

APPROACHING
THE BUDDHIST PATH

The Dalai Lama and Thubten Chodron

THE LIBRARY OF WISDOM AND COMPASSION : VOLUME I

STUDY
GUIDE

Approaching the Buddhist Path Study Guide

Second Edition



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How to Use This Guide

The Library of Wisdom and Compassion shares the Buddha’s teachings on the complete path to full awakening that His Holiness the Dalai Lama has practiced his entire life. This 10-volume series provides a “middle ground” between more introductory “lamrim” (stages of the path) texts, and in-depth study of the great philosophical texts. This study guide supports *Approaching the Buddhist Path*, the first volume of the series. The contemplation points are organized by book chapter and subsection. You can find recorded teachings given by Bhikshuni Thubten Chodron (2018-2019) here. Combining a study of the oral teachings with the written words will give you the richest experience of the topics in this book.

Approaching the Buddhist Path starts from the universal human wish for happiness and presents the dynamic nature of the mind. It also provides a wealth of reflections on Buddhist history and fundamentals, contemporary issues, and the Dalai Lama’s own personal experiences. It stands alone as an introduction to Buddhism, but also provides a foundation for the systematic illumination of the path in the volumes to come.

As you study this text, take time to reflect on the material and write out the main points. What stands out to you? How can you put it into your own words? Your notes can then form the basis of your reflections and meditations. In addition, the questions in this Study Guide, as well as the reflection points in *Approaching the Buddhist Path* itself, will show you how to relate the teachings to your own life, your own lived experience. Combining this three-step process of study, reflection, and meditation enables us to truly integrate the Dharma into our lives. On that basis of being a kinder, wiser human being, we can truly be of benefit to others.

Prologue

1. What does it mean to be a 21st century Buddhist?
2. At what point in our practice would it be beneficial to study other Buddhist traditions? Why is it important to study other traditions?
3. The Dalai Lama often says that if Buddhism had a slogan, it would be “Dependent arising.” What does this mean?
4. Make a strong determination that, throughout your study of this book, you will “think deeply about the various topics in the manner explained,” and “contemplate how these topics relate to one another and to your life.”
5. Why is there a need for a different presentation of the traditional lamrim outline when teaching a Western audience?

Chapter 1 – Exploring Buddhism

The Purpose of Existence and the Meaning of Life

1. Why is developing the great potential of our own mind essential for experiencing happiness in our life?
2. How does the Dalai Lama define the meaning of life and spirituality? How is this similar or different from your own understanding?

A Middle Way Between Theistic Religions and Scientific Reductionism

1. The Dalai Lama divides the eight billion human beings into three groups. What are these three groups? How are they different from each other and what do they have in common?
2. How could some of our current global problems be solved if people lived with a sense of responsibility coming from valuing ethics?
3. What are the three ways Buddhism can be described? Are these different viewpoints compatible?

Buddhadharma and Other Religions

1. How does understanding the law of causality relate to our desire for happiness?
2. Think of examples from your life where you have different religious views from others, but still get along by respecting other’s views.
3. Do we need to be Buddhist to practice and benefit from the Buddha’s teachings? Why or why not?

Religion in the Modern World

1. Why are spirituality and religion still relevant in the modern world?
2. The Dalai Lama identifies three main challenges facing religion today. What are they? Make other examples of challenges facing religion in our modern context.

A Broad Perspective

1. Why do we need many different types of meditation?
2. How do we reconcile advice to think about past and future lives with advice to be in the present moment?
3. What are some benefits from cultivating a broad outlook and a deeper view about the meaning of life?

Chapter 2 –The Buddhist View of Life

What is Mind?

1. Reflect on how your Dharma education has been different than the secular education you received, and the purpose behind that difference.
2. Summarize how the mind is understood from a Buddhist perspective.
3. Our mind is changing from moment to moment. What does this quality of changeability indicate to you?
4. What evidence do we have right now that emotions are not in the very nature of the mind? Reflect on the analogy that the mind is like colorless water that can be colored by a variety of hues, or none at all.
5. What do you understand from the analogy of the body being like a house and the mind like its inhabitant?

Complement these questions with the reflection on page 22.

Body, Mind, Rebirth, and Self

1. How do you know the mind exists?
2. What factor differentiates a corpse from a living being?
3. What is the source of all our happiness and suffering?
4. What is the substantial cause of mind?
5. The Dalai Lama says, “The moment of mind at the time of conception arose due to a cause, a previous moment of mind, and in this way the continuum of mind prior to this life is established.” How would you meditate on this to bring greater understanding and conviction?
6. What are some examples of the coarse, subtle, and subtlest levels of mind we experience?

