batteries to run down sooner. When your battery power becomes low the Zen Timepiece will alert you by displaying “Lb” in place of the seconds in the lower right corner of the LCD display.

Clock Display Light

The display light comes on for 10 seconds when any of the clock’s buttons are pressed. The “RING HI/LO SECOND” button turns the light on and off, but the light goes off automatically after 10 seconds to save the batteries.

Care of Your Zen Timepiece

The Zen Timepiece is designed for indoor use only. Keep it out of prolonged direct sunlight and free from excessive dust,

Operation

dirt or moisture. Clean the clock with a dry cloth. Never use detergents, furniture polishes, or oils on your clock as these liquids may come into contact with the clock's internal circuitry and cause a malfunction. The Zen Timepiece's brass bowl may be cleaned with any commercially-available metal cleaner. However, the bowl naturally develops an antique patina over time, which you may prefer to the polished look.

III. SUGGESTED USES

Progressive Awakening

It would be nice if we could wake up every morning without an alarm. We fall asleep gradually, and it seems only natural that a gradual awakening is best for our physical and mental well-being. Some people wake up naturally at the same time every morning without any outside stimulus. But for most of us, an alarm clock is essential. The natural desire for a gradual awakening accounts for the popularity of "snooze buttons" on alarm clocks. But even the minimal effort required to reach over and push a snooze button can disrupt the experience of waking up gradually. The benefits of a more natural "progressive awakening" include better dream recall, prolonged alpha brainwave activity, and a general feeling of well-being that results when you are not startled into the waking state by an obtrusive, speaker-driven alarm clock or

clock radio.

In the larger scheme of things, our days on this planet are few and precious, so it seems fitting that we should begin each day with grace and beauty. Used as an alarm clock, your Zen Timepiece thus serves as a useful reminder that each day is a new and sacred opportunity to live life to its fullest. But in addition to its use as an alarm clock, your Zen Timepiece is also an aesthetically-sophisticated timer that enhances practice activities and social gatherings. It can also serve as a “mindfulness bell” that periodically calls you to stillness. These suggested uses are discussed below.

Using the Clock for Dreamwork

The Zen Timepiece can help you remember and use your dreams in two basic ways: First, by not abruptly interrupting your dreams, allowing your dreaming mind to “finish the dream;” and secondly, by giving you the time between bowl strikes to lie in bed undisturbed when you are first awakened, so you can better recall your dreams.

Depending on how deeply you are sleeping when the clock's alarm is triggered, it may take several bowl strikes to arouse you from a dreaming state, or you may be awakened by the first strike. But even if the first strike does wake you, it is possible to resume or re-enter a dream from which you are marginally awakened if you are allowed to return to the dream without further disturbance. The interval between the first and second bowl strike can provide a brief period of time for you to reach a conclusion to your dream. Preventing the abrupt interruption of your dreams acts to preserve your dream experiences and maximizes the psychic benefits to be derived from improved dream recall.

There is general agreement among dream researchers that dream memories are best preserved when your body is allowed to wake up naturally when it is ready (without using a clock radio or buzzer alarm). However, if you can't “sleep late,” the Zen Timepiece's gradual awakening sequence comes closer to providing a natural awakening than practically any other wake-up aid. So for best results in remembering your dreams, as you are falling asleep at night, resolve that your first

thought upon waking will be the recollection of your dream. Whether or not you are in the middle of a dream when the bowl/gong wakes you, your best dream memories will be available in your first moments of waking consciousness. Before opening your eyes or moving, lie quietly and try to remember your dreams. Once you have established a conscious memory of your dream, you are ready to open your eyes and get up. Keeping a notebook by your bed to write down your dream memories can also be helpful. Discovering the value of your dream life can be richly rewarding.

Using Your Progressive Awakening Time for the Practice of Affirmations

Just in between the sleeping and waking state is a brain state known as the *Alfa State*. When in the Alfa State, your brain produces unique brain waves that have been found to be very helpful in increasing the effectiveness of personal affirmations. An affirmation is a specialized technique of stating a goal to yourself in a way that re-programs your preconscious mind for improved performance. Affirmations are most effective when they are expressed as statements of fact or convictions written

down in your own language. The most effective affirmations are personal, positive and in the present tense. For example, if your goal is to become a better parent, effective affirmations may include: "I am balanced in my expressions of discipline and understanding toward my children." or "When I demonstrate love and compassion to my kids, they learn to show love and warmth to each other."

