



Chapter 3: Ceremonies & Practices

Contents

Note: *Chanting from the Heart* offers readers many ceremonies, practices, discourses and chants with music. Practitioners, and especially those who lead the practice within a sangha, may wish to refer to that larger volume.

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3.1 Daily Practice

You might like to practise each day following the Daily Practice session offered here. It is based on the practice of the monks, nuns, residents and retreatants at Plum Village.

A daily practice session usually begins with 20 minutes of sitting meditation, followed by slow walking meditation (Kinh Hanh), and then some chanting and recitation. The first sitting period can be a guided meditation.



The Blooming of a Lotus: Guided Meditation Exercises for Healing and Transformation.

During a short practice session, you may wish to practise sitting for only 12 minutes or so. Or, if you do not wish to practise chanting and recitation, these may simply be replaced by a second period of sitting meditation.

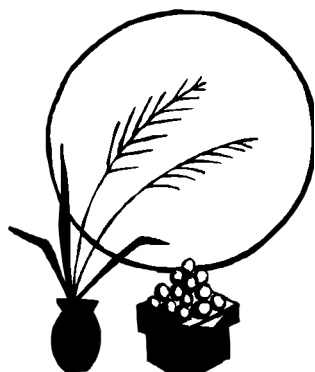
It is not necessary to chant and/or recite everything offered here as part of the Daily Practice. Reciting *The Insight that Brings Us to the Other Shore* (see below and 4.2) and reading one of the basic discourses is enough to inspire and guide your practice. You may also replace the texts given here with others of your choice. What is important is to create a daily practice that you will enjoy as part of your daily life and that of your practice community.

The Morning or Evening Chant may be chanted by the Bell Master as the bell is invited to begin the practice.

Morning Chant

Our dharma practice body
 Shines brightly as the day dawns
 Still our posture, mind at ease
 A smile is born on our lips
 This is a new day,
 We vow to go through it in mindfulness.
 The sun of insight has now risen,
 Shining in every direction.
 Noble Sangha, diligently
 Bring our minds into meditation.
 Namo Shakyamunaye Buddhaya
 Namo Shakyamunaye Buddhaya
 Namo Shakyamunaye Buddhaya





Evening Chant

With posture upright and stable, we are seated at the foot of the Bodhi Tree.

Body, speech and mind are one in stillness; there is no more thought of right and wrong.

Our mind and body dwell in perfect mindfulness.

We rediscover our original nature, leaving the shore of illusion behind.

Noble Sangha, diligently bring your mind into meditation.

Namo Shakyamunaye Buddhaya

Namo Shakyamunaye Buddhaya

Namo Shakyamunaye Buddhaya

Incense Offering

Three bells

In gratitude, we offer this incense throughout space and time to all Buddhas and Bodhisattvas.

May it be fragrant as Earth herself, reflecting careful efforts, wholehearted awareness, and the fruit of understanding, slowly ripening.

May we and all beings be companions of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas.

May we awaken from forgetfulness and realise our true home.

Bell

or, second version ...

Three bells

The fragrance of this incense invites the awakened mind to be truly present with us now.

The fragrance of this incense fills our practice centre, protects and guards our mind from all wrong thinking.

The fragrance of this incense collects us and unites us.

Precepts, concentration and insight we offer for all that is.

Namo Bodhisattvebhyah

Namo Mahasattvebhyah

Bell

Sitting meditation

Twelve minutes or more, perhaps preceded by instruction – see Chapter 1.3. The first sitting period may be a guided meditation.

Kinh Hanh walking meditation

Optional – for guidance, see Chapter 1.5.

Sitting meditation

This second period of sitting meditation may follow if you do not wish to practise chanting or recitation.

Touching the Earth***Opening Gatha*** (optional)

The one who bows and the one who is bowed to
are both, by nature, empty.

Therefore the communication between them
is inexpressibly perfect.

Our practice centre is the Net of Indra
reflecting all Buddhas everywhere.

