

Rational Buddhism:
Antidotes to the Eleven Cardinal Fallacies Presented in Elliot D. Cohen's
The New Rational Therapy
From Buddha and Some of His Greatest Disciples

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Abstract: This article shows how Buddhist philosophies are consistent with the rational counseling approach of Logic-Based Therapy (LBT), as presented in Elliot D. Cohen's book, *The New Rational Therapy: Thinking Your Way To Serenity, Success, and Profound Happiness*. It presents many Buddhist insights as pathways to the "transcendent" or guiding virtues of LBT, and, accordingly, as philosophical antidotes to its eleven "cardinal fallacies." It therefore helpfully adds to the repertoire of philosophies that can be used by LBT counselors in helping counselees address their problems of living.

1. Metaphysical Security (Security about reality) vs. Demanding Perfection

Antidote to Demanding Perfectionism:

If you want spiritual security, let go of everything. (Zen Master Katagiri-Roshi)

*The New Rational Therapy** is about using philosophy as a form of therapy. Although Katagiri's advice on how to obtain metaphysical security includes not holding on too tightly to ideas, concepts, and belief systems, Buddhism is not, as many have supposed, anti-intellectual. Philosopher of religion John Hick makes this point:

Zen Buddhism is often thought of in the West as a kind of anti-philosophy, a matter of living in the present moment of experience without any intellectual framework or presuppositions. Zen does indeed lead to a new quality of consciousness in which the world is experienced directly and not through a grid of culturally created concepts. But behind the Zen practice of meditation there lies a profound and subtle philosophy developed over many centuries and stemming ultimately from the spiritual insights of the Buddha two and half thousand years ago.¹

* Elliot D. Cohen, *The New Rational Therapy: Thinking Your Way to Serenity, Success, and Profound Happiness* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2006).

Buddhism is a judicious blend of clear, deep thinking, *when appropriate*, and just “being there” not actively thinking, when *that* is appropriate. Buddhism is not anti-thinking, its anti-bullshit thinking. It is pro-rational, positive, helpful, compassionate thinking.

What Katagiri is suggesting is a kind of meditation that is the oldest and most basic in Buddhism. It was employed by the Buddha himself, and is still used by millions of Buddhists today. You focus on your breathing. When you realize you are lost in thoughts, you gently bring your attention back to your breathing. It is simple, but extremely effective. Meditation has been shown to help with a great number of physiological and psychological problems, including that of *perfectionism*.

In a 2012 study titled “Investigation of Buddhist Beliefs and Practices and Impact on Levels of Maladaptive Perfectionism,” the authors reported that,

Providers in the mental health community have long considered the perfectionistic personality to be resistant to traditional psychological methods. In the current study, the practice of Buddhism is evaluated as an alternative approach to the treatment of clinical perfectionism. Results suggest that the practice of meditation may be responsible for the significantly diminished need for perfection.²

Meditation involves not getting caught up in thoughts about the past and future, returning our attention to what is happening in the present moment, and *accepting what is*. Demanding that things be different, not to mention perfect, is clearly *not* accepting things as they are. Once we have accepted what is actually the case, moment by moment, Buddhism has no problem with aiming for perfection. On the contrary, Buddhism promotes *Nirvana* as a goal to be obtained through ethical living, intellectual study and meditation, but with the recognition that this goal can only be experienced in the present moment, by accepting what is. We are encouraged to work hard towards our psycho-spiritual liberation without demanding it.

Nirvana is the ultimate metaphysical security in the Buddhist context. This is a state of mind reached when one does not *depend* on anything: not things, not people, not ideas. When thinking about the future or the past one does not get *caught up* in those thoughts. How do you know when you are dependent or caught up? You lose your mental composure, your calmness, concentration and compassion. You lose your balance.

When we imagine what it might be like to let go of everything, we may be afraid to be so vulnerable. But that's just paranoia. When you are actually in that state, *by definition* you're not holding on to anything, including anxiety.

In the state of Nirvana we can choose to actively think or choose not to, but in either case, we aren't grasping things or ideas with our thoughts. This actually results in better thinking, since we do not get stuck on ideas, and thus limit our options. Another way to put it is that in the state of Nirvana “we” don't think, because the sense of a separate self is gone, but thinking emerges naturally, spontaneously.

Zen employs various methods to give students a taste of this state of mind. One such strategy is the Koan, a conundrum of sorts, a question to which no *conceptual* answer can be given. The “correct

answer" is a state of consciousness free from attachment to any ideas. Two famous koans are "What is the sound of one hand clapping?" and "What was your original face before your parents were born?" The student goes off on his or her own for days, weeks, even longer sometimes and tries to answer the koan. Any answer the student gives that is not backed up by the state of consciousness in question, is rejected by the teacher. On the other hand, if the student racks her brain until it wears itself out trying to solve the koan, and she finds herself in the appropriate state of mind, anything she says or does as the "answer" will be accepted. I once asked Katagiri-Roshi to give me a Koan to work on. Katagiri suggested I meditate on the koan "think not-thinking". In Zen and Western thought, the Japanese Buddhist scholar Masao Abe explains;

Zen does not establish itself on the basis of either thinking or not-thinking, but rather non-thinking, which is beyond both thinking and not-thinking...and thus can express itself without hindrance through both thinking and not-thinking, as the situation requires.³

As I understand it, the difference between not-thinking and non-thinking is that the former is associated with a strong sense of "I" as in "I am not thinking about anything right now." Sort of, *I think not therefore I am*. Non-thinking, on the other hand, is a state of consciousness that is prior to a sense of "I" and thus prior to both thinking and non-thinking. Subsequently, it can, as Masao, express itself freely.

2. Courage (in the Face of Evil) vs. Awfulizing

Antidote to Awfulizing:

Consider your enemies as your teachers. (Dalai Lama)

In the 8th century c.e., Padmasambhava, a great Tibetan monk and philosopher, made this prophecy: "When the iron bird flies and horses run on wheels, the Tibetan people will be scattered like ants across the face of the earth."⁴ This came true in 1949 when the Chinese army invaded Tibet, and, over the next few years, caused the destruction of thousands of monasteries and related Tibetan casualties. The Dalai Lama and nearly 100,000 Tibetans escaped to India.

Rather than condemn the Chinese, the Dalai Lama has said on many occasions that our enemies are our *best teachers*, because they give us the opportunity to learn the spiritual values of tolerance and patience. Also, many people have argued that, without the Chinese invasion, the Tibetan teachings would not be nearly as widespread as they are.

In the 25 years or so that I have followed the life and work of the Dalai Lama, reading virtually all of his books and listening to hundreds of his lectures, I have never heard him express hatred for the Chinese. On the contrary, he has always encouraged non-violent protest, compassion, and understanding as the best way to deal with the situation. This attitude reflects the Buddhist teaching of interdependence. Compassion and non-violence make sense because we are so interconnected in terms of commerce, environmental concerns, etc., that working together on our many problems as a species is the only sensible approach.

