

The Buddhist Survival Guide

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If I am not for myself who will be?
If I am only for myself what am I?

The Conditions

In the current international environment of conflicted opinions and proselytizing religious traditions the Buddhists are the only ancient spiritual tradition that is currently endangered. The historical evidence over the last eight hundred years, and more recently over the last sixty years, should be convincing, even devastating, evidence that the Buddhists are not paying attention to world events, regional events or even local social and religious turmoil. Traditional Buddhism and Buddhists in general are not defending themselves against well financed, competently educated and highly motivated proselytizing adversaries that range from the mildly self-delusional to clinically psychotic despots.

Buddhist Achievements

A brief history of Buddhist expansion and decline is helpful to fully appreciate the current conditions as they exist today.

During the time of Ashoka (?-232 BC) The Buddha Dharma was incorporated into the Indian continent as the official ethical and cultural doctrine. Ashoka encouraged the Buddhist Sangha to travel widely and to explain and debate (academically) the Buddhist doctrine as was the tradition at the time. This spread the influence of the Buddha Dharma from the Roman and Egyptian Empires, through central Asia, onto China and eventually to Korea and Japan by the sixth century. Buddhism and its doctrines were culturally influential and supported by local citizens, merchants and diverse cultures until the Mongol invasion in the thirteenth century.

Genghis Khan (1167-1227) contrived this Mongol invasion that spread through China, across central Asia to the doorway of central Europe. Due to this military, political and cultural turmoil the Iranian Muslims continued this assault on into India decimating the entire Buddhist population, except for the Jains in southern India. This was accomplished by the singular convincing argument of putting a knife to the victim's throat and saying, "*Convert or die.*"

The next spiritual and cultural threat came from the expanding European empires of Spain, and Portugal (1450-1750) that brought with them inquisitional Catholic missionaries and the militaristically superior Conquistadors. Although, their usual doctrine was to *divide, conquer and convert*, the Buddhist must consider conversion as being the Catholics singular objective. The Catholic religious oppression was the same as the Islamic conquerors - total domination of the culture and the establishment of a theocracy predicated on their religious

doctrines. With the invasion of Islamic and Catholic absolutist's traditions and proselytizing religious values, a significant percentage of the Asian indigenous population was forcibly converted.

The British Protestant tradition was convincingly established by the eighteenth century with the strategy of *convert and prosper*, which was astoundingly effective in converting numerous people to western religious values as well as cultural standards and language.

Social conditions and economics kept spiritual and social doctrines conservative (Victorian) but somewhat stable for two hundred years until the Second World War (1939-1945) when the material wealth of the west and the oil wealth of the Mideast changed their spiritual strategies to a more aggressive and proselytizing expansion strategy.

Current Disappointments

In the more contemporary times from the 1950's the motivation for western cultural expansion into Asia was not the attraction of Asian values but the expansion of Communism, which was significantly more devastating to the Buddhists than it was to any western society.

Remember that up until sixty years ago Buddhism could rhetorically claim that half of the world's population was Buddhist or had Buddhism as a basic social influence. Then in 1949 Mao took over China from a decidedly stupid, oppressive and ineffective Nationalists government. What Mao did was transform China into a secular theocracy destroying thousands of years of cultural history including over half of the Buddhist followers and traditions in the world.

Buddhist Tibet fell to a Chinese invasion by 1959 when the Dali Lama fled to India changing and ancient Buddhist culture into a communist atrocity in a few short years with surprisingly little effort – by simply building a road to Lhasa.

Cambodia, on Thailand's eastern border, fell to Po Pot psychotic Communist genocide from 1975 to 1979 but the turmoil lasted until 1995, or even until today, with the complete destruction of an ancient culture including most of the Buddhists. The current problem is that American influence in Cambodia has encouraged Christian Evangelicals and Fundamentalists to sway the devastated, uneducated and demoralized Cambodian toward Christianity. One reason is that the Americans, with their typical cultural arrogance, decided that they would prefer Cambodia to be Christian rather than Islamic; who are also trying to turn Cambodia into an Islamic theocracy. I suspect the Christian will win and that Thailand will have a Christian dominated country on its eastern border within the next ten years.