Complement these questions with the reflection on page 27.

The Four Truths of the Aryas

1. What are the four things that Aryas have seen as true?
2. Why is it important for each of us to learn about the four truths?
3. What is the special purpose for recognizing and reflecting on our suffering?
4. Summarize the three types of duḥkha and make an example of each from your own experience. Which type of duḥkha is unique to Buddhadharma?
5. In what way is the Dharma—true paths and true cessations— a unique refuge?

Complement these questions with the reflection on page 31.

Dependent Arising and Emptiness

1. Reflect on how dependent arising ties together many topics such as the four truths, ignorance, the emptiness of inherent existence, and nirvana.
2. Describe the three levels of dependent arising with examples.

Dependent Arising and the Three Jewels

1. Everything we perceive and experience arises in dependence on its own causes and conditions. Make examples of this from your own experience. Does this impact how you think of yourself and the world around you?
2. Consider the different parts of your computer—the screen, keyboard, trackpad, case, etc. What makes this collection of parts “a computer”? Can you begin to understand how these parts are merely labeled “computer,” and then a computer appears to your mind?
3. How does dependent arising underlie the four truths?
4. For what reason did the Buddha say, “Whoever sees dependent arising sees the Dharma. Whoever sees the Dharma sees the Tathāgata [the Buddha]”?

Complement these questions with the reflection on page 35.

The Possibility of Ending Duḥkha

1. What two factors make it possible to put an end to our suffering?
2. What is the consciousness that is the root cause of cyclic existence?
3. Explain the unique quality of the Buddhist approach to eradicating erroneous minds.
4. What is the relationship between our buddha nature and nirvana?

Chapter 3 – Mind and Emotions

Buddhism, Science, and Emotions

1. Make an example from your own life of how feelings of pleasure or pain give rise to different emotions, which motivate actions that bring results such as suffering.

2. Describe the difference between the scientific and Buddhist explanations of emotions.
3. What does it mean to say that our intentions and emotions are the forces behind what we say and do? How is this the key to transforming our lives?
4. How is it that well-being can be learned?

Happiness and Unhappiness, Virtue and Nonvirtue; Emotions and Kleśas

1. Describe the four permutations of feelings and ethical value. Make examples from your own experience.
2. What would it be like to live in a culture that does not focus as much on “my emotions”? Take a specific aspect of your life and consider how it would be different without this habitual focus.
3. What does the Sanskrit word “kleśa” encompass? Is there a single English equivalent?

Complement these questions with the reflection on page 43.

Constructive and Destructive Emotions

1. What are some of the objects, people, or ideas that you are attached to? How does this attachment influence your behavior regarding those objects?
2. When you reflect on fear that has arisen in the past, can you identify any unrealistic exaggerations that led to that fear?
3. What advice does the Dalai Lama give to work with the panicky fear that can arise when contemplating such topics as the lower realms?
4. Identify some of the disadvantages of anger, and the effects it has on your body, speech, and mind.
5. Can you imagine a positive kind of disillusionment from practicing the Buddhist path?

Complement these questions with the reflection on page 48.

Emotions and Survival

1. If, on a biological level, emotions such as anger and fear may have helped human beings stay alive in the face of life-threatening situations, why does the Buddha say that they lead to suffering and recommend counteracting them?
2. Can you identify in your own experience an example where responding with tolerance and kindness would have protected your own interests and well-being more effectively than responding with anger?

Working with Afflictions

1. Examining your own experience, do afflictions ever serve a useful purpose?
2. What are some benefits you’ve observed from identifying the disadvantages and unrealistic perspectives of afflictions?
3. What is the two-pronged approach to working with afflictive emotions?

4. See how many helpful methods for subduing afflictive emotions you can find in this section, “Working with Afflictions.”

Complement these questions with the reflection on page 60.

Cultivating Love and Compassion

1. Describe the difference between ordinary love and compassion, and the expansive love and compassion we seek to cultivate in our spiritual practice.
2. How can we counter doubts and develop confidence that it’s possible to develop genuine constructive emotions?
3. What is one way of cultivating a sense that others are lovable?

Working with Fear, Developing Courage

1. Make examples of the two types of fear—wise and panicked—from your own experience.
2. How does courage come from the way we look at situations?
3. What are some basic beliefs that can help us develop confidence?

Complement these questions with the reflection on page 62.