The communists kicked Zen Master Thich Nhat Hanh out of his home country of Viet Nam in 1973. Like the Dalai Lama, he has taken a negative situation and made something very positive out of it. He began a community while in exile in France, which is thriving today and is the center of the now world-wide Order of Interbeing, a new Buddhist order that Nhat Hanh started in 1966. Like the Dalai Lama, he teaches the importance of seeing the interconnectedness of all beings, including the communists that still prevent his returning home to live.

One of the most striking examples of courage in the face of evil is the story, told many times by the Dalai Lama, of a monk who visited him after his release from a Chinese prison. He said he was tortured constantly, over a period of many years. He told the Dalai Lama that during that time his greatest fear was that he would lose his compassion for his captors. He refrained from the fallacy of awfulizing-acting as if things couldn't be worse. Of course, they arguably could have been; he might have been executed. The general view of Buddhism on suffering is in agreement with the attitude "If it doesn't kill you it will make you stronger" with the important understanding that this is true only if you handle it well, with compassion-not bitterness and hatred. Also, most Buddhists believe in rebirth so *even if it does kill you* it will make you stronger-the next time around!

3. Respect (for self, others and the universe) vs. Damnation

Antidote to Damnation:

Realize that you and all others have the enlightened mind already -Buddha

In 1990, the Dalai Lama met with a small group of psychologists to discuss how emotions affect one's health. He was told that it was common for Westerners to feel that they were basically evil, and that they have a strong sense of self-hatred and great difficulty seeing their good aspects. They are constantly caught up in negative thinking. They feel guilty, deserving of whatever bad happens and undeserving of happiness. Sometimes this leads to depression, and sometimes to aggression towards others or themselves. The Dalai Lama was very surprised at this, and responded, "I thought I had a very good acquaintance with the mind, but now I feel quite ignorant. I find this very, very strange, and I wonder where it comes from. Are you all suffering from nervous disorders?"⁵ He then asked "Is this self-contempt or lack of compassion for oneself something that arises now and then as a result of specific circumstances, or is it a matter of temperament, an enduring mental trait?" Sharon Salzberg, a psychologist and Buddhist teacher answered in the affirmative: "I think it is an enduring mental trait that is very commonly found in Western Culture."⁶

When the discussion turned to the causes of low self-esteem, the Dalai Lama suggested that

Perhaps it arises from an absolutist mentality. That is, if something is somewhat negative then one labels it as absolutely negative; and if something is rather good, it is seen as absolutely good, ignoring all the subtle variations in between. That might give rise to this mental dysfunction.⁷

Indeed it might. And it sounds a lot like awfulizing, the fallacy just discussed.

When people first start a meditation practice, negative emotions that usually stay repressed on an unconscious level often come bubbling up to the surface and manifest in their consciousness. Since they weren't aware of these feelings prior to this, they think that meditation *caused* these emotions. When my brother-in-law first attempted meditation, he complained to me that it made him really angry.

This can be disconcerting, especially to people who think of themselves as "spiritual," easygoing, kind-hearted, and generous, only to find out they are devious, tense, greedy and mean-spirited under their carefully-crafted countenance of loving serenity. I can personally attest to this fact.

Although this is a shock in the beginning, and may lead some to quit the practice, studies of long-term meditators show that they eventually come to accept their neuroses and not react to them. But for the vast majority of people who meditate, negative thoughts and emotions are part of their daily psychological situation; they manifest less often and not as intensely as before, but they still come up. Buddhist practice is to not "go there" when they do.

Some prominent Buddhist scholars, such as Stephen Batchelor (author of *Living With the Devil*) point out that according to the scriptures, Mara, the personification of evil, continued to appear in Buddha's life even after he had been vanquished on the morning of Buddha's enlightenment. They take this to mean that even though negative thoughts and emotions still came up on occasion, Buddha didn't engage them; as a result of his mental training he was able to just let them go.

This, as I understand it, is the goal of Buddhist practice, not some idea of perfection where no negativity exists. When we have trained our minds sufficiently we won't react to what comes up, we won't get angry at ourselves for being angry, or fear our fear, or judge ourselves for being judgmental, etc. We will have sympathy for the devil.

Buddhism teaches that from an absolute point of view, we are perfect the way we are and that life is perfect the way it is. If you are a fool you are a perfect fool. It's okay if sometimes you are a neurotic, whining, self-centered pain in the ass. We don't need to feel bad about ourselves. That would just add to the problem. Thinking you're a piece of crap is just more ego. It's a negative ego trip. Your focus is on yourself. So from an absolute point of view, Buddhism says accept yourself as you are. But from a relative point of view, we can improve our lives. So it makes sense to do our best to change in a more positive direction, for our own sake and that of others. It's a paradox, but so what? It makes sense!

But Buddhism goes beyond just saying that we are okay as we are. At the moment of his deepest spiritual realization, Buddha said "Wonder of Wonders! All beings have the enlightened mind!"

Buddha realized that all beings have, as their most basic nature, the mind of enlightenment, which is a mind of love, of peace, of a deep happiness independent of circumstances. Just as the clear blue sky is often cloudy, sometimes filled with rain and violent thunderstorms, this mind of enlightenment is often covered by erroneous thinking and negative emotions. Buddhism encourages us to accept the weather, both physical and psychological, as part of the wonder and beauty of life, but to become aware that our true nature, like the clear blue sky, can be concealed by the weather, but is ultimately free of it.

My teacher Katagiri-Roshi used to say to us "You are Buddha." He meant that our highest self is equal

to that of the historical Buddha.

In the Tibetan Buddhism practice of deity yoga, the meditator visualizes himself or herself in the form of a deity. The Dalai Lama explains:

Among the principle features of deity yoga meditation is the cultivation of the 'pride' or self-identity of a divine being, in order to overcome our feelings and perception of ordinariness. I think this helps us to elicit to an even greater extent the potential for enlightenment from within us.⁸

It can be difficult to make sense of this "divine pride" approach given the teaching of no-self in Buddhism. Part of the problem is that the concepts of no-self, selflessness, and egolessness (all meaning the same thing) are tied up with another difficult and often misunderstood concept, that of emptiness. It's important to know that in Buddhism, the term emptiness doesn't imply a vacuum, it means that nothing exists by itself: everything and everyone is empty of a separate "self," but precisely because of this, they are "full" of, and intimately connected to, all other beings. Zen Master Thich Nhat Hanh calls this Interbeing.