Burma, or currently Myanmar, on Thailand's western border, has a secular military dictatorship that has lasted since 1947 with no end in sight. The Buddhist Sangha there has not been able to change this condition, though at great personal sacrifice. This dictatorship is likely to fail, eventually, or change dramatically; leaving another devastated culture to the vicissitudes of the world's spiritual and culture predators.

Buddhist Countries

There are still three countries that can be considered Buddhist theocracies; Bhutan, Sri Lanka and Thailand. There is a large Buddhist presence in Mongolia, Nepal and Vietnam but

the general population is decidedly secular, Hindu or Islamic; also there are many Buddhist in Korea, Japan and Taiwan, though managed by secular western style democracies.

Bhutan, King Jigme Singye Wangchuck, due to an English education and insights into western duplicity, evicted (in 1972) all the hippies, missionaries, European idealists and almost everyone else, out of the country and refused to let them back in - a very smart social and political advocacy. Bhutan is a small and exclusive but a singularly unique example of ancient Buddhist culture in the world today.

Sri Lanka has recently passed a law that forbids the conversion of any Sri Lankan Buddhist to any other tradition. Prime Minister Mahindra has also eliminated missionary visas. Why he has to go to these extreme measures to insure the integrity of the Buddhist tradition is a reflection of an endemic problem of traditional belief and the institutionalization of Buddhist decision making predicated on outdated cultural and spiritual conditions.

Thailand might best be described as secular Buddhism operating within a Buddhist theocracy politically managed by Parliamentary prejudices. If it weren't for an ethical bureaucracy and local business integrity conditions could be much worse. Unfortunately, the political stagnation extends to Buddhist traditionalists that encourages cultural and social complacency, even exclusivity, within the Sangha to hold themselves isolated from the turmoil regardless of the external, well organized, well-funded spiritual and cultural threats.

If current history is any criterion Buddhism and Buddhist traditional doctrines can be eliminated in any country in a year or less given concerted opposition, spiritual or secular, that it is willing to kill dissidents; a strategy that Buddhist traditionalists have failed to appreciate - ever. Thailand and Buddhist in general, have no obvious protection against these threats.

Buddhism in the west is in the hands of a small intellectual elite and is, at best, a strange curiosity to the general American public. Western Buddhists have not been able to save Tibetan Buddhism in Tibet, the Cambodia Buddhist culture nor traditions, nor the Burmese Buddhist although there has been significant interest in doing so. They will not be able to save the Thai Buddhist traditionalists in Thailand either.

Tradition in the face of Changing Conditions

The Buddha, and the early Buddhist, had to explain their beliefs and traditions to diverse populations with a wide range of intellectual skillfulness. They also had to defend and debate complicated issues against academically sophisticated competition. This constant dynamics kept the Sangha vital, healthy and informed. Currently, the Buddha Sangha seems unable to defend themselves against even the most absurd delusions of competing religious doctrines. This condition is decidedly unhealthy even, disastrous, and must be addressed in order to sustain any Buddhist tradition, at all. It is not even remotely consoling to see Buddhism disappear in their traditional lands because of irrational adherence to historical, political and cultural doctrines including international pressures and values that are locally and logically self-destructive.

It is not enough for the Sangha, or their lay supporters, to endure years of servitude to acquire a position of doctrinal or political responsibility and then disregard *accountability*. It is meditationally skillful to be able to discern the difference between blind adherence to absurd doctrines, spiritual or secular, and addressing the value of managing contemporary

problems. Martyring yourself to historical or political doctrines because they are old, established and considered *right* does not help you, your neighbor, your culture, or future generations of Buddhist.