Hope, Desire, and Acceptance; Comparing Ourselves with Others and Self-Worth

1. Make examples of the two types of hope, desire, and acceptance from your life.
2. Do you find it easy to list your own talents and good qualities, as well as weaknesses?
3. Are you able to acknowledge with ease when others are better than you in certain areas without getting jealous?

Countering Depression

1. What can nonbelievers reflect on to help them counter depression?
2. What is a good way to cultivate contentment with the affection and kindness we have received in our life?
3. What are two topics that can be particularly helpful for Buddhists to overcome depression?

Disagreement and Conflict

1. What are the six roots of disputes the Buddha lays out in AN 6.36?
2. Which of these do you engage in frequently? Which of these six do you see other people engage in frequently?
3. What harm arises from these six roots of disputes?
4. Think of examples when you have acted in one of these six ways. How could you have looked at the situation in different way to prevent harming yourself and others?
5. What practices can you apply to overcome each of these six roots of disputes?

Chapter 4 – The Spread of the Buddhadharma and Buddhist Canons

1. What are some benefits from knowing and understanding the history of how Buddhadharma has spread from India?

Vehicles and Paths

1. What is the meaning of the word “vehicle” (yāna) in the Buddhist context?
2. What differentiates the three vehicles?
3. How does one enter a Mahāyāna path?

The Buddha’s Life; Early Buddhist Schools

1. What inspires you about the Buddha’s life story? Can you see parallels between Śākyamuni Buddha’s search for lasting peace and happiness, and your own?
2. Reading about early Buddhist schools, do you find the subjectivity of the history inspiring or unsettling, and why?

Early Buddhism in Sri Lanka

1. Describe in brief the various understandings of “Theravāda.”
2. Why is it important to have tolerance and understanding towards other Buddhist traditions and other religious traditions?
3. Summarize what happened at the first and second Buddhist councils.

Growth of the Mahāyāna

1. What are some of the reasons people question the authenticity of the Mahāyāna scriptures?
2. What reasons support the idea that Mahāyāna scriptures were actually spoken by the Buddha?
3. What do the Theravāda and Mahāyāna share in common?

Buddhist Canons

1. Today, three Buddhist canons are extant. What are they?
2. What are the three “baskets” found in each canon and what do they correspond to?
3. Since many of the Pāli suttas were not translated into Tibetan, how did this material find its way into treatises authored by Tibetans?
4. To identify which basket a scripture in the Tibetan canon belongs to, a convention of homages has been established. Which homage belongs to which basket? Give examples of texts from each basket.

5. What do you understand from reading about the different perspectives on the origins of the Abhidharma Pitaka?
6. Why is it important to study the Abhidharma?

Complement these questions with the reflection on page 74.

Chapter 5 – The Buddha’s Teachings Form a Cohesive Whole

Three Turnings of the Dharma Wheel

1. Summarize or draw a chart of the description of the three turnings of the Dharma wheel [pages 99-102] including:
 - where the Buddha gave the teaching of each wheel
 - the main audience for which it was intended
 - the main sutra connected with that turning
 - the key teachings
 - the fruit of that path of each turning

Complement these questions with the reflection on page 103.

Authenticity of the Mahāyāna Scriptures

1. How does the Dalai Lama approach the Mahāyāna sutras and commentaries in regard to their authenticity?
2. Why didn’t the Buddha teach the Prajñāpāramitā sutra and other Mahāyāna sutras publicly?
3. In what ways are the Mahāyāna teachings valuable for humanity?

Nāgārjuna and the Authenticity of the Mahāyāna Sutras

1. Does it make sense that the consciousness ends at the time of death—even for an arhat? What agent or antidote could bring about the cessation of the mind?
2. Summarize Nāgārjuna’s advice to people who do not feel comfortable practicing the bodhisattva path.

Complement these questions with the reflection on page 112.

Four Authenticities

1. What are the four authentic factors that help us develop faith and confidence in the Buddha’s teachings? In what order did these factors appear historically? In what order do we develop confidence in them within our own mind?
2. Which teachings of the Buddha have you heard that you “know in your bones” to be true?

3. Identify at least with one thing that helps ground your faith in the Buddha's teachings.
Complement these questions with the reflection on page 115.

Four Buddha Bodies

1. What are the four buddha bodies taught in this section?
2. How might it benefit someone to think of Siddhartha Gotama as an unenlightened being at birth?
3. What is the benefit of thinking of Śākyamuni Buddha as someone who attained awakening eons ago and appeared in our world as an emanation body?

