

Week 2: Bodhisattva Vow

Lesson Time: 1 hour

Instructors Required: In-person: 2, Virtual: 1- 2

Supplies:

- Photos of Bodhisattva figures: Manjushri, Avalokitesvara, Samantabhadra, Jizo
- Small bell and striker
- Bodhisattva Vow chant cards

Learning Objectives

- *Create safe, fun and participatory environment*
- *Introduce basic concept of Bodhisattva, vow, and how the two interrelate*
- *Connect Bodhisattva vow concept to youth's day to day life*
- *Elicit examples of giving, generosity and service from youth*
- *Connect examples with opportunities to relieve suffering and perform actions for the benefit others*
- *Relate Bodhisattva concept and it's relation to interconnection to get participants thinking about next week's topic.*

Outline

I. Gather & Morning Message	20 mins
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Morning Message• Alter Practice/Gassho and Bow• Fun & Games	
II. Dharma Lesson - Bodhisattva Vow	15 mins
III. Movement & Meditation	5 mins
IV. Main Activity - Breath and Bell	15 mins
V. Closing Chant	5 mins

Gather & Morning Messag

Begin day with informal questions to get participants talking.

- Ask participants what they remember about the Buddha from the previous week.
- Ask participants if they remember what happened while Buddha sat under Bodhi tree.
- Ask participants if they remember the word enlightenment. Ask what the word means to participants.
- Ask participants what part of the Buddha's life was the most memorable.
- Ask participants if they thought about setting up a home alter.

Alter Practice/Gassho and Bow

Refer participants to the alter. Provide an example of Gassho and bow
Instruct participants individually to Gassho and bow at alter.

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Fun and Games: Fortunately/Unfortunately

Goal of Activity: Participants explore different ways to think about situations by using the cue words "fortunately" and "unfortunately" to indicate a change in the plot or change in circumstances. The game is a fun way to demonstrate casualty and karma.

Explain vocabulary to participants:

- **Fortunately** = Receiving something unexpectedly good; for our game it is a word that foreshadows something positive
- **Unfortunately** = Receiving something unexpectedly bad or unwanted; for our game it is a word that foreshadows something negative

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Instructions: Decide on a main character. Select a name, gender, age, where do they live.

Example: Farmer in today's story. They leads a very confusing life. Just as something lucky happens it surprisingly changes to something seemingly unlucky.

- The story begins when facilitator makes a statement about the main character.
- The story will pass to the first player who adds a sentence beginning with "Unfortunately."
- The second player then adds to the story with a sentence beginning with "Fortunately..."
- As the pattern continues, the story becomes more and more ridiculous.

Dharma Lesson: Bodhisattva Vow

Facilitators are encouraged to develop Dharma lesson content in a manner that most resonates with them.

Suggested talking points

- Discuss samsara and nirvana
- Define Bodhisattva as enlightened being who vows to stay in samasara until all beings are enlightened
- Provide examples of Bodhisattva figures (Manjushri, Avalokitesvara, Samantabhadra, Jizo, etc.)
- Provide examples of Bodhisattva activity (giving, lovingkindness, compassion, effort, etc.)
- Review the closing chant. Illustrate how each line in the chant are examples of Bodhisattva behavior.

Facilitators are welcome to refer to photos of Bodhisattva figures in supplies bin.

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Movement & Meditation

Take participants through a series of mindful movement postures as a way to give participants an opportunity to move around, stretch, and explore mindfulness.

Suggested movements with instruction:

One: Begin with your feet slightly apart, arms at your sides. Breathing in, keep your elbows straight as you lift your arms in front of you until they're shoulder level, horizontal to the ground. Breathing out, bring your arms down again to your sides. Repeat the movement three more times.

Two: Begin with your arms at your sides. Breathing in, lift your arms in front of you. In one continuous movement, bring them all the way up, stretching them above your head. Touch the sky! This movement can be done with your palms either facing inward toward each other, or facing forward as you reach up. Breathing out, bring your arms slowly down again to your sides. Repeat three more times.