Proposal:

*Thailand is the last country in the world capable establishing,
and sustaining, a World Buddhist Sanctuary.*

The authors, sponsors and supporters of this argument are not satisfied by simply criticizing existing conditions but by proposing that specific changes be adopted by Thai lay Sangha who, not only, have the ability but the responsibility to establish and protect as well as managed a *Buddhist Sanctuary* for all the Buddhist people and traditions in the world.

Thailand is the only country in the world today that has the possibility to sustain and managing an international Buddhist Sanctuary for all Buddhist Pilgrims. It is important for us to appreciate that the Buddha Sangha and Dharma is currently incapable of defending itself against predatory, proselytizing religious doctrines. Therefore it is the responsibility for the Thai Parliamentarians as well as the Sangha Monks to assume this responsibility by passing relevant laws that insure the preservation of all Buddhist.

Monotheistic Religion as Doctrine

By definition Buddhism is not a monotheistic religion, does not believe in a God, does not proselytize, and is antithetical to faith. Buddhism can be considered a social philosophy (love of wisdom) predicated upon rational values; although, the application of these doctrines can vary considerably, depending on the culture, historical times and countless other conditions.

I am compelled to organize a rational summary for anyone interested in appreciating the scope and range of the absurdities in monotheistic religions doctrines. It is not my intention, in this argument, to present a point by point criticism of the assumptions that have to be believed or the inconsistencies that have to be endured in monotheistic religious doctrines to believe in their liturgies. Other people have done so with enormous scholastic endurance and intellectual ingenuity.

Observation: – Religion is a self-referential belief system committed to replicating itself, and people are the process.

Voltaire “Anyone who can convince you of an absurdity can cause you to do an atrocity.”

By definition; Religion is a belief in a single God justified by faith. The diversity of this idea specifically includes the Christian-Jewish traditions, including all Catholic orders, the Protestants including fundamentalists, evangelicals, Mormons, Jehovah Witness, Seventh day Adventists and anyone who says that Jesus is their savior; as well as the Islamic tradition of Shi’a and Sunni. Absolutely all of these religious traditions have an exclusive source, the Jewish monotheist *Abraham*.

Only these monotheistic religions traditions are based solely on *faith* and only faith. There is no other criterion that is used to justify their beliefs. Unfortunately, this leads to a singular application – to test your faith you need to be subjected to increasingly irrational beliefs. The more irrational the belief the greater the faith is required to sustain those beliefs making the believer more religious and virtuous. It is therefore essential to make their liturgies, doctrines and traditions as irrational, illogical, dualistic and inconsistent as possible. This is done historically by conscious, even clever, design. If you point out even one inconsistency in their doctrines you may be branded a heretic and a follower of the devil and can be killed, *with impunity for the murder*, by all of these religions traditions.

Pointing out irrational, illogical and inconsistent statements in their liturgies is not an efficient way to distract religious followers (all it does is test their faith). A good way to defend yourself against any conversion strategy is to ask questions – any question. Why do you believe in...? Is a completely unanswerable question, in any rational way, by any follower of any of the monotheistic religions. There is no WHY in any traditional religion (even Jesus asked *why* and got no answer). There is not a single statement in any of these liturgies that is not contradicted by an equally convincing contrary statement. Do not kill... accept for specific religious reasons.

The lineage connectedness of these proselytizing religious traditions goes like this, in the Jewish Torah the first commandment says; *Take no other God before me*. This is only one of the problems you have to figure out.... The God of the Jewish Torah is Jehovah, the God of Abraham, who was the first monotheist. The Christian God of the Bible is also the Jewish God but kinder, which was not hard to be. The Christian monotheistic God is divided into three parts which are the Father, the son (Jesus) and the Holy Spirit, which are *co-substantial* (a Catholic interpretation) and not separate at all! Jesus, a rabbi, was sent to earth, as the son of God, to die for the sins that his father, which is himself, who is also omniscient, and who created the conditions for the idea of sins in the first place – to fix it. The Islamic God of the Quran is Allah, whose prophet Mohamed, says that Allah is also the God of the Jew Abraham, and that Mohamed's prophases fix all previous prophases.

