

THE OLD MITRA STUDY COURSE

Syllabus

Year 1

1 The Noble Eight-fold Path

1. The Nature of Existence: Right Understanding.
2. Reason and Emotion in the Spiritual Life: Right Resolve.
3. The Ideal of Human Communication: Right Speech.
4. The Principles of Ethics: Right Action.
5. The Ideal Society: Right Livelihood.
6. The Conscious Evolution of Man: Right Effort.
7. Levels of Awareness: Right Mindfulness.
8. Samadhi, the Higher Consciousness: Right Meditation.

2 Selected Suttas from the Pali Canon

1. The Buddha-vagga (section 14 of the Dhammapada).
2. The Kalama Sutta (3.65 from the Anguttara Nikaya).
3. The Mangala Sutta (2.4 from the Sutta Nipata).
4. The Bahiya Sutta (1.10 from the Udana).
5. The Karaniyametta Sutta (1.8 from the Sutta Nipata).
6. The Meghiya Sutta (4.1 from the Udana).
7. The Kosambiya Sutta (Sutta 48 from the Majjhima Nikaya).
8. The Culagosinga Sutta (Sutta 31 from the Majjhima Nikaya).

3 The Higher Evolution

1. Evolution: Lower and Higher.
2. The Axial Age and the Emergence of the New Man.
3. Art and the Spiritual Life.
4. Buddhism as the Path of the Higher Evolution.
5. Stream Entry: The Point of No Return.
6. Buddhism Nietzsche and The Superman.
7. From Alienated Awareness To Integrated Awareness.
8. Is a Guru Necessary?

Year 2

4 Buddhism for the Modern World: the Vision of the FWBO

1. A Method of Personal Development.
2. A Vision of Human Existence.
3. The Nucleus of a New Society.
4. A Blueprint for a New World.
5. The Individual and the World Today.
6. Western Buddhist and Eastern Buddhism.
7. Commitment and Spiritual Community.
8. The Five Pillars of the FWBO.

5 Emphases and Restatements of Traditional Buddhist Teachings

1. The Unity of Buddhism. (The material for this is Chapter Two of Subhuti's book 'Sangharakshita, A New Voice in the Buddhist Tradition.')
2. Levels of Going for Refuge.
3. Dimensions of Going for Refuge.
4. Mind: Reactive and Creative.
5. The Taste of Freedom.
6. The Path of Regular Steps and the Path of Irregular Steps.
7. The Meaning of Friendship in Buddhism.
8. Karma and Rebirth.

6 Aspects of the Bodhisattva Ideal

1. The Origin and Development of the Bodhisattva Ideal.
2. The Awakening of the Bodhi Heart.
3. The Bodhisattva Vow.
4. Altruism and Individualism in the Spiritual Life.
5. 'Masculinity' and 'Femininity' in the Spiritual Life.
6. On the Threshold of Enlightenment.
7. The Bodhisattva Hierarchy.
8. The Buddha and the Bodhisattva: Eternity and Time.

Year 3

7 Parables, Myths and Symbols of Mahayana Buddhism in the White Lotus Sutra

1. The Universal Perspective of Mahayana Buddhism.
2. The Drama of Cosmic Enlightenment.
3. Transcending the Human Predicament.
4. The Myth of the Return Journey.
5. Symbols of Life and Growth.
6. The Five Element Symbolism and the Stupa.
7. The Jewel in the Lotus.
8. The Archetype of the Divine Healer.

8 Transformation of Self and World in the Sutra of Golden Light

1. The Growth of a Mahayana Sutra.
2. The Bodhisattva's Dream.
3. The Spiritual Significance of Confession.
4. The Protectors of the Dharma.
5. Buddhism and Culture.
6. Nature, Man and Enlightenment.
7. Buddhist Economics.
8. The Moral Order and its Upholders.

9 The Inconceivable Emancipation, themes from the Vimalakirti Nirdeśa

1. The Magic of a Mahayana Sutra.
2. Building the Buddha Land.
3. On Being All Things to All men.
4. The Transcendental Critique of Religion.
5. History Versus Myth in Man's Quest for Meaning.
6. The Way of Non-duality.
7. The Mystery of Human Communication.
8. The Four Great Reliances: Criteria for the Spiritual Life.

10 Creative Symbols of the Tantric Path to Enlightenment.

1. The Symbolism of the Tibetan Wheel of Life.
2. The Tantric Symbolism of the Stupa.
3. The Symbolism of the Sacred Thunderbolt or Diamond Sceptre of the Lamas.
4. The Symbolism of the Cosmic Refuge Tree and the Archetypal Guru.
5. The Symbolism of the Cremation ground and the Celestial maidens.
6. The Symbolism of Offerings and Self-sacrifice.
7. The Symbolism of Colours and Mantric Sound.
8. The Symbolism of the Five Buddhas, 'Male' and 'Female'.