Buddhism in Tibet

1. Consider the difficulties undergone by the masters who brought Buddhism to Tibet. Allow a sense of gratitude to arise.
2. What is the main difference among the Geluk, Sakya, Nyingma, and Kagyu Tibetan traditions? How are they similar in their explanation of love, compassion, and bodhicitta, as well as emptiness?
3. Why does the Dalai Lama call Tibetan Buddhism 'the Nālandā tradition'?

Chapter 6 – Investigating the Teachings

The Kālāmas' Experience

1. The Buddha encouraged the Kālāmas to test the assertions of religious teachings to see if they affirm what the Kālāmas knew to be true and beneficial from their own experience. When have you done this, and what was the result?
2. His Holiness says, "It is our responsibility to use our intelligence to questions and test a teaching before accepting it." What is the result from doing this?

Reliable Teachings

1. What criteria can you use to evaluate whether a teaching is authentic and reliable?
2. Why are both study and meditation necessary to accomplish Buddhahood?

Exaggerated Statements

1. Describe the various factors that affect the weight of a karma and the results it will bring.
2. How can you use the idea of the "power of an object" to inspire your creation of virtue throughout the day?

Complement these questions with the reflection on page 137.

Correctly Understanding the Point

1. What is the meaning behind the story of the Buddha in a previous life giving away his wife and children as an act of generosity?
2. Are there stories you have heard in a Dharma teaching that have especially inspired you? What was inspiring about them?
3. Think about the difference between what is Dharma and what is culture. Define those terms and include specific examples.

Complement these questions with the reflection on page 141.

Being Practical

1. What does the story of being shot with an arrow have to teach us about getting all of our questions and doubts resolved before practicing the path?

Chapter 7 – The Importance of Kindness and Compassion

A Peaceful Mind; The Importance of Motivation

1. What qualities are necessary for our spiritual practice to bear good results?
2. What are the faults that result from focusing just on the happiness of this life?
3. Do you remember to set a positive motivation when waking in the morning, before going to work, and before engaging in other activities?
4. Give examples of when reinforcing mindfulness of your values helped you to act ethically.

Complement these questions with the reflection on page 151.

Cultivating a Compassionate Intention

1. What is the demarcation between being fully awakened or imprisoned in cyclic existence?
2. Review the Dharma meaning of the word *duḥkha*. Make several examples of the *duḥkha* of change and the pervasive *duḥkha* of conditioning from your own experience.
3. What is the meaning of Geshe Chekawa's mind training instruction that says, "Emptiness is the supreme protection"?
4. Can emptiness alone bring us to buddhahood?
5. Reflect on some of the benefits of compassion and altruism you've experienced in your own life.

Complement these questions with the reflection on page 155.

Mind Training

1. What is your current idea of what “success” looks like in your life? How do you react when you encounter adversity?
2. Cultivate the two bodhicittas to help you work with a difficult situation. How do these two states of mind help you look at the situation in a different and more beneficial way?
3. Do you have particular “worst-case scenario stories” that you consistently tell yourself? Can you identify the underlying fear and self-centered attitude that lies beneath them? Is the story you’re telling yourself in tune with reality?

Complement these questions with the reflection on page 158.

Eight Verses, Verses 1-3

1. Consider that all the experiences we value and seek are dependent upon cooperation and interaction with others, even our progress along the bodhisattva path. Reflect repeatedly on the kindness of others to generate a sense of gratitude and the wish to repay kindness.
2. Why must we respect ourselves in order to have compassion for others?
3. Do you believe, as the Dalai Lama does, that caring for others’ welfare is a wise way of caring for yourself? Check your own experience to see if you are happy when others around you are distressed or oppressed.
4. What are the benefits of “seeing ourselves as the lowest of all”?
5. Instead of suppressing emotions or pretending they aren’t there, how does the Dalai Lama advise us to handle our emotions?

Complement these questions with the reflection on page 163.

Verses 4-6

1. Can you identify prejudices you have for certain groups of people, and if so, how can Verse 4 help to work with those prejudices?
2. What does “offering the victory to others” mean in practice? What would that look like for you in specific situations where conflicts often arise?
3. Compare the usual understanding of forgiveness with the description given in the commentary to Verse 6. How are they different?
4. Consider how you could be more discerning about who you trust with what, so that you do not give people more trust than they can bear.

Complement these questions with the reflection on page 166.

Verses 7-8

1. Briefly describe the taking-and-giving meditation. Why is it practiced “in secret”?
2. How do you feel when imagining transforming your body, possessions, and merit into whatever others need, and with a loving heart giving it to them?