Another condition is that the religious God is omniscient (all knowing), all powerful, and all good that is why there is pain and suffering, tragedy, sickness, ignorance and death in God's perfect creation. This is a wonderful test for faith. If the proselytizers can manage this argument (which is why the condition of free will was argued by St. Augustine in the fourth century) you are in the presence of a truly deluded person.

Multiple or past lives are a problem for monotheistic religion, they don't believe in multiple live. Although, you're soul comes from someplace because it is eternal and apparently there are an infinite number of souls (They are unclear where they might store an infinite number of anything). Your soul has to have a life, which is this one, and only on this planet, as a test, to decide where it will go in the next life (heaven or hell, also for eternity). Another is to accept Jesus as your savior you are reborn again in this life, if you are talking to a fundamentalist. That is three or four lives all in one breathe but they don't believe in past or future lives, which is a heathen belief.

Intelligent design was proposed in 1994 as a scientific justification for God. All you have to do is believe that religions are intelligently designed, that the human body is intelligently designed (please enjoy your back ache, eye glasses, arthritis and very painful

births...on and on) and that everything (including politics) makes intelligent good sense! Good luck!

Indulgences, or their equivalent, are an astounding way for religions to raise money. Lay people should have churches, temples and mosque including Priests, Rabbis, Ministers and Imams, with cemeteries and clergy that pray and care for the living and dead. But all of the liturgies say that you are judged at death and go to the heaven or hell solely dependent upon your behavior while alive! Then why pray and have ceremonies for the dead? The Catholics thought up purgatory as well as some form of future resurrections for lost souls. The more prayers and masses and good works done in the name of the dead will get them, and you, out of purgatory or into heaven faster. The Buddhist have *Merit* which exactly the same thing.

The Muslims have the Five Pillars of Islam which are the confession of faith, performing five daily prayers, fasting during Ramadan, paying taxes, performing Hajj. These religious practices are reasonably straight forward and would not be a problem if it were not for the spectacular misinterpretations of the Quran that has permeated the Islamic Traditions. The most outlandish is that if you martyr yourself for Islam you will go to a particularly wonderful heaven – with seventy one virgins!

Unfortunately, in the Quran, there are no virgins in Islamic heaven; there are no women in Islamic heaven, at all. The virgin part seems to be a mistranslation of – *white grapes of crystal clarity*. There are so many of these translation problems one can only marvel at their creativity.

The Christians have the Virgin Mary's birth of Jesus, which was her first birth or the *birth of her virginity*, by Jewish tradition, that got mistranslated into that Mary was an actual *virgin*; quite easy for celibate clergy to do. Jesus had at least one brother (James the Just) apparently conceived in a more traditional way by the mother of God! The saddest application of Christian religious misogamy was to turn Mary the Madeline, the *Apostle of the Apostils*, according to Gospel of John, into a prostitute. This was done for one thousand years of Christian history until 1966 when the Catholic Church finally decided to change their mind, again.

These astounding mistranslation problems have plagued proselytizing religions from their inception and are not intended to go away. Of course, this becomes a monumental catastrophe when the religious fundamentalists insistence of strict, and absolute adherence, to the written doctrines which are inconsistent interpretations of the original irrational proposals but an excellent test of their faith and your gullibility if you believe then.

I contend that Buddhist have an impossible task of defending themselves against delusional people who are willing to martyr themselves, if questioned about their delusions - without being martyred themselves.

Thailand is already in peril and any proposals is likely to cause considerable turmoil within Thailand but it is essential that we remind the Roman Catholic, Protestants, Islamic and Mormon and other proselytizing religious traditions that the Buddhist or the Buddhist traditions are not the current or historical problem.