To use your Zen Timepiece for affirmation practice, formulate and write down an affirmation of improvement in your life. Before you go to sleep, read the affirmation to yourself and resolve to remember it when you first wake up. When you are first awakened by the Zen Timepiece, lie quietly in bed before moving or opening your eyes and repeat your affirmation to yourself three times. If you lie still, the chances are good that your brain will remain in the Alpha State during the first few strikes of the bowl. If you do nothing to disturb this "freshly awakened" state while you repeat your affirmation to yourself, you will maximize the effectiveness of the affirmation through this alfa wave programming technique. Like the dreamwork techniques discussed above, the improvement of your life

through affirmations in the alpha state can be accomplished without the use of the Zen Timepiece; but using the clock makes the process easier and more fun.

Using the Clock for Meditation

Beyond the psychological inquiry into dreams or the self-improvement techniques of affirmations lies the ancient and sacred practice of meditation. Some form of meditation is practiced in every major world religion. Yogis, Christian mystics, Zen Buddhists, Quakers, practitioners of the Kabbalah, and Secular Humanists, all experience the benefits of meditation. The Zen Timepiece is an exquisite “accoutrement to meditation.” It can be used in a variety of ways to aid your practice and encourage you to “make time” to meditate. The first and most basic use of the Zen Timepiece in your meditation practice is as a signal of the end of your allotted meditation time. If you want to meditate for twenty minutes, simply set the countdown timer for twenty minutes, press the LARGE WOOD BUTTON, and begin your meditation. When the countdown timer reaches zero and the bowl/gong is struck, you can choose to end there or continue

your meditation for about three and a half minutes until the next bowl strike, or even longer. Many meditators find that a “three and a half minute warning” is a perfect interval in which to gradually conclude their longer meditations. The first strike signals the final phase of the meditation and the second strike its conclusion. The beauty of the brass bowl/gong is that it compliments rather than disturbs the meditative state while acting as an effective timer. No matter how you use it, the sonic clarity of the brass bowl provides an appropriate conclusion to your stillness.

The Zen Timepiece can also be more actively incorporated into your meditation practice as a form of “mantra” or “yantra.” Mantra is a sanskrit word which means “mental protection.” In Eastern meditation traditions, a mantra takes the form of a word or sound which is chanted to occupy the mind and keep disturbing thoughts from distracting the meditator. A yantra is used in Eastern meditation traditions as an image upon which the meditator concentrates until it “disappears.” The Zen Timepiece’s bowl strikes can be used as a sort of external mantra or sonic yantra. The clock’s countdown mode repeat

function (the interval timer) allows the bowl to be struck repeatedly at any set period, so that as the strikes repeat, they serve to bring you back to the focal point of concentration. Bells and chimes are used in both Eastern and Western meditation traditions. In the Christian monastic tradition, the ringing of the bell during meditation reminds the practitioners to return to the object of worship. Similarly, Zen monks have used gongs and “mindfulness chimes” (described below) to begin their meditations and during meditation to bring them out of their mental processes back to the stillpoint of tranquility.

Using the Clock for Yoga and Other Timed Practices

Practitioners of disciplines such as yoga, or reiki often find that a periodic acoustic timer is the perfect signal to change positions (or phases of the practice) at a pre-set interval. Using the Zen Timepiece’s interval timer function in such practices adds not only to the precision and efficiency of the session, but also to its aesthetic value. Because the Zen Timepiece’s hand-finished brass bowl/gong produces such a rich, complex sound, it helps create a calm environment in

which practitioners can get the most out of their discipline. Also, because the Zen Timepiece’s appearance is aesthetically pleasing, it can be placed on an altar or other prominent location where it can add to the visual beauty of the practice environment. The Zen Timepiece has been designed so that it can be positioned either with the clock display in the front, or with the display in the back, so its electronic functions are disguised.

Mindfulness

“Mindfulness” is the spiritual practice of being aware of your present moment. World famous Zen monk Thich Nhat Hanh has developed the use of the bowl/gong in a practice he calls the “mindfulness bell.” When you hear the sound of the mindfulness bell, you are invited to take a moment to breathe in and out and center yourself in the present. During this practice, the resonating sound of the bowl/gong periodically connects you to the peace and tranquility that resides inside you right now. This delightful practice reduces stress and improves your overall health.

