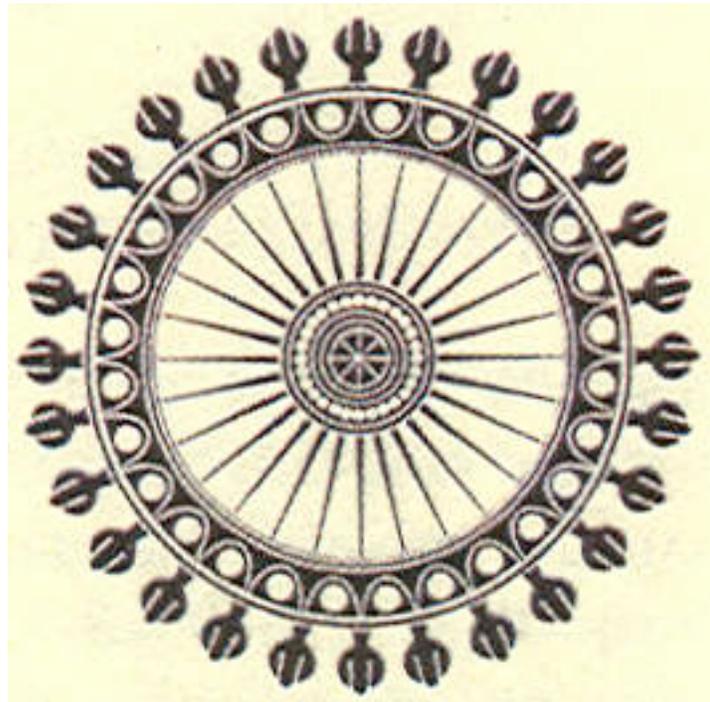


# The Basic Teachings of Buddhism

## Workbook



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## **Chapter 1 : Taking Refuge in the Three Treasures**

1) In what do we take refuge?

2) In your opinion, what does "refuge" mean?

3) The text quotes the Buddha as saying, "You must not depend on other people. You should also make the Dharma your light and depend on the Dharma." In the very next paragraph, there is the statement, "Thus, though we should live through our own efforts, we should always live in accordance (harmony) with the Dharma." How does a person depend on the Dharma and yet depend on oneself? Please give an example from your life of when you succeeded or failed to do both.

4) How has the term "Sangha" been misunderstood? How should we understand it?

5) Why are the Three Treasures called treasures?

6) In the Kyoten Sutra Readings, there is the refuge prayer. What does this prayer tell you about the commitments that come with taking refuge?

**Chapter 2 : Dependant Origination** (p.3 of textbook)

1) Please draw lines between analogous terms applying the law of causation to the life of a tree.

<b>Cause</b>	<b>Fruit</b>
<b>Condition</b>	<b>New Seeds</b>
<b>Effect</b>	<b>Seed</b>
<b>Reward</b>	<b>Nourishment</b>

2) The text mentions that we should "acknowledge that we are the 'cause' in our lives." In your opinion, what is the benefit of always placing yourself in the position of 'cause'?

3) The teaching that "there is nothing existing in an eternal, fixed and unchangeable form" is sometimes frightening to people unprepared to hear it. How can this teaching be interpreted from a more positive perspective?

### **Chapter 3 : The Three Seals of the Dharma** (p.4 of text)

1) The Three Seals are considered 'laws' even though the Buddha did not make them laws. Why are these seals referred to as laws?

2) How are the three seals: (1) All things are transient, (2) All things are nonself, and (3) Nirvana is tranquility, connected to one another? In other words, if I understand the first seal, how does it lead to the second seal and so forth?

3) The third law, Nirvana is tranquility, is explained as being in harmony with the universe. What does this idea of harmony mean to you? Please give an example from your own life.

4) The text mentions a fourth law, "All will be suffering, but it is very much deemphasized in relation to the other three seals." Why do you think this is so?

**Chapter 4 : The Four Noble Truths** (p.6 on text)

1) Early in the text, "pain is inevitable, suffering is optional" is quoted. What does this quote mean to you?

2) Please fill in the blanks.

<b>Truth of Suffering</b>	<b>Truth of the Cause of suffering</b>
<p>Four Stages of Life</p> <p>1) _____</p> <p>2) _____</p> <p>3) _____</p> <p>4) _____</p>	<p>1) The Ten Suchnesses ("Reality of All Existence")</p> <p>2) Twelve Link Chain of Causation</p>
<b>Truth of Extinguishment of Suffering</b>	<b>Truth of the Way that Extinguishes Suffering</b>
<p>Seal of the Three Laws</p> <p>1) _____</p> <p>2) _____</p> <p>3) _____</p>	<p>1) The Eightfold Path</p> <p>2) The Six Perfections (Bodhisattva Way)</p>

3) We can compare the Four Noble Truths to the steps a medical doctor takes toward curing his or her patient of a particular disease (the disease of suffering). With this in mind, please make an example of a diagnosis.

**Truth of Suffering:**

The doctor documents the patient's symptoms, identifies the disease, and knows the stages of the disease's progression if no steps are taken to cure the patient.

**Truth of the Cause of Suffering:**

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**Truth of Extinguishment of Suffering:**

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**Truth of the Way that Extinguishes Suffering:**

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4) As a result of studying the Four Noble Truths, some people have concluded that Buddhism teaches a fundamentally pessimistic or negative outlook on life. After studying the Four Noble Truths for yourself, do you agree or disagree with this conclusion?