And with my person in front of each Buddha
I go with my whole life for refuge.

Bell

Prostrations

Touch the Earth one time at the sound of each bell

Offering light in the Ten Directions,
the Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha,
to whom we bow in gratitude.

Bell

Teaching and living the way of awareness
in the very midst of suffering and confusion,
Shakyamuni Buddha, the Fully Enlightened One,
to whom we bow in gratitude.

Bell

Cutting through ignorance, awakening our hearts and minds,
Manjushri, the Bodhisattva of Great Understanding,
to whom we bow in gratitude.

Bell

Working mindfully, working joyfully for the sake of all beings,
Samantabhadra, the Bodhisattva of Great Action,
to whom we bow in gratitude.

Bell

Listening deeply, serving beings in countless ways,
Avalokiteshvara, the Bodhisattva of Great Compassion,
to whom we bow in gratitude.

Bell

Fearless and persevering through realms of suffering and darkness,
Kshitigarbha, the Bodhisattva of Great Aspiration,
to whom we bow in gratitude.

Bell

Mother of Buddhas, Bodhisattvas and all beings,



Nourishing, holding and healing all,
Bodhisattva Gaia, Great Mother Earth, precious jewel of the cosmos,
to whom we bow in gratitude.

Bell

Radiating light in all directions, source of life on Earth,
Mahavairocana Tathagata, Great Father Sun,
Buddha of infinite light and life,
to whom we bow in gratitude.

Bell

Seed of awakening and loving kindness
in children and all beings,
Maitreya, the Buddha to-be-born,
to whom we bow in gratitude.

Bell

Showing the way fearlessly and compassionately,
the stream of all our Ancestral Teachers,
to whom we bow in gratitude.

Two bells

Sutra Opening Verse

Three bells

Namo Tassa Bhagavato Arahato Samma Sambuddhassa
Namo Tassa Bhagavato Arahato Samma Sambuddhassa
Namo Tassa Bhagavato Arahato Samma Sambuddhassa

Bell

The Dharma is deep and lovely.
We now have a chance to see, study and practise it.
We vow to realise its true meaning.

Bell





Sutra Reading

Recite *The Insight that Brings Us to the Other Shore*, below, or another sutra of your choice – see ***Chanting from the Heart*** or this Manual, Chapter 4.2 – Discourses.

The Insight that Brings Us to the Other Shore

Avalokiteshvara
while practising deeply with
the Insight that Brings Us to the Other Shore,
suddenly discovered that
all of the five Skandhas are equally empty,
and with this realisation
he overcame all Ill-being.

“Listen Sariputra,
this Body itself is Emptiness
and Emptiness itself is this Body.
This Body is not other than Emptiness
and Emptiness is not other than this Body.
The same is true of Feelings,
Perceptions, Mental Formations,
and Consciousness.

Listen Sariputra,
all phenomena bear the mark of Emptiness;
their true nature is the nature of
no Birth no Death,
no Being no Non-being,
no Defilement no Purity,
no Increasing no Decreasing.

That is why in Emptiness,
Body, Feelings, Perceptions,
Mental Formations and Consciousness
are not separate self-entities.

The Eighteen Realms of Phenomena
which are the six Sense Organs,
the six Sense Objects,
and the six Consciousnesses
are also not separate self-entities.

The Twelve Links of Interdependent Arising
and their Extinction

are also not separate self-entities.

Ill-being, the Causes of Ill-being,

The End of Ill-being, the Path,

insight and attainment,

are also not separate self-entities.

Whoever can see this

no longer needs anything to attain.

Bodhisattvas who practise

the Insight that Brings Us to the Other Shore

see no more obstacles in their mind,

and because there

are no more obstacles in their mind,

they can overcome all fear,

destroy all wrong perceptions

and realise Perfect Nirvana.

All Buddhas in the past, present and future

by practising the Insight that Brings Us to the Other Shore

are all capable of attaining

Authentic and Perfect Enlightenment.