Clarifying what the term ego and self mean in Buddhism, the Dalai Lama writes

In Tibetan Buddhism one can ask "Does a buddha have self-interest or only concern for other people?" The answer-and this is a crucial point-is that the Buddha has both...One sense of self-identity is negative in that it arises from self-importance, arrogance...another sense of self-identity, or ego...would be stronger in Bodhisattvas than in ordinary people; for Bodhisattvas are beings who are prepared to sacrifice their own welfare for the benefit of others..For this, you need extraordinary willpower, and you develop that with strong self-confidence.⁹

So, when you're feeling down, remember all of this and say (to yourself) "Holy Shitballs! I am awesome! I am Buddha! Just as I am! And if you also consider that everyone else is in the same situation, you will treat them with tremendous respect, regardless of how they treat you. Even your so-called "enemies."

The Dalai Lama, who has had many great Tibetan teachers throughout his long life, says that Mao Tse Tung, the man who orchestrated the destruction of Tibet and the death of hundreds of thousands, was his greatest teacher. Why? Because he taught the Dalai Lama patience. Someone who treats you well is not going to challenge your spiritual strength, your ability to accept suffering with equanimity and not hate others for what they do to you. Buddhism suggests that we be grateful for the opportunity to grow when others abuse us. Buddhism is quite good at seeing the silver lining in any situation.

4. Authenticity (Being your Own Person) vs. Jumping on the Bandwagon

Antidote to Jumping on the Bandwagon:

Work out your own salvation with diligence. -Buddha

Buddha studied with the greatest Hindu teachers of his day before finding his own path. Some consider

him the founder of a new religion, some as having reformed an existing one-Hinduism. In either case, I think it's fair to say that Buddha was a maverick. In the final analysis, he came to his own conclusions, based on his personal experience, his reason, and his insight. He was certainly influenced by the teachers he studied with, and the ancient Hindu scriptures that had been part of his upbringing, but he seems to have accepted some of those teachings, reformulated others, and clearly disagreed with some crucial points, such as the existence of an individual "self" in the sense that Hinduism was using that word. His approach was unique. Not surprisingly then, he encouraged us to follow our own way; he said "work out your own salvation with diligence."¹⁰

It is true that in his first and most fundamental teachings, the Four Noble Truths, Buddha explains why we suffer psychologically and what we can do about it. In the Eight-fold path (which is the Fourth Noble Truth), Buddha laid out a way to "unshakeable happiness" consisting of eight steps. He must have believed there was some common ground in people's approaches to spirituality, such as compassion, clear thinking, and insight into the nature of reality, in order to give these general suggestions. But part of what makes the Buddhist scriptures intriguing is that the advice he gave to his disciples was custom-made for them individually. His teachings may seem unclear and even contradictory at times, because of this approach. After his death, this led to many different interpretations of his teachings.

For example, historically, many Zen Buddhists teachers have tended to discourage thinking, even rational thinking, as being problematic. Ancient Chinese and Japanese Zen masters believed that their students were caught up in what Buddha called "a thicket of views, a wilderness of views, a contortion of views, a writhing of views, a fetter of views...accompanied by suffering, distress, despair..."¹¹ They employed various tactics, such as the koans mentioned earlier, to help their students break out of their mental morass. For example, when asked a perfectly sincere question about Buddhism, the teacher would sometimes give a baffling response. When asked "What is the essential meaning of Buddhism?" one Zen master said "The cypress tree in the courtyard." another offered "Three pounds of flax." Thich Nhat Hanh has suggested that the first exchange probably happened near a cypress tree and the second while the master was weighing flax.¹² Sometimes the master would shout at the student, or hit him or her with his staff. All of these are strategies to break through the conceptual barrier the student has erected, that keeps him from the direct experience of life.

On the other hand, Tibetan Buddhists encourage rational thinking. The Dalai Lama has said "Buddhism has to be followed through reason and not taken for granted based on faith...don't accept a teaching that goes against reasoning. Know the ultimate goal and purpose of the teaching."¹³

Some Theravadin Buddhists, who base their beliefs on the earliest scriptures, consider much of the Mahayana teachings (including those of Zen and Tibetan Buddhism) as made-up long after Buddha's death and unnecessary, if not misleading.

Some Mahayanists think of Theravadins in a derogatory way, as not having the deepest teachings. Mahayana means "Big boat" as opposed to those who the Mahayana felt were too narrow in their thinking and called the "Hinayana;" the *little boat* people.

The differences, in terms of emphasis, interpretation, and practices between the major schools of Buddhism are notable, and yet all have produced remarkable individuals.

Personally, I see football as a good metaphor for the spiritual life. Each of us is like a quarterback, given the opportunity to call our own plays, and due to the laws of cause and effect, we are the captains of our own destiny. There are obstacles of all kinds as we make our way and circumstances are constantly shifting, sometimes dramatically and without warning. We have to adjust our thinking accordingly, based on things as they actually are. We can't afford to worry about what happened on the last play, or whether we will win the game or not. We need to keep our focus on the present, without losing sight of the goal (line). Of course, nothing is guaranteed, in football or in life, so we must do our best and not be overly concerned about the results.

It may feel safer to go with the crowd, but it will not result in real safety or true happiness. When you are your own person you feel good about your life, even when you screw up. In the end, you can “die with a smile on your face.”

5. Temperance (Self-control) vs. *Can'tstipation*

Antidote to *Can'tstipation*:

Recognize that your level of can'tstipation is inversely proportional to your spiritual development.
(Buddha, Dalai Lama, Thich Nhat Hanh)

Buddhism takes the position that ultimately we have free will, despite being heavily conditioned by our past actions. Our past strongly inclines us to think, feel, and act in certain ways, but without fully determining what we do. This is because our deepest mind, our highest self, the mind of enlightenment, is also known as “the unconditioned,” and to the extent that we manifest that unconditioned consciousness, we are psychologically free. While in practice this is difficult, theoretically we can fully manifest our highest self at any time as it is always with us.

Once a Buddhist practitioner accepts this logic, at least tentatively, he or she can begin to exercise self-control over negative emotions, thought processes, and behavior with some confidence.

Buddha believed that in reality we are deeply interconnected with nature and all other beings, but that we suffer from the delusion that we are separate, isolated, alienated beings. He taught that this self-delusion resulted in greed and anger. These three; greed, anger and self-delusion, are known as *The Three Poisons* in Buddhism. Fortunately, there are antidotes available to us. The Dalai Lama advises:

To counter anger, you should cultivate love and compassion. To counter strong attachment to an object, you should cultivate thoughts about the impurity of that object, its undesirable nature, and so on. To counter one's arrogance or pride, you need to reflect upon shortcomings in you that can give rise to a sense of humility.¹⁴

But before we can apply any antidotes, we have to become aware that we are being poisoned, and what kind of poison we are dealing with. This awareness is difficult to come by because we live in a culture that *encourages* self-delusion, that glorifies the idea of a separate “self” existing independently of the

natural world and other people. The human race as a whole (with a few notable exceptions) is on a huge ego trip, so caught up in its greed for consumer goods, and so angry when it can't get them, that it is willing to destroy parts of itself and its home, the planet. In other words, we live in an insane society. Buddhism promotes sanity.