**Chapter 5 : The Ten Suchnesses** (p.8 of text)

1) Apply the Ten Suchnesses to a flower, say a rose or tulip. What qualities of the flower would you list under each suchness?

<b>Appearance</b>	
<b>Nature</b>	
<b>Substance</b>	
<b>Potential</b>	
<b>Function</b>	
<b>Cause</b>	
<b>Condition</b>	
<b>Effect</b>	
<b>Reward</b>	
<b>Ultimate Identity</b>	

2) The last of the ten suchnesses is "such an ultimate Identity." In your opinion, how are the other nine suchnesses integrated with one another? In other words, how are they connected?

3) Cause, Condition, Effect and Recompense are the component parts of the Buddha's teaching on Karma. The tenth and final suchness unifies all the other suchnesses. What is the function of the first five suchnesses in relation to the rest?

4) The teaching on the Ten Suchnesses is described as a teaching on the "Reality of All Existence." Based on your own experience, is there more you would add or items you would subtract?

**Chapter 6: The Twelve Causes and Conditions** (p12 of text)

1) What is the purpose of the teaching on the Twelve Causes and Conditions?

2) It is often the case that the Twelve Causes and Conditions is applied to a broad view of suffering, as is the case in the text. However, it can be applied more narrowly too, say to a dispute between neighbors. Pick a specific instance of suffering, either hypothetical or from your own experience, and apply the Twelve Causes and Conditions.

<b>1) Ignorance</b>	
<b>2) Actions</b>	
<b>3) Consciousness</b>	
<b>4) Name &amp; Form</b>	
<b>5) Six Senses</b>	
<b>6) Contact</b>	
<b>7) Sensation</b>	
<b>8) Craving</b>	
<b>9) Clinging</b>	
<b>10) Existence</b>	
<b>11) Birth</b>	
<b>12) Aging &amp; Death</b>	

3) The first link in the Twelve Causes and Conditions is *ignorance*. Generally, when we use the term *ignorance*, we also indicate a subject. For example, we can speak of being ignorant to the plight of soldiers or ignorant of proper pet care practices. In the teaching of the Twelve Causes and Conditions, what are we ignorant of? Please explain your answer.

4) What is the difference between Inner Causation and Outer Causation?

**Chapter 7: The Eightfold Path** (p.17)

1) The text defines the term *right* as "to be in accord with the Buddha's Teaching of Universal Truth." What is your definition of *right* in this context? In other words, what are the parameters of *right*?

2) To understand what is *right*, it is sometimes helpful to understand what is wrong. List an example of a wrong in each box below and explain why you think it is wrong.

1) Wrong View	
2) Wrong Thought	
3) Wrong Speech	
4) Wrong Action	
5) Wrong Livelihood	
6) Wrong Endeavor	
7) Wrong Mindfulness	
8) Wrong Concentration	

3) A classic example of a moral dilemma goes something like this:

Your spouse is gravely ill and will die if he or she does not take the proper medication. You are poor though, and the pharmacy refuses to give you the medication on credit. Time is of the essence if you want to save your spouse.

In this instance, what is an example of Right Action? Remember that you cannot go back in time to correct the mistakes of the past, you can only face the present situation.

4) In your opinion, is the Eightfold Path predicated on securing the greatest amount of good for the greatest number of people? If you were a doctor in the hospital, would you let one patient die in order to save two other patients?

5) What are examples of careers that accord with Right Livelihood? What characteristics do these careers share or exclude?

**Chapter 8: The Six Perfections** (p20 of text)

1) How is the teaching of the Six Perfections different from the teaching of the Eightfold Path? What is the purpose of one versus the other and how do they complement one another?

2) According to the text, the Six Perfections are the foundational practice of bodhisattvas. Imagine you are a bodhisattva working in the world as a waiter or grocer at a local restaurant or supermarket. You are overworked and underpaid. Discuss how you would undertake the practice of the Six Perfections in the boxes below.

<b>Generosity</b>	
<b>Keeping the precepts</b>	
<b>Forbearance</b>	
<b>Effort</b>	
<b>Meditation</b>	
<b>Wisdom</b>	

3) The practice of generosity is often associated with the donation of money, but generosity is not limited to money. In what ways can an individual practice generosity without donating money?

4) The dictionary definition of forbearance is "to refrain or abstain from." How is the Buddhist idea of forbearance as taught in the Six Perfections different from the dictionary definition of forbearance?

5) The text states that the Six Perfections are linked to one another and create "a reinforced circle of action." In your opinion, how does one perfection lead to another?

6) How does an individual practice wisdom?



**Chapter 10: The Three Thousand Realms in One Mind** (p.26 of text)

1) The text states that the Six Realms, "can be representative of mental realms," meaning that individuals can pass through these realms without having to undergo physical death and rebirth. In each of the boxes below, chart an individual's progression through these realms in the course of a single day. Draw from your own experiences.

Human Beings	
Heaven	
Demons	
Hell	
Hungry Spirits	
Animals	

2) What are some differences between the Four Heavenly Realms? In other words, what are the differences between a shravaka, pratyekabuddha, bodhisattva, and buddha?

3) How is the figure 3,000 created in the Three Thousand Realms in One Mind?

4) What is the meaning behind Nichiren's statement that, "Unless people attain enlightenment through the teaching of the Three-Thousand Realms in One Thought, their attaining nirvana and becoming buddhas will be little more than a mere name?" Why is attaining nirvana and becoming buddhas apart from the teaching of the Three-Thousand Realms in One Thought, illegitimate and in name only?