Buddhist Deliberations

It is frustrating for a practicing Buddhist to listen to lay western people describe Buddhist as fixated on suffering and other inconsistent ideas. Of course, it is our own fault that these misinterpretations have persisted for the last sixty years or so. There are many reasons why this has occurred but irrational adherence to strict interpretations of the written dharma is most of the problem.

Siddhartha Gautama, the Buddha, did not do this. The Buddha spontaneously interpreted his wisdom in accordance to the competence of each person or conditions. He spent a good deal of time doing this convincingly and comprehensibly.

Think about what translation actually does. First there is an insight or an idea that is translated into words that are vague at best. Then it is decided that; if you know the definition of the *word* - you actually understand the original insight or idea. Then we translate that *word* into another *word* in another language that has no connection to the original *word* either contemporarily, historically, linguistically, grammatically, conceptually or intellectually. It is then concluded that - if you understand the definitions of this new word you, somehow, understand the original insight or idea.

The word *suffering* is an example of how the western mind completely misunderstands the meaning of the Pali word *Dukkha*. There have been hundreds of thousands of Pali words written about *Dukkha* such that it is unclear whether the Buddhists understand the insight or idea either. The word is a correct word and comprehensible or it isn't; mostly it isn't. Especially when dealing with abstract ideas.

The Buddha did not speak the translated Pāli or Chinese, Japanese, Thai, English, Tibetan or any other known language. Every single word of the Buddha Dharma is a translation from a very formal and stylized oral tradition; which was not how the Buddha spoke to people, either.

We are encouraged to do what the Buddha had to do. First you have to take people from the new language, tradition or culture, get them to practice long enough to understand the original insights or ideas. Then have them discover words in their native language that best capture the original insights and ideas, thoughts and expectations. This, of course, is not considered academically rigorous merely nontraditionally comprehensible.

It is important to remember that, if you depend on words - vague is as good as it gets. It is up to you to take the final steps and figure out the original insight and ideas beyond the words.

Layman Ceremonies of the Buddha Dharma

For the western lay person one of the ways the inspiration of Buddhist thought can be appreciated is in ritual ceremony, which can be utilized for daily practices or insightful meditations. These practices are a key to the unfolding of natural insights into the human condition that the Buddha Siddhartha Gautama explained during his enlightened life. I am proposing that Thai Buddhist Temples adopt this, or some version of this ceremony, into their weekly meditation practices, in English, for all foreign lay people.

Traditionally, Buddhist Ceremony is performed on a clean uncluttered floor with a statue of the Buddha (however stylized or informal) on a raised platform. Mats, rugs, cushions or

meditational seats are considerate with chairs available for those who prefer or need them. The following conditions are also encouraged;

- It is polite to be clean in body and appearance.
- It is considerate to have an open mind.
- It is appropriate to dressed in loose fitting comfortable clothing.
- It is encouraged to bring an offering.
- It is expected that you will be patient with yourself and others.

Formal Ceremony, on special occasions, or daily practice within an assembly, should be led by the most experienced person available and that person is referred to, in this context, as the *Reasonable Voice*.

The Reasonable Voice begins the ceremony by leading all of the participants in performing three prostrations before an altar symbolizing *the Buddha Nature in all of us*, which can include lighting candles, incense and other offerings as an example of the *Gift of Gratitude*.

Ceremony for Honoring the Buddha

(Honoring the historical Buddha as well the Buddha Nature in yourselves and others)

A short contemplation of ten slow breaths - Breathe, in relax, and wait
The recitation should be clear, moderate and lyrical.

The Reasonable Voice

Honoring the Buddha who is kindly bent to ease us,
The Buddha is my inspiration
The Dharma is the teaching
The Sangha is my friend
(Repeat 3 ties)
Posture is the means
Chanting a tool
Meditation is the process
(Repeat 3 ties)
Enlightenment is the beginning
Wisdom is the vehicle
Loving kindness is the objective
(Repeat 3 ties)

Together

I honor the Buddha
I honor the Dharma
I honor the Sangha

I will discipline my body
I will discipline my speech
I will discipline my mind

I will begin
I will learn
I will endure

Taking Sanctuary in the Buddha

(Sanctuary is a choice hidden within your mind)

A short contemplation of ten slow breaths - Breathe, in relax, and wait.