So, the first strategy is *mindfulness*: becoming aware of what's going on in your own body/mind and your environment. This calms down mental chatter, what Buddhists call the "monkey mind," and enables us to see negative emotions and thoughts early in their development and intervene before they get out of control. Then, having become aware of their existence, we can apply the appropriate antidote.

Mindfulness is practiced not just in the context of formal meditation, but during everyday life. According to Buddhist psychology, all thoughts and emotions, positive and negative, exist in seed form in our subconscious mind, what Thich Nhat Hanh calls "the basement." The circumstances and vicissitudes of life cause these seeds to manifest in "the living room." If someone calls you a shithead, for example, anger might arise and must be dealt with skillfully in order to nip it in the bud. Nhat Hanh suggests that one "embrace" the negative emotion as a mother would a fussy baby, rather than repress it or act it out. He says that doing so will pacify it and return it to the basement, but in a less potent form. When it rises again, it will be easier to deal with.¹⁵ The Dalai lama emphasizes that:

It is very important to cultivate mindfulness right from the beginning. Otherwise, if you let negative emotions and thoughts arise inside you without any sense of restraint, without any mindfulness of their negativity, then in a sense you are giving them free reign. They can then develop to the point where there is simply no way to counter them.¹⁶

But of course, some do get through, and this is where the next line of defense, *reasoning*, comes in. Analytical meditation is similar to the *cognitive therapy* of Western psychology, the unique formulation advanced in the *New Rational Therapy* being a good example of that approach. In Tibetan Buddhism the first step in applying analytical meditation to anger is to consider how damaging anger is to our health, both mental and physical, and to our relationships. Indeed, a brief loss of temper can result in child abuse, divorce, homicide, and a host of lesser and more common problems. Buddhism encourages us to think deeply about this on a regular basis so that it becomes thoroughly understood.

In his analysis of how anger develops, the Dalai Lama warns about the temptation to exaggerate someone's qualities, or lack thereof, a concern similar to Cohen's *Damnation of others*.¹⁷

When you are in the midst of anger, your tendency is to perceive the person who harmed you as 100% bad. But if you analyze further, you will realize that every human being is composed of both positive and negative characteristics, and you can try to get a more realistic view of the person by attempting to find some positive aspects of the person... you can learn to separate another person's harmful action from that person as a totality."¹⁸

Anger, in Buddhism, is considered optional, and we are responsible for its results. However, Buddhism does not council us to be door-mats for the abuse of others, nor are all Buddhist pacifists.

The Dalai Lama recognizes that sometimes we have to take action to prevent harm to ourselves or in defense of others, but this has to be done with the *prime directive* of compassion in mind, not with anger and malice.

For those of us who suffer from the fallacy of perfectionism and never feel that we've made the grade, it's sobering to realize that even the Dalai Lama, after many years of intensive spiritual practice and a life devoted to the welfare of others, still gets angry. He says that sometimes, if it's just irritation, he just expresses it and is done with it. If it's stronger, he separates himself from it and observes it, and it diminishes (similar to Nhat Hanh's approach). A strong meditative practice results in a calm mind—eventually, a mind that is slow to anger and fear. Then, as the Dalai Lama says, “...even if some negative emotions come, they remain for very short period, all the emotions remain on the surface, and do not disturb much in depth.”¹⁹

In Buddhism, the rational analysis of emotions is complex, and often subtle. We don't usually think of anger and compassion being compatible, but the Dalai Lama suggests that in addition to the ego-based anger that causes so much suffering in the world, there is another kind:

One type arises out of compassion; that kind of anger is useful. Anger that is motivated by compassion or a desire to correct social injustice, and does not seek to harm the other person, is a good anger that is worth having. For example, a good parent, out of concern for a child's behavior, may use harsh words or even strike him. He may be angry, but there is no trace of any desire to hurt him.²⁰

Rational thinking and the use of antidotes play a big part in Thich Nhat Hanh's *Five Mindfulness Trainings*.²¹ The *five precepts* have been handed down since Buddha's time as rules to live by that promote ethical behavior. Reasoning that the term “precepts” didn't really capture Buddha's meaning, Thich Nhat Hanh has updated, elaborated on, and renamed the precepts. The Five Mindfulness Trainings are not commands, or even rules, but suggestions based on careful thinking and insight gained from meditation. For example, the first training states:

Seeing that harmful actions arise from anger, fear, greed, and intolerance, which in turn come from dualistic and discriminative thinking, I will cultivate openness, non-discrimination, and non-attachment to views in order to transform violence, fanaticism, and dogmatism in myself and in the world.²²

In that short paragraph, Thich Nhat Hanh first establishes a cause and effect relationship between “dualistic and discriminative thinking” and “anger, fear, greed, and intolerance,” and then argues that the latter generate “harmful actions.” The antidotes he suggests are “openness, non-discrimination, and non-attachment to views.”

The second mindfulness training: *True Happiness* states:

I am aware that happiness depends on my mental attitude and not on external conditions, and that I can live happily in the present moment simply by remembering that I already have more than enough conditions to be happy.²³

Here, Nhat Hanh uses as antidotes to unhappiness the concepts that (1) We already have what we need to be happy (we just need to see that) and (2) Our mental attitude, not external conditions are paramount.

6. Moral Creativity (Prudence) vs. Thou Shalt Upset Yourself (Dutiful Worrying)

Antidote to Thou Shalt Upset Yourself (Dutiful Worrying):

Look inside yourself, rather than depend on others for answers to moral dilemmas. (Thich Nhat Hanh, Buddha, Dalai Lama)

Morality, in Buddhism, is flexible and nuanced. Each situation is unique. The main consideration is compassion for all concerned. With this standard in mind, very few important decisions can be solved by black and white, either/or thinking. President George W. Bush's statement to the world community after the attacks on September 11, 2001, comes to mind as a good example of simplistic thinking that may have been largely responsible for the horrendous problems that ensued: "You are either for us or against us."

A deeper analysis of the situation would have taken into account the complicated foreign policy issues leading up to 911 and the possible complicity of a number of different countries in that attack. I'm inclined not to accept the President's explanation that an old man in a cave somewhere conspired with 19 other guys to outwit and outgun the most powerful and well-defended nation in the world. However, my Buddhist training and natural inclination is to maintain an open attitude, lest new evidence supporting and strengthening the government's conspiracy theory should come to my attention.

