

STAGE 1

Texts for study and practice—*Interbeing: Fourteen Guidelines for Engaged Buddhism (Third Edition)*; *Breathe! You Are Alive*; *Our Appointment with Life*; *For a Future To Be Possible*; *Old Path White Clouds*; *The Blooming of a Lotus*; *The Heart of the Buddha's Teaching*; *The Peace Treaty*.

Practice—Walking meditation at all times. Sitting meditation: *Shamatha*—calming, stopping, and nourishing; *Vipashyana*—looking deeply. Metta meditation to parents, using selected exercises in *The Blooming of a Lotus*. Bell inviting for Dharma talks, meditation, tea meditation, and meals. Practice Beginning Anew and the Five and the Three Prostrations. Write letters to parents and or other family members. Basic Buddhism: The Four Noble Truths, The Noble Eightfold Path. Chanting: Opening verse, closing verse, *Heart of the Prajñāparamita*, *Refuge Chant*, etc. Singing: *Breathing in*, *Breathing out*; *I Have Arrived*; *Being an Island*; *In, Out*; and other practice songs. Sixty days of mindfulness each year.

Assignments—Write to a friend who knows nothing about the practice and tell him or her about walking meditation in a way that will help him or her. Write about your experience of metta meditation toward your parents. Write a song describing your practice of walking meditation, working meditation, or watering the seeds of happiness. Ask three family members or others with whom you share a lot of time to comment on your strong and weak points. Report your decision on practices to transform your weaknesses.

STAGE 2

Revise and continue to practice Stage 1.

Texts for study and practice—*Transformation and Healing*; *Teachings To Be Given to the Sick*; *Interbeing*; *The Heart of Understanding*.

Practice—Walking meditation: Deepen your own practice and explain walking meditation to others. Sitting meditation: Deepen the practice. Use all the exercises in *The Blooming of a Lotus*. Organize a tea ceremony. Invite the bell in ceremonies. Offer incense. Explain the Peace Treaty and Beginning Anew. Facilitate Dharma discussion. Basic Buddhism: The Six Principles of Harmony, The Seven Ways of Resolving Conflicts, The Four Immeasurable Minds. Check with the three family members or others who commented in Stage 1 about your last year's efforts at transformation, and report on their comments.

Assignments—A song expressing your insight. Write on how you envision the Pure Land in which you wish to be reborn.



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STAGE 3

Revise and continue to practice Stages 1 and 2.

Texts—*A Bhikkhu's Request*; *Thundering Silence*; *Diamond That Cuts Through Illusion*; Preface to the *Anapananasmrti Sutra* by Dhyana Master Tāng Hoi; *History of Vietnamese Buddhism*.

Practice—Sitting meditation: the nine-point metta practice. Report on how you put into practice the nine-point metta meditation practice with those with whom you are in conflict. Ask six people for feedback on your strong and weak points. Report your practices to strengthen the good points and transform the weak points. Organize a Day of Mindfulness. Guide meditations for others. Basic Buddhism: Interdependent Co-Arising, The Seven Factors of Enlightenment.

Assignments—A song expressing your insight. Write on the practice of the Four Noble Truths in your daily life.

STAGE 4

Revise and continue to practice everything in Stages 1, 2 and 3.

Texts—*Samiddhi Sutta*; *Lotus Sutra*; *Fifty Verses*, with reference to the *Thirty Verses* of Vasubandhu; the 39 Mindful Manners from *Stepping Into Freedom*.

Practice—Organize a retreat; give a Dharma talk; Sangha-building; Chanting; conducting ceremonies for the sick and the deceased; Basic Buddhism: the *chittasamskaras*.

Assignments—A song expressing your insight. Write on your experience of practicing Buddhism as someone with non-Buddhist roots. Write on your experience of Sangha-building. Ask three of your co-workers and three family members how you have improved in transforming the weakness they pointed out last year.