3. Conduct your own experiment to see the benefits of reciting and reflecting upon these eight verses daily, setting a doable timeframe, such as a week or a month. Doing it at the same time each day will help you remember. Early morning is best, as your reflection can then inform the rest of your actions that day. Once your set timeframe is over, see if you can and want to continue the practice.

Chapter 8 – A Systematic Approach

Paths for Spiritual Development

1. Why do we need to engage in many different practices in order to transform our mind?
2. Review the chart on page 174 that forms the basic outline for the teachings in this book. How is having an overview of our spiritual practice helpful?
3. What is the purpose of stressing the importance of preparing for future lives?
4. What does it mean that advanced practitioners practice “paths in common with” initial and middle-level practitioners?

Four Truths and Three Levels of Practitioners

1. Make a chart outlining the four truths from the perspective of a person of initial, middle, and advanced capacity.

More Than One Approach

1. Outline the different sequences that Atiśa and Maitreya present on how to become the Three Jewels.
2. Why is it helpful to integrate emptiness and bodhicitta into our other lamrim [stages of the graduated path] reflections?

Value of the Stages of the Path

1. What are some of the advantages of the gradual path’s systematic approach?
2. Explain one advantage of the gradual path in more detail, reflecting on it in the context of your own experience.

Two Aims and Four Reliances

1. What are the two aims of the Buddhadharma, and what are the means for attaining them? How can you incorporate these methods into your daily life?

Chapter 9 – Tools for the Path

General Advice

1. What are some of the differences between learning subjects in school and learning the Dharma?
2. How can you balance formal Dharma practice with engaging in projects that benefit others?
3. How does having unrealistic expectations of quick attainments or comparing ourselves with other Dharma practitioners hinder our spiritual pursuits?

Complement these questions with the reflection on page 194.

Wisdom and Faith

1. Review the three kinds of faith in the Buddhist context and make examples of each.
2. Check for elements of “blind faith” in your own beliefs and practice.

Proper Practice

1. As Buddhists, how do we seek protection from suffering? How can we protect ourselves?

Complement these questions with the reflection on page 197.

Purification and Collection of Merit; Prayers and Rituals

1. What does “merit” refer to, and why is it important to cultivate it in our Dharma practice?
2. What are some signs that it would be helpful to focus on the collection of merit and purification in our practice?
3. Are the prayers you tend to make more in line with those of bodhisattvas or ordinary beings?
4. What is the principal way that Buddhas help sentient beings?

Study, Reflection, and Meditation

1. Describe how study, reflection, and meditation build on one another.
2. Explain the four principles from the *Sutra Unravelling the Thought* that help us understand phenomena from different perspectives. Do this in both a forward and reverse sequence.

Complement these questions with the reflection on page 208.

Memorization and Debate

1. What are the benefits of memorization?

2. Is there a short text (such as the Eight Verses of Thought Transformation or Heart Sutra) that would be beneficial for you to memorize so that you can recite and reflect on it anytime, anywhere?
3. Summarize the real purpose of debate in the Tibetan Tradition, and what to avoid.
4. What three qualities should we cultivate to become a receptive student able to investigate the Buddha's teachings in a beneficial way?

Role Models

1. In what way is the Buddha a role model for you, given your Dharma interests and predispositions?

Chapter 10 – Making Progress

Realistic Expectations

1. Make examples from your own experience when integrity and consideration for others inspired you to act ethically and avoid nonvirtue. How did you feel at those times?
2. What can we learn from the Dalai Lama's prayer, "In order to serve sentient beings, may I attain Buddhahood—if possible, within this lifetime, but more likely after countless lives"?
3. In your own mind, can you identify any unrealistic expectations about how quickly and easily you should be able to actualize the path to awakening? Can you let go of expectations for immediate progress, and instead take joy in transforming your daily activities using the Dharma?

Advanced Practices at the Right Time

1. How is accomplishing the entire path to awakening just like building a house?
2. Examine your own entry into the Dharma. Did you start at the beginning of the path, or jump in somewhere more advanced? How has that served you?

Checking Our Meditation Experiences

1. Why is remaining humble an essential quality of a genuine spiritual practitioner?
2. Review the signposts along the path to check whether your meditations are progressing in the right direction and bearing fruit.

Signs of Progress

1. What are the signs that indicate someone has generated the three principal aspects of the path (renunciation, bodhicitta, and the correct view)?

Complement these questions with the reflections on pages 226 and 229.