Although Buddhist morality is not absolute, neither does it fall into the trap of extreme relativity. It isn't about "anything goes" or "if it feels good, do it." On the contrary, the precepts (the rules that one agrees to live by when officially becoming a Buddhist) prohibit killing, stealing, lying, sexual misconduct, and intoxication. These are not commandments from a deity but agreements deemed necessary for people to live in harmony. Apparently, there were no precepts in the early days of Buddha's sanhga (group of disciples) but the need for them developed as the group got larger.

As mentioned earlier, Thich Nhat Hanh calls them *mindfulness trainings*, to emphasize their true purpose. Every situation is different and requires us to be aware of what actions would benefit all concerned. Just blindly following the precepts won't do. One has to apply critical thinking, be creative, sometimes even do something that is in direct violation of the precepts in order to benefit others. In extreme cases this might even involve injuring or even killing someone in self-defense, to stop them from murdering you or someone else.

The Dalai Lama, the incarnation of compassion, encourages everyone to not eat meat, but eats a little meat on the advice of his doctor. The Buddha himself set the example for nuanced thinking on this issue by advising his disciples to eat whatever was put in their begging bowls, out of gratitude to the giver, but not to hunt or fish.

I think the football metaphor I used earlier in this paper also applies to moral decisions as well as other

aspects of the Buddhist path. As a Buddhist, I feel free to live in a way that makes the most sense to me. I think this is what Buddha did, and what he suggests we do. It's a great feeling to be liberated in this sense, but it also implies tremendous responsibility. If we freely choose our way, we can't blame others for our mistakes. We can certainly benefit from the examples and suggestions of others, but as Thich Nhat Hanh puts it;

We have the habit of always looking outside of ourselves, thinking we can get wisdom and compassion from another person or the Buddha or his teachings (Dharma) or our community (Sangha). But you are the Buddha, you are the Dharma, you are the Sangha.²⁴

Where does moral courage come from in the Buddhist context? I believe it comes from trusting that if we are mindful, if we pay attention, we will be able to free ourselves enough from our negative emotions and erroneous thinking long enough to see what to do in any given situation. We can't be 100% certain that we are making the right choice, but we can dismiss that concern as “nobody's perfect” and do our best.

7. Empowerment vs. Manipulation

Antidote to manipulation:

Never try to force others, even our children, by any means whatsoever – such as authority, threat, money, propaganda, or indoctrination – to adopt your views. (Thich Nhat Hanh)

One of the many attractive things about Buddhism, and one that I've mentioned in the context of some of the other virtues, is its insistence that people have control over their own lives. How much control is debated, some contending that it is complete, but most Buddhists would at least agree that it is substantial. Certainly we have enough to justify paying close attention to our behavior, which through the law of karma (moral cause and effect) has created our present circumstances and will create our future.

The Eightfold-Path, the last of the Four Noble Truths (Buddha's first and most basic teaching) lays out eight interconnected “steps.” These are suggestions, not commandments. Though his disciples did call him Lord Buddha, out of their great respect for his accomplishments, Buddha never lorded over anyone.

Buddha practiced silent meditation and encouraged others to do so, and this is basic to Buddhism, But he also gave well thought out arguments for meditation as he did for all of his teachings. He never said “just do it because I say so,” in fact, he specifically advised his students *not* to do something just because he or someone else said so, but rather to consider the rational justifications for doing something, and *then* make a decision.

To empower others means to give them the same respect for autonomy that we enjoy (or could enjoy if we choose to). But often we try to manipulate other people. Most of us don't have our own act together and yet we are often ready and eager to give unsolicited advice to everyone else. It's so much easier to focus on other people's lives, especially our kids, since we feel an obligation to mold them into the kind

of people we think they should be - people like us. Sometimes parents try to “live through their children” and push them to accomplish what they, the parents, could not. This is the cause of great suffering in families.

One of Thich Nhat Hanh's mindfulness trainings concerns freedom of thought:

Aware of the suffering brought about when we impose our views on others, we are determined not to force others, even our children, by any means whatsoever – such as authority, threat, money, propaganda, or indoctrination – to adopt our views. We are committed to respecting the right of others to be different, to choose what to believe and how to decide. We will, however, learn to help others let go of and transform fanaticism and narrowness through loving speech and compassionate dialogue.²⁵

One way that my wife and I empowered our kids was by letting them be responsible for their own education. We gave them the opportunity to drop out of public school. After pondering this offer for about two seconds they left school immediately. We didn't then try to manipulate their education by taking most of the same subject matter that the schools teach and force-feeding it to them at home, which is often the case with home-schooling. We carried their freedom even further than home-schooling usually does, we *unschooled* them: we let them choose what they wanted to study, and when, and how much. If they wanted our help, they would have to ask, and we would happily oblige. They were in charge of their academic education, but otherwise we were fully engaged in their lives, and encouraged them to be ethical, generous, and kind to others.

It was initially terrifying for us, because some of them would do absolutely nothing “academic” for months. As products of the school system ourselves, we were programmed to believe that there were certain things one simply must learn, and in a timely manner! But we hung in there, having heard from other un-schoolers that there was typically a “recovery period” from forced public schooling before they could regain the innate love of learning that the school system had squelched. They all went through that process to varying degrees, and then found their own way out, and flourished. All grown up now, they are happy, successful and doing what they want to do for a living. All of them have college degrees, although we didn't push that as a goal. They have a great appreciation for the trust and respect we gave them, and they are treating our grandchildren the same way.

Although our tendency to manipulate others is very seductive, and “control freaks” are ubiquitous, we can best use our rational thinking skills to keep our own problematic inclinations under control, rather than other people.

8. Empathy vs. the World Revolves Around Me

Antidote to The World Revolves Around Me:

Be wisely selfish rather than foolishly selfish. (Dalai Lama)

The Dalai Lama is full of surprises:

...the compassionate practitioners of the Buddhist path are wisely selfish people, whereas people

like ourselves are the foolishly selfish. We think of ourselves and disregard others, and the result is that we always remain unhappy and have a miserable time.²⁶

Wisdom and compassion are two crucial aspects of Buddhism and support each other. Wisdom is defined as knowing the nature of reality, most importantly the nature of the "self." When we understand that we exist deeply interconnected with all beings, rather than as separate entities, our compassion for others is as natural as caring for our foot, our face, or our fingers. But until we realize that connection fully, until our love for others flows freely, we need to make a special effort to treat others well, and in order to do that, we need to be convinced that it is a good idea to do so. While it may seem obvious to some why we should be kinder people, apparently it is not obvious to all; hence the world as we have it!