The Reasonable Voice

Remember Sanctuary that is kindly bent to ease us,
The Buddha, as Sanctuary,
The Dharma, as Sanctuary,
The Sangha, as Sanctuary,
(Repeat 3 times)

Together

Please remember me as I remember the Buddha
Please remember me as I remember the Dharma
Please remember me as I remember the Sangha

The Four Noble Truths

(These Truths are a summary of the first words of the Buddha's realization)

Version 1

The Reasonable Voice

Together

Recite the Noble Truths that are kindly bent to ease us,
Before discovering true knowledge
Each new birth brings new suffering
I know the builder
My mind enters Summate and cannot be stirred

I cycled around within my births.
Craving and ego are the builder of my house.
I cannot be imprisoned anymore.
I have arrived in the Peace of Nirvana.

Version 2

Recite the Noble Truths that are kindly bent to ease us,
There is much confusion in this world
Many people choose to be confused
There are other possible solutions
Confusion is no longer necessary

Confusion is a personal choice
I occasionally choose confusion
There is a solution to my confusion
I reside in insightful awareness

Version 3

The Reasonable Voice

Together

Recite the Noble Truths that are kindly bent to ease us,
The Truth is unnoticed
The Truth is not hidden
The Truth eventually catches on
The Truth is enduring

I am lost in the darkness
I can choose to be Truthful
The Truth is unavoidable
I am not separate from the Truth

The Eight fold Path

(Proposals for reasonable choices in the laypersons world)

The Reasonable Voice

Together

Remember the Eight Fold Path that is kindly bent to ease us,
Right Understanding
Right Thought
Right Speech
Right Action
Right Livelihood
Right Effort
Right Mindfulness
Right Concentration

I wish to be free of conditional suffering
I wish to be free from cruelty and ill will
I wish to be free from lying, slander and gossip
I wish to be free from misconduct
I wish to be free from destructive labor
I wish to be free from unwholesome choices
I wish to be free from the materialism of the world
I wish to be free from sensual objects and unwholesome thinking

Honoring the Precepts

(Precepts are a way of honoring yourself and others)

The Reasonable Voice

Together

Honor the Precepts that are kindly bent to ease us,
I do not want to be killed
I do not want to be robbed
I do not want to be deceived

I will not kill
I will not steal
I will not lie

I do not want to be befuddled
I do not want to be unwell
I do not want to be misused
I do not want to be confused

I will not be intoxicated
I will eat consciously
I will be sexually polite
I will be mindful

...

A short contemplation of ten slow breaths - Breathe, in relax, and wait.

Blessings

(Is the willingness to take responsibility)

Blessings are traditional within the Buddhist spiritual community and represent a spiritual bond between the supplicant and *their enlighten selves*. The conditions that establish blessing behavior are loving kindness and deep emotional caring applied with insightful competence. Without these conditions there are no realizations in any direction. To Bless is to be enlightened in that way.

The Reasonable voice

Practice Blessings that are kindly bent to ease us,
Are you asking for a Blessing
(Repeat 3 times)
I am here to give a Blessing
I have received Blessings in the past
I have given Blessing in the past
We are together in this Blessing
I see you and you are not alone
What is the application of this Blessing?

I hear you and you have been heard
(Repeat 3 times)

Together

I am asking for a Blessing
I am here to receive a Blessing
I have received Blessings in the past
I have given Blessing in the past
We are together in this Blessing
I am seen and I am not alone
Examples (can be done silently);
Compassion for my family
Guidance for my health
Wisdom in my choices
Caring for others
Understanding of my actions
Healing my confusions

...