Chapter 11 – Personal Reflections on the Path

My Day

1. What is your daily morning routine? Does it include generating bodhicitta?
2. What progress can you identify in your mental attitudes and behavior since you began practicing the Dharma?

Gradual Progress

1. The Dalai Lama implores us to “please make as much effort as you can while you have this precious life.” What reasons does he give for this?
2. Reflect on what is most important in your life. Does this inspire you to prioritize Dharma study and practice?

Willingness to Undergo Hardship

1. How does the Buddha’s life exemplify the necessity to be able to bear hardship?
2. Take some time to assess how you spend your time, energy, and resources, and then ask yourself, “What do I value more: my present comfort and security, or my spiritual aspirations?”

Keeping a Happy Mind

1. Compare an experience of happiness when the mind is non-virtuous—like when our craving is satisfied—and an experience of happiness motivated by virtue, like generosity.
2. How does distraction to sense stimuli—attachment to attractive sights, sounds, smells, tastes, or physical sensations—manifest in your life? Can you think of ways to reduce sensory input so that you have more energy to watch the mind and cultivate wholesome mental states?

Realized Beings

1. Why don’t realized beings discuss or proclaim their spiritual attainments?
2. What did the Buddha stipulate about revealing one’s realizations?

What I Have Learned in Life

1. A key learning in the Dalai Lama’s life is that all beings are fundamentally the same. How did this understanding arise? How does it express itself?
2. What is a key learning you have learned in life?

Chapter 12 – Working in the World

Good Health and Dealing with Illness and Injury

1. Our body is a precious vessel to practice the Dharma. How do you currently take care of yourself in terms of diet, sleep, exercise, and personal hygiene?
2. One mind-training practice is to regard illness as a result of destructive actions we have done in the past. Notice how is this different than blaming ourselves or thinking that we deserve to suffer. Why would we want to think this way?
3. Can you distinguish between the actual physical pain of an illness or injury and the mental suffering caused by fear and anxiety? How can doing this lessen your suffering?
4. Experiment with visualization to help manage pain. Imagine the Buddha in front of you or on the crown of your head, with light and nectar flowing from him into you, purifying and healing your body and mind.

Using Diverse Methods to Benefit Others

1. What three steps we can take in helping others? Which of these are you engaged in already?
2. In meditation, apply the four activities of awakening activity to a difficult situation in your work or social life. Does this framework reveal more possibilities of how to improve your own and others' wellbeing?
3. What distinguishes a meditation technique or practice as “Buddhist”?

Engaged Buddhism and Political Involvement

1. The Dalai Lama identifies three ways the Buddhist community can serve society. What are they, and how can you personally contribute to these efforts?

Consumerism and the Environment

1. Do you see protecting the planet as an ethical issue?
2. What are some ways we can practice contentment to counter our greed for more and better?

The World of Business and Finance

1. Why do you think those in business and government don't keep future generations in mind, even though they have children or grandchildren themselves?
2. Why do Buddhist practitioners have even greater reason to abandon illegal and deceitful business practices?
3. If you work in business or finance, are your goals and actions guided by a compassionate motivation? How could you incorporate the principles of care, responsibility, and cooperation into professional life?

Media and the Arts

1. What sources of media (TV, radio, newspapers, Internet, entertainment, and so on) do you regularly consume? What effect does this have on your mind?
2. Consider exploring “good news” sources (e.g. the Good News Network) that provide a more balanced and realistic perspective on the great kindness that humans show each other.

Science

1. Both science and Buddhism benefit from interdisciplinary discussion. What can science learn from Buddhism, and what does science have to offer Buddhist practitioners?
2. What is the Dalai Lama’s main purpose in dialoguing with scientists?

Gender Equality

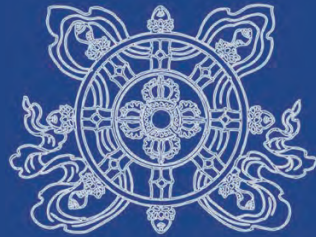
1. How strongly do you identify with your gender? Reflect on Aryadeva’s advice that there is no inherently existent “inner self” that is male, female, or other.

Interfaith

1. Why does the Dalai Lama accept and respect all religious traditions?
2. How is the variety of religions in the world a blessing, not a difficulty?
3. What four activities does the Dalai Lama recommend in order to promote mutual understanding and harmony among religious leaders and their followers? Which of these could you get involved in?

A Nonsectarian Approach

1. What is recommended as a solution to sectarianism?



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