In their teachings, both the Dalai Lama and Thich Nhat Hanh stress the importance of realizing that without the cooperation of others, we would not enjoy good food, friendly conversation, a decent place to live, etc. Nhat Hanh emphasizes that nothing exists by itself, that all things *inter-are*, a simple word he coined that captures the essence of the complex Buddhist teaching of *interdependent co-origination*.

But suggesting that someone be more compassionate because it's the right thing to do only goes so far. An important Buddhist insight is that people are more likely to help others if they believe it will help themselves-and, in the Buddhist view, that's understandable. Buddhism suggests that if we do not care about ourselves, we won't really be capable of loving others. As the Dalai Lama explains;

...when we find statements in the teachings such as "Disregard your own well-being and cherish the well-being of others," we should understand them in the context of training yourself according to the ideal of compassion. This is important if we are not to indulge in self-centered ways of thinking that disregard the impact of our actions on other sentient beings...it is important to understand these statements...in their proper context. If you do not have the capacity to love yourself, then there is simply no basis on which to build a sense of caring toward others.²⁷

But even if we really want to be more empathetic, can we really change our minds, after years of self-obsession? Apparently so. At the University of Wisconsin (Madison) Richard Davidson and his team of scientists have been studying the brains of 16 Tibetan monks, courtesy of the Dalai Lama, who was kind enough to loan them out for a study that focuses on the development of empathy. The monks each had over 10,000 hours of practice cultivating meditation techniques. Also included in the study were 16 people, of about the same age as the monks, who had never meditated before. Subjects were asked to focus on compassion meditation, or actively refrain from it, during an MRI. Areas of the brain associated with empathy, the ability to perceive the emotional states of others, displayed notable increased activity. Further studies have demonstrated the development of greater compassion in novices who meditated for only 8 weeks, 40 minutes a day. Davidson is convinced that, "people are not just stuck at their respective set points. We can take advantage of our brain's plasticity and train it to enhance these qualities."²⁸

"My religion is kindness," says the Dalai Lama, who is literally the *incarnation* of the principle of

compassion in Tibetan Buddhism. He travels around the world, giving hundreds of talks, many on Buddhist philosophy and practice. But he isn't promoting Buddhism as such-he tirelessly encourages people to develop what he thinks is most important, what he calls a "warmed-up heart."

9. Good Judgment vs. Oversimplifying Reality

Antidote to Oversimplifying Reality:

Avoid extremes in lifestyle and in thinking. (Buddha, -Thich Nhat Hanh)

As a youth, Buddha was very wealthy and had everything he wanted-except peace of mind. He came to realize that what little happiness he did have was dependent on outside circumstances. He left home in search of a more stable happiness, but after several years of intense effort was unable to find it. In desperation, he went to the opposite extreme of the self-indulgence of his youth, denying himself comfort of any kind, eating almost nothing. But this did not produce happiness either. In fact, he almost starved to death. Finally, he took a more balanced approach in his lifestyle and thereby attained his goal, which he called the *Middle Path*;

...these two extremes ought not to be practiced...There is addiction to indulgence of sense-pleasures, which is low, coarse, the way of ordinary people, unworthy, and unprofitable; and there is addiction to self-mortification, which is painful, unworthy, and unprofitable. Avoiding both of these extremes, I have realized the Middle Way; it gives vision, gives knowledge, and leads to calm, to insight, to enlightenment and to Nirvana.²⁹

He went on to say that to take the *Middle Way* was to follow a strategy he called the *Eight-fold Path*, a balanced, practical way of life that results in true, unshakeable happiness. The first step on that path is called Right View.

View, in this context, means our world-view, our "take" on reality, on life. According to Buddhism our way of seeing things is based on our perceptions, which are almost always faulty. The Buddha said "where there is perception there is deception." Thich Nhat Hanh explains:

Our perceptions carry with them all the errors of subjectivity. Then we praise, blame, condemn, or complain depending on our perceptions. But our perceptions are made of our afflictions-craving, anger, ignorance, wrong views, and prejudice. Buddhism is not a collection of views. It is a practice to help us eliminate wrong views. The quality of our views can always be improved...if we train ourselves in Right Thinking, our Right View will improve. We have to put our views into practice. In the process of learning, reflecting, and practicing, our view becomes increasingly wise, based on our real experience.³⁰

Having had many years of experience, reflection and practice, the Dalai Lama and Thich Nhat Hanh give carefully nuanced answers to questions about ethical choices, always looking for the most compassionate solutions. For example, a morally-conflicted scientist who was required to experiment on animals asked for Thich Nhat Hanh's advice. Rather than tell the man to quit his job in the name of

compassion, Nhat Hanh encouraged him to seriously consider keeping it, since he would try to find ways to lessen the suffering of the animals, whereas his replacement might not be so kind.

Once Nhat Hanh told of a young woman who was raped and wanted to terminate the pregnancy. Although he believed, personally, as do Buddhists generally, that the unborn have a right to life, in this case the woman's suffering was so great that he supported her choice to have an abortion.

Both Thich Nhat Hanh and the Dalai Lama have come out against capital punishment wholeheartedly. Asked "Suppose someone has killed ten children. Why should he be allowed to live on?" Thich Nhat Hanh replied,

A person who has killed ten children is a sick person. Of course we want to lock him up to prevent him killing more, but that is a sick person, and we have to find ways to help that person. Killing him does not help him, and does not help us...something is wrong with our society; our society has created people like that.³¹

And the Dalai Lama agrees:

However horrible the act they have committed, I believe that everyone has the potential to improve and correct themselves. Therefore, I am optimistic that it remains possible to deter criminal activity, and prevent such harmful consequences of such acts in society, without having to resort to the death penalty³².

So to sum up, what does Buddhism have to say about good judgment (or objectivity)?

Buddhism encourages us to develop a state of mind that entertains thoughts and emotions without being caught up in them and suggests that such a state of mind is fertile ground from which clear thinking will most likely emerge. Clear thinking, based on experience and intuition, results in the best possible judgment.

10. Foresightedness (in Assessing Probabilities) vs. Distorting Probabilities

Antidote to Distorting Probabilities:

Develop a calm, stable, concentrated mind, so you can see things as they really are and then make decisions based on that knowledge. (Buddha)

According to Buddhism, to see things "as they really are" includes the insight that our universe is one of constant transformation at every level of existence. Stars and galaxies consisting of hundreds of billions of stars are created and destroyed endlessly, as are the innumerable plants and animals on our planet, including human beings. Even while we live, the cells in our bodies are changing - dying by the millions, and our thoughts and feelings appear and disappear as they flow through us like rivers.