I hear you and I have been heard

The Silent Hand

(Everyone is familiar with the Silent Hand or you wouldn't be here.
And no one has ever explained it - ever, anywhere)

To begin, strike a bell or gong three times.

A period of contemplation of 100 slow breaths - breathe in, relax, and wait

Strike a bell or gong (softly) one time, to finish.

This time could also include recitation of a mantra, spiritual chanting, reading of a Sutra, any other inspirational or spiritual effort.

The Wish-fulfilling Gem of the Buddha Dharma

(Any wish can be fulfilled. This does not make it easy.)

A spiritual wish (or appeal) is an agreement between yourself and the *Insightful Awareness of Buddha Nature* and constitutes an obligation to a Mystical-Spiritual Pilgrimage. Remember - beginning is a lot easier than finishing.

The Reasonable Voice

The Wish-fulfilling Gem is kindly bent to ease us,

Together

I come to the First Awaken Moment as a window into the possible,
I desire the Wish-fulfilling Gem of the Buddha's loving kindness as a guide,
I walk in the Footsteps of the Buddha and take the pilgrimage into the unknown,
I endure the changes that must take place to proceed to the next *Insightful Realization*,
I perceive the Domain of Human Existence is in turmoil,
I am overwhelmed and cannot find my way,
I am distracted by Delusion, Desire and conflicted Emotions,
I see, through the Inner Eye - the clarity of the middle way,
I see, through the Outer Eye - the option of my mind in the *present*,
I see the pilgrimage *itself* as a condition for Enlighten Awareness,
I see the Stir Stick of Reason and use it to discern the Truth,
I see that all Buddhist rely on the Wish-fulfilling Gem and are comforted,
Knowing;

The Wish-fulfilling Gem of the Buddha's loving kindness binds us together regardless of our conflicts.

(Repeat 3 times)

The Heart Sutra

(Samadhi is the objective of all Mystical-Spiritual practices)

The Reasonable Voice

The Prajna Parramatta Sutra is kindly bent to ease us,

Together

Avalokieteshvara Bodhisattva:

When practicing deeply the Prajna Parramatta saw that all five skandhas were empty and was saved from all suffering and distress.

Sariputra:

Form does not differ from emptiness, emptiness does not differ from form the same is true for feelings, perceptions, impulses and consciousness.

Sariputra:

All dharma's are marked with emptiness they do not appear nor disappear, are not tainted nor pure, do not increase nor decrease, therefore in emptiness no eyes, no ears, no nose, no tongue, no body, no mind, no realm of consciousness and no old age and death, and no extinction of them, no ignorance also no extinction of them, and no attainment with nothing to attain.

The Bodhisattva:

Depend on the Prajna Parramatta and is saved from all suffering and distress.

All Buddha's:

Depend on Prajna Parramatta and attain Maha Samadhi insights.

Therefore know Prajna Parramatta is the great bright mantra, the utmost mantra is the supreme mantra which is able to relieve all suffering and distress. So proclaim the Prajna Parramatta mantra proclaim the mantra that says;

“Gate, Gate, Paragate, Parasamgate, Bodhi Soha”

(Repeat 3 times)

Dharma talk, Debate or Discussion
(Traditional time for spontaneous sharing)

Possible topics, which are endless;

The Buddha did not believe in belief, faith, or opinions.

A short contemplation of ten slow breaths - Breathe, in relax, and wait.

Dedication of Intention

(If I am only for myself what am I? If I am not for myself who will be?)

The Reasonable Voice

I dedicate the Practice of Intention that is kindly bent to ease us,

I am guided by the hands of the Buddha

I walk in the footsteps of the Buddha

I am influenced by the mindfulness of the Buddha

Because I am comforted

Together

The Buddha is my friend

The Buddha is my guide

The Buddha is my inspiration

I am able to comfort others

Together

I dedicate the intention of this practice to myself and others with consummate adoration

(Repeat 3 times)

Conclude with performing three prostrations as a *Gift of Realization*.