Three: Breathing in, lift your arms out to the side, palms up, until your arms are shoulder level, parallel to the ground. Breathing out, touch your shoulders with your fingertips, keeping your upper arms horizontal. Breathing in, open your arms, extending them until they're stretched out to a horizontal position again. Breathing out, bend your elbows, bringing your fingertips back to your shoulders.

Four: When you breathe in, you are like a flower opening to the warm sun. Breathing out, the flower closes. From this position with your fingertips on your shoulders, do the movement three more times. Then lower your arms back down to your sides.

Five: In this exercise, you make a large circle with your arms. Breathing in, bring your arms straight down in front of you, centered between your hips, palms together. Raise your arms up and separate your hands so your arms can stretch up over your head. Breathing out, continue the circle, arms circling back, until your fingers point toward the ground. Breathing in, lift your arms back and reverse the circle. Breathe out as you bring your palms together and your arms come down in front of you. Repeat three more times.

Six: Start by putting your hands on the sides of your waist. As you do this exercise, keep your legs straight but not locked, and your head centered over your body. Breathing in, bend forward at the waist and begin to make a circle with your upper body. When you're halfway through the circle, your upper body leaning back, breathe out and complete the circle, ending with your head in front of you while you're still bent at the waist. On your next in-breath, begin a circle in the opposite direction. On your out-breath, complete the circle. Repeat the series of movements three more times.

Seven: Begin with your hands on our waist, heels together, feet turned out to form a V, so that they make a 90 degree angle. Breathing in, rise up on your toes. Breathing out, stay on your toes, keep your back straight, and bend your knees. Keeping your upper body centered, go down as low as you comfortably can maintain your balance. Breathing in, straighten your knees and come all the way up, still standing on your toes. From this position, repeat the movement three more times, remembering to breathe slowly and deeply.

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Activity: Breath and the Bell

In this activity, participants explore mindful breathing and the practice of simply paying attention to one simple sound.

The Bell:

Once participants are gathered, ring the bell, allow ample time for the bell sound to resonate; listen quietly.

Hold up the bell and ask, "Does anyone know what this is? Have you seen this before?" allow time for answers.

- Explain: "When we listen to the sound of the bell, we don't talk, or think, or do anything because the sound of the bell is like the voice of Buddha or someone who loves us very much and wants us to be happy and peaceful. The sound of the bell is calling us home to our heart and ourselves so we must listen very closely!"
- Continue: "When we hear the sound of the bell, we stop what we are doing, and just breathe. We have a chance to rest, to take a breath, to enjoy ourselves. We are aware only of our in-breath and our out-breath."

The Breath:

- "Now let's think about our breath. Close your eyes gently and breathe in slowly.
- "Now put your hands on your belly. What happens when you breathe in? Can you feel your belly rise and fill up? What happens when you breathe out?" Take time for one or two slow breath cycles."
- "How do you feel when you pay attention to your breath?"
- "Paying close attention to your breath can help you relax and feel calm, it can help you notice how you are feeling."
- "Sometimes it can help to say some special words or phrases; like 'May all people be happy and free'"
- Breathing in you can say, "Listen, Listen"
- Breathing out you can say, "This sound is bringing me back to my home." "Let's try it. I will ring the bell and you notice your breath"
- Ring bell, lead gatha until the sound of the bell diminishes.
- "What did you think? How did that feel? Did you notice your breath?"
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Closing:

Inform participants that you will ring the bell momentarily to bring the session to a close. Ring bell.

End sessions with questions and feedback eliciting participants to share their thoughts and feelings about the experience.

Virtual Participant Consideration

Ensure virtual participants can clearly hear bell and see inperson participants. In addition, ensure to call on virtual participants with questions or requests for examples throughout activity to ensure they are fully included in activity.

Closing Chant

Pass out closing chant to participants. Show participants how you plan to put your hands together and chant the four line Bodhisattva Vow. Go through once on your own. For the second time, invite participants to follow along.

May we develop a deeper understanding in order to live peacefully with people, animals, plants and minerals.
May we develop compassion in order to protect the lives of people, animals, plants and minerals.