Recognizing this, Buddhism posits that one of the three "marks" or characteristics of existence, is *impermanence*: the truth that everything is in a constant state of change. Because of this fact, nothing, including us, has a "self" or "ego," if those words are defined as a solid, separate, *unchanging* core of being. This *selflessness or egolessness* is the second characteristic of existence. Often the term

emptiness is used in this context to mean “empty” of “a solid, separate unchanging core of existence,” not *non-existence*. To say that something is empty of a self means that it exists interconnected with everything else. To realize this, not just as an idea but as an experience, is *Nirvana*, the third characteristic of existence.

In order to fully understand these characteristics of existence we have to lessen the influence of our negative emotions; our greed, anger, prejudice, etc. This was discussed earlier in this paper under the heading of *Good Judgment vs Oversimplifying Reality*. Indeed, distorting probabilities and oversimplifying reality are closely related fallacies.

With this understanding of impermanence, selflessness and the interconnectedness of all beings as a basis, one acts and plans accordingly. The fact of impermanence implies that holding onto things, people and ideas will result in psychological suffering. The fact of the interconnectedness of all things speaks to the importance of compassion, and the reality that we don't have a solid, separate self will hopefully cause us to loosen up and not take ourselves and our personal dramas too seriously.

A concentrated and stable mind also enables you to see how your words and actions affect those around you, or to notice a correlation between your eating habits and your health, etc. This kind of causation is recognized by both science and Buddhism. Another kind of causality is called *karma*, which is not recognized by modern science but is a basic teaching of Buddhism, Hinduism, and Christianity (as in Jesus's saying, “As you sow, so shall ye reap.”³³ Karma is the view that our moral choices have results, both positive and negative, in ways that science cannot account for. The idea of karma usually goes with the theory that we have lived many lives before this one and will live again. Subsequently, the results of our actions are not limited to the time frame of this life. The workings of karma are thus incredibly complex, and supposedly only a Buddha can understand them.

In terms of predicting the future, you can reasonably conclude that if meditation has helped you become a calmer, more compassionate person, there is a good chance it will continue to do so.

11. Scientificity vs. Blind Conjecture

Antidote to Blind Conjecture:

Trust your own reason and experience above all else. Take no refuge outside yourself. (Buddha)

The Transcendent Virtue of Scientificity (in providing explanations) is reflected in the empirical and logical approach of the Buddha, who offered the following advice to a group of townspeople who had been visited by numerous religious leaders, all insisting that their way was *the truth*.

Do not go upon what has been acquired by repeated hearing, nor upon tradition, nor upon rumor, nor upon scripture, nor upon surmise, nor upon axiom, nor upon specious reasoning, nor upon bias toward a notion pondered over, nor upon another's seeming ability, nor upon the consideration 'The monk is our teacher.' When you yourselves know: 'These things are bad, blamable, censured by the wise; undertaken and observed, these things lead to harm and ill,' abandon them... When you yourselves know: 'These things are good, blameless, praised by the

wise; undertaken and observed, these things lead to benefit and happiness,' enter on and abide in them.³⁴

Failure to apply this antidote does not just concern the personal spiritual growth of individuals, but is a matter of great importance to the welfare of humanity as a whole. Unquestioning allegiance to religious scriptures and beliefs has resulted in denying the rights of the poor, abuse of women and children, racism, terrorism, and war. Despite Buddha's admonition, even "enlightened" Zen Masters, can fall prey to nationalism, jumping on the bandwagon (another fallacy) and justifying morally outrageous behavior with religion. During World War II, a Japanese Zen Master wrote:

[If ordered to] march: tramp, tramp, or shoot: bang, bang. This is the manifestation of the highest Wisdom [of Enlightenment]. The unity of Zen and war of which I speak extends to the farthest reaches of the holy war [now under way].³⁵

The situation we all find ourselves in today is even more puzzling than that faced by the townspeople in Buddha's day. In addition to being pressured to adopt the views of conflicting religious zealots, there exists a militant atheism that lumps religious superstition, mysticism, and other spiritual approaches together and then trashes religion as a whole.

If we look to science for insight, we have the widespread phenomenon of *scientism*, an approach based on the philosophy of materialism, which posits that only matter and energy are ultimately real. In this view, consciousness of any kind, including spiritual states, are "just" biochemical changes in the brain. No doubt every experience we have correlates with such changes of some kind, but correlation does not equal cause and is hardly a reason to dismiss experiences that suggest the existence of something more than the physical universe. As I understand it, good science goes where the evidence leads, and is not based on any particular philosophy but rather on a method of inquiry.

Buddhism uses various forms of meditation as its method of inquiry, some of which are empirical, involving observation, and some that are analytical, using reason. In both cases the goal is to find out what is true, real and beneficial, with the emphasis on that which is conducive to happiness. Buddha said, "I teach one thing and one thing only; suffering and the end of suffering."³⁶ Buddha believed that happiness is concomitant with a true understanding of certain aspects of reality, such as the nature of the self, but refused to get caught up in idle speculations.

In Buddhism, when we have carefully come to conclusions that we feel confident about, if we refuse to fairly consider new evidence or reasoning that contradicts them, we are engaged in unskillful Buddhist practice. Thich Nhat Hanh emphasizes the importance

of not being idolatrous about or bound to any doctrine, theory, or ideology, even Buddhist ones. We are committed to seeing the Buddhist teachings as guiding means that help us develop our understanding and compassion...relatively speaking there are right views and wrong views. But if we look more deeply we see that all views are wrong views. No view can ever be the truth. It is just from one point: that is why it is called a point of view. If we go to another point, we will see things differently and realize that our first view was not entirely right.³⁷

It is in this spirit that in a conversation with the Astronomer Carl Sagan, who asked The Dalai Lama, what he would do if science proved reincarnation to be untrue, the Dalai Lama replied that if science proves a Buddhist belief to be in error, Buddhism would have to change its position accordingly.³⁸

Note that in his advice to the townspeople, Buddha suggests that we consider the ideas of "the Wise" and give them some weight, but that we ultimately rely on our own *good judgment* (another one of the virtues). But he also warns that our judgment will not be good if we rely on "specious reasoning" and "upon axiom." This means to avoid fallacious thinking and question even that which is generally accepted as true.

Buddha suggested that living in a certain way would result in "unshakeable happiness." But he did not expect people to believe what he said to be true on faith. Rather, he invited them to check it out for themselves. He said, "...just as a goldsmith would test his gold by burning, cutting and rubbing it, so must you examine my words..."³⁹

Buddha meant for us to apply his teachings to our lives, to experiment with them, and see for ourselves if they work *for us*. But, just as our logic can be flawed, our perceptions of our experience can be deceptive. Thich Nhat Hanh suggests that we constantly ask ourselves "are you sure?"⁴⁰ because wrong perceptions lead to wrong thinking, which in turn can lead to unnecessary suffering. He gives the example of mistaking a rope in your path for a snake, and reacting with fear. In terms of our relationships with others, we often make assumptions about what other people think and feel, based upon their body language, their physical appearance, our interpretation of their words, etc. and react with jealousy, anxiety and anger.