The Zen Timepiece can serve as a mindfulness bell in two ways: it can be set to strike on the hour (providing an hourly moment of stillness), or it can be set to strike at a programmed interval, such as every twenty minutes, or even every three hours (see the Operation Instructions section for details on these settings).

Using the Clock to Begin and End Sessions or Meetings

In addition to the personal and contemplative uses described above, the Zen Timepiece can also be used as a progressively persistent, yet gentle way to bring people together for meetings or sessions, and to disperse them when their meeting time is over. Having a timer set to signal the end of a meeting can be very useful, especially in intense situations where it is socially difficult to play the role of “meeting police” by cutting people off at the allotted end time. Yet the buzzing of an ordinary alarm clock or beeper watch is also an inappropriately abrupt end. If you shut off the alarm, the meeting often continues unabated; but if you let the alarm keep ringing, the meeting does not have a chance to conclude gracefully. However, when you use your Zen Timepiece as a

meeting timer, the first bowl strike of the clock’s automatic, progressive strike sequence provides a gentle warning of the meeting’s agreed-to conclusion, with the following strikes acting to bring the meeting to a timely end. Because the more frequent, ‘alarmed’ bowl strikes only occur at the end of the clock’s ten minute strike sequence, these more frequent, disruptive strikes will only be heard if the meeting runs late.

The Zen Timepiece’s progressive bowl strikes are also useful to call meetings to order. A gradually-increasing ten minute “call to order” is a perfect way to begin meetings on time. For use in calling a group to order, the timer is most effective when attendees have advance notice of the purpose of the striking bowl. Whether you are calling your family to the dinner table or beginning a church service, the Zen Timepiece provides a lovely way to begin and to end.

Further Reading:

Thich Nhat Hanh *Peace is Every Step: The Path of Mindfulness in Everyday Life*. Bantam Books 1992

Tolle, Eckart *The Power of Now*. New World Library 1998

Kabat-Zinn, Jon *Wherever You Go There You Are: Mindfulness Meditation in Everyday Life*. Hyperion Press 1995

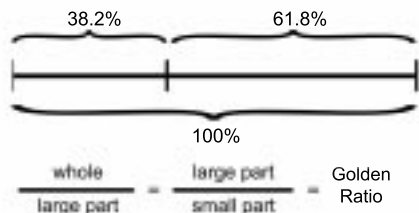
Fontana, David *The Meditator's Handbook: A comprehensive guide to Eastern and Western meditation techniques*. Element, Inc. 1992.

Brooke, Avery *Learning and Teaching Christian Meditation*. Cowley Publications 1990.

IV. THE ZEN TIMEPIECE'S GOLDEN RATIO STRIKE PROGRESSION

The Zen Timepiece's progressive strike function (activated by either the alarm or the countdown timer) takes place over about ten minutes. This progression is measured from the first bowl strike until the clock reaches its terminal cycle of continuous bowl strikes, about every 6.5 seconds. The sequence of bowl strikes within this initial ten minute cycle is designed to approximate a "Golden Ratio" progression. The Golden Ratio, also known as the "Divine Proportion," is a very special harmonic relationship that is used throughout nature as a technique of unified growth. The Golden Ratio has also been used by artists and architects throughout human history as a formula for beauty.

The Golden Ratio divides any whole into two parts so that the ratio of the small part to the large part is the same as the ratio of the large part to the whole line. In other words, when a



100% whole is divided by the Golden Ratio, the small part is approximately 38%, and the large part is 62% of the whole. This creates a relationship of “fractal self-similarity” wherein the small part is 62% of the large part, and the large part is 62% of the whole. The beauty of the Golden Ratio is that all three parts—the small part, the large part, and the whole—are in perfect proportion with each other. Golden Ratio relationships are everywhere in nature—from the human body to the solar system.

The Zen Timepiece’s bowl strike progression expresses the Golden Ratio by dividing its ten minute time “line” into smaller and smaller Golden Ratio sections. After the first strike begins the sequence, the second strike divides the line at three

minutes and 48 seconds. The next strike divides the large part of the original division (the remaining six and a half minutes of the ten minute cycle) by the same ratio. The interval between bowl strikes thus diminishes from within itself according to the Golden Ratio.

Perhaps the most beautiful examples of Golden Ratios in nature are found in the “golden spirals” seen in nautilus shells, galaxies, whirlpools, and even on the side of your own fist. As the Zen Timepiece’s bowl strikes grow closer together, they form an “audible golden spiral” as illustrated below. The clock thus echoes nature’s expression of universe harmony as it provides for a progressive awakening.