Many traditional Buddhists have criticized more modern Buddhist thinkers for using Buddha's advice to trust ourselves to justify a "spiritual supermarket" approach to religion, where one can "take what they like and leave the rest." I agree that in cherry-picking only what feels good, and avoiding what might not feel good but *be* good for us, we run the risk of engaging in "spiritual materialism"⁴¹ a malady that builds up our ego in the name of religion. But I also believe that with that caveat in mind, a judicious balance of careful attention to experience and good reasoning will have good results, perhaps even "unshakeable happiness."

¹ Masao Abe, *Zen and Western Thought*, edited by William LaFleur (Honolulu:University of Hawaii Press, 1988) ix

² Lauren Jill Brown, *Investigation of Buddhist Beliefs and Practices and Impact on Levels of Maladaptive Perfectionism*, (abstract) retrieved July 12, 2013, from <http://search.proquest.com/docview/1102869591>

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- ³ Masao Abe, *Zen and Western Thought*, 24
- ⁴ Oral tradition attributes this to Padmasambhava, 8th Century, unable to find original source
- ⁵ Dalai Lama, *Healing Emotions* (Boston, Shambhala Publications, 1997) 192
- ⁶ Dalai Lama, *Healing Emotions*, 189
- ⁷ Dalai Lama, *Healing Emotions*, 192
- ⁸ Dalai Lama, *The World of Tibetan Buddhism* (Boston, Wisdom Publications, 1995) 100
- ⁹ Dalai Lama, *Healing Emotions*, 195
- ¹⁰ Mahāparinibbāna Sutta. DN 16. *Chaṭṭha Saṅgāyana CD-ROM* (version 3). Igatpuri : Vipassana Research Institute. [D ii.155-6.]
- ¹¹ MN 72 PTS: M i 483, *Aggi-Vacchagotta Sutta: To Vacchagotta on Fire* translated from the Pali by Thanissaro Bhikkhu 1997
- ¹² Thich Nhat Hanh, *Nothing to Do, Nowhere to Go* (Berkeley, Parallax Press, 2007) 166
- ¹³ Dalai Lama, The Tibet Post International, retrieved October 2, 2013 from <http://www.thetibetpost.com/en/news/exile/1969-qbuddhism-is-followed-through-reasonq-his-holiness-the-dalai-lama>
- ¹⁴ Dalai Lama, retrieved October 2, 2013 from <http://www.dalailama.com/teachings/training-the-mind/verse-3>
- ¹⁵ Thich Nhat Hanh, *Anger: Wisdom for Cooling the Flames*, (New York, Riverhead Books, 2001) 165
- ¹⁶ Dalai Lama, retrieved October 2, 2013 from <http://www.dalailama.com/teachings/training-the-mind/verse-3>
- ¹⁷ What the Dalai Lama is addressing seems to be an *awfulizing* of others. Cohen usually uses *awfulizing* to refer to situations and *damnation* to others, the world, and ourselves. See Elliot D. Cohen *The New Rational Therapy* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield;2007), p. 49 for Awfulizing, and p.84 for Damnation of others.
- ¹⁸ Dalai Lama, *The Mindful Monk*, *Psychology Today*, Retrieved October 2 from

<http://www.psychologytoday.com/articles/200105/the-mindful-monk>

- ¹⁹ Dalai Lama, interview with NDTV. Retrieved October 2, 2013, from <http://www.ndtv.com/article/india/in-conversation-with-the-dalai-lama-35955>
- ²⁰ Dalai Lama, interview in Tricycle Magazine, retrieved October 2, 2013 from <http://blog.tricycle.com/blog/justifiably-angry-marxist>
- ²¹ Thich Nhat Hanh, retrieved October 2, 2013 from <http://plumvillage.org/mindfulness-practice/the-five-mindfulness-trainings/>
- ²² Thich Nhat Hanh, *ibid*, retrieved October 2, 2013
- ²³ Thich Nhat Hanh, *ibid*, retrieved October 2, 2013
- ²⁴ Thich Nhat Hanh, *Answers from the Heart*, (Berkeley, Parallax Press, 2009) 7
- ²⁵ Thich Nhat Hanh, *ibid*, retrieved October 2, 2013
- ²⁶ Dalai Lama *Training the Mind: Verse 1*, retrieved October 2, 2013 from <http://www.dalailama.com/teachings/training-the-mind/verse-1>
- ²⁷ Dalai Lama, *ibid*, *Training the Mind: Verse 1*
- ²⁸ Richard Davidson, retrieved October 2, 2013 from <http://www.waisman.wisc.edu/news/stories/2008/davidson22.html>
- ²⁹ Buddha, in the *Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta: Setting in Motion the Wheel of Truth*, retrieved October 2, 2013 from <http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/sn/sn56/sn56.011.piya.html>
- ³⁰ Thich Nhat Hanh, *Heart of the Buddha's Teaching* (Berkeley, Parallax Press, 1998) 50
- ³¹ Thich Nhat Hanh, *Answers from the Heart* (Berkeley, Parallax Press, 2009) 107
- ³² The Dalai Lama, retrieved on October 8, 2013 from <http://www.engagedzen.org/HHDLMSG.html>
- ³³ Jesus, in Galatians VI (New Testament; King James Version)
- ³⁴ Kalama Sutta: The Instruction to the Kalamas (AN 3.65) translated from the Pali by Soma Thera 1994. Retrieved October 3, 2013 from <http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/an/an03/an03.065.soma.htm>

³⁵ Harada Daiun Sogaku in *Zen at War* by Brian Victoria (Weathehill 1997) 137 retrieved October 3, 2013 from http://www.thezensite.com/ZenBookReviews/ZenAtWar_Loy.htm

³⁶ Buddha, quoted by Thich Nhat Hanh, *Heart of the Buddha's Teaching* (Berkeley, Parallax Press, 1998) 3

³⁷ Thich Nhat Hanh, retrieved October 2, 2013 from <http://plumvillage.org/mindfulness-practice/the-five-mindfulness-trainings/>

³⁸ Retrieved October 3, 2013 from <http://benvitalis.wordpress.com/2012/02/15/a-meeting-of-two-minds-carl-sagan-and-the-dalai-lama/>

³⁹ Buddha, quoted in *Old Path, White Clouds*, by Thich Nhat Hanh (Berkeley, Parallax Press, 1991)

⁴⁰ Thich Nhat Hanh, *Heart of the Buddha's Teaching* (Berkeley, Parallax Press, 1998) 60

⁴¹ Chogyam Trungpa, in *Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism* (Shambhala, 2002)