V. THE TRADITION OF BELLS, GONGS, AND SINGING BOWLS

Bells, gongs, and chimes are used prominently in both Eastern and Western spiritual traditions. The use of metal alloy bowls for devotional purposes can be traced back to the beginnings of metallurgy in China prior to 1,000 B.C. The bowl that comes with your Zen Timepiece is modeled after a Japanese “rin gong,” or *Keisu*, that is periodically struck with a stick to punctuate sutra-reading in Buddhist temples.

The Himalayan peoples have been using metal bowls in their rituals and as offerings to Deities since at least 560 B.C. These hand-hammered Himalayan alloy bowls have come to be known as “Tibetan Singing Bowls” because of the unique way they are sounded by rubbing a mallet over the rim so as to produce harmonic resonances and overtones. Although the bowl that comes with your Zen Timepiece is not technically a Tibetan Singing Bowl, it will

Bells, Gongs & Singing Bowls

produce harmonic effects if a mallet or striking stick is rubbed around its edge in a circular motion.

The bowl that comes with your Zen Timepiece is made from the following five metals: copper, zinc, lead, iron, and tin. It has been formed using the same forging techniques that have been used in Asia for two thousand years. Unlike hand-hammered Himalayan-style bowls, your Zen Timepiece's ring gong bowl is made using methods which first appeared in Japan in the first century. Following these traditions, your bowl's long-resonating tone has been carefully selected to bring beauty and harmony to your environment.

VI. NOW & ZEN'S GUARANTEE AND LIMITED WARRANTY

Your Zen Timepiece is guaranteed against mechanical defect for a period of 12 months from the date of purchase provided the clock has not been misused. Now & Zen will repair or replace free of charge any part or workmanship found to be defective within the warranty period. If your clock breaks during the warranty period, please call or write us for a return authorization number (RA#) and return instructions. It is your responsibility to ensure it is properly packaged for return, as any damage suffered in return shipment is not covered by this warranty. This warranty does not include damage due to dirt, moisture, or negligent handling. This warranty is only valid when accompanied by a dated proof of purchase.

Your Zen Timepiece is designed for indoor use only. To clean, wipe off with a damp cloth. Never use oils or

Warranty

polishes on the wood platform, and NEVER ADD LUBRICANT OF ANY KIND TO THE STRIKING MECHANISM. Your brass bowl may be cleaned with any commercially-available metal cleaner, If you have any questions or problems with the operation of your Zen Timepiece, please call us weekdays at (800) 779-6383, or (303) 530-9028 if you are outside the U.S., and we will be happy to assist you.

REPAIR OR REPLACEMENT AS PROVIDED UNDER THIS LIMITED WARRANTY IS YOUR EXCLUSIVE REMEDY. NOW & ZEN SHALL NOT BE LIABLE FOR ANY INCIDENTAL OR CONSEQUENTIAL DAMAGES NOR FOR ANY DAMAGES FOR BREACH OF ANY EXPRESS OR IMPLIED WARRANTY ON THIS PRODUCT.

For Warranty claims contact: Now & Zen, Inc.:
(303) 530-9028, e-mail: orders@now-zen.com

PLEASE NOTE: NO RETURNS WILL BE
ACCEPTED WITHOUT AN RA#.

VII. ABOUT NOW & ZEN

Founded in Boulder, Colorado in 1995, Now & Zen's mission is to create natural lifestyle products that make a real difference in people's lives. The growing preference for natural foods and natural fibers is carried forward by Now & Zen in the natural acoustic sounds and natural hardwood materials featured in every Now & Zen product. Our way of describing the essence of a natural lifestyle is: *quality of thought, stillness of being.*

As a result of cultural evolution, we're becoming more discerning about the real nature of quality. Quality thinking is concerned with the welfare of the greatest relevant whole—our whole selves, our whole environment, and our whole society. Now & Zen products embody *quality of thought* through their use as tools that improve your life, in the esoteric principles they embody, and in their originality.

Stillness of being is also an integral part of a natural lifestyle. The practices of prayer, meditation, and yoga all contribute to a stillness of being. Now & Zen products serve as accoutrements to these practices; and they also help create a sense of stillness through the beauty of their designs.

Please visit our website (www.now-zen.com) which gives further information on our products and mission. For a catalog of current Now & Zen products, please call us at: (800) 779-6383 or (303) 530-9028, or send us an e-mail at: orders@now-zen.com

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