Therefore Sariputra,

it should be known that

the Insight that Brings Us to the Other Shore

is a Great Mantra,

the most illuminating mantra,

the highest mantra,

a mantra beyond compare,

the True Wisdom that has the power

to put an end to all kinds of suffering.

Therefore let us proclaim

a mantra to praise

the Insight that Brings Us to the Other Shore.

Gate, Gate, Paragate, Parasamgate, Bodhi Svaha!

Gate, Gate, Paragate, Parasamgate, Bodhi Svaha!

Gate, Gate, Paragate, Parasamgate, Bodhi Svaha!"

Two bells



Invoking the Bodhisattvas' Names

*Or recite another chant of your choice – see the **Plum Village Chanting and Recitation Book** or this Manual, Chapter 4.1 – Recitations & Chants.*

To support your aspiration to cultivate the Bodhisattvas' qualities, you may like to practise by "evoking" rather than "invoking" the Bodhisattvas' names.

We invoke your name, Avalokiteshvara. We aspire to learn your way of listening in order to help relieve the suffering in the world. You know how to listen in order to understand. We invoke your name in order to practise listening with all our attention and openheartedness. We will sit and listen without any prejudice. We will sit and listen without judging or reacting. We will sit and listen in order to understand. We will sit and listen so attentively that we will be able to hear what the other person is saying and also what has been left unsaid. We know that just by listening deeply we already alleviate a great deal of pain and suffering in the other person.

Bell

We invoke your name, Manjushri. We aspire to learn your way, which is to be still and to look deeply into the heart of things and into the hearts of people. We will look with all our attention and open-heartedness. We will look with unprejudiced eyes. We will look without judging or reacting. We will look deeply so that we will be able to see and understand the roots of suffering, the impermanent and selfless nature of all that is. We will practise your way of using the sword of understanding to cut through the bonds of suffering, thus freeing ourselves and other species.

Bell

We invoke your name, Samantabhadra. We aspire to practise your vow to act with the eyes and heart of compassion, to bring joy to one person in the morning and to ease the pain of one person in the afternoon. We know that the happiness of others is our own happiness, and we aspire to practise joy on the path of service. We know that every word, every look, every action, and every smile can bring happiness to others. We know that if we practise wholeheartedly, we ourselves may become an inexhaustible source of peace and joy for our loved ones and for all species.

Bell



We invoke your name Kshitigarbha. We aspire to learn your way of being present where there is darkness, suffering, oppression and despair, so that we may bring light, hope, relief and liberation to those places. We are determined not to forget about or abandon those who are in desperate situations. We shall do our best to establish contact with those who cannot find a way out of their suffering, those whose cries for help, justice, equality and human rights are not being heard. We know that hell can be found in many places on Earth. We will do our best not to contribute to creating more hells on Earth, and to help transform the hells that already exist. We will practise in order to realise the qualities of perseverance and stability, so that, like the Earth, we can always be supportive and faithful to those in need.

Bell

We invoke your name, Sadaparibhuta. We aspire to learn your way of never doubting or underestimating a living being's capacity for love and understanding. With deep reverence for life, you say to others respectfully, "You are someone of great value. You are a future buddha. I see this potential in you." We aspire to look at ourselves and others with respectful and compassionate eyes in order to recognise that all living beings, including ourselves, are precious wonders of life. We aspire to help all beings see their true nature more clearly. We are determined to preserve the health and well-being of all, including our children, by extending sincere offerings of love, equanimity, patience, and inclusiveness. Inspired by the great faith and insight that everyone is a future buddha, we will do our best to transform our thoughts, words and deeds so that they encourage deep confidence and self-love within ourselves and others. By nourishing wholesome seeds inside and around us, we will manifest our true nature in the ultimate dimension. This is the realm of nirvana – complete liberation, freedom, peace and joy.

Two bells





The Three Refuges

I take refuge in the Buddha,
the one who shows me the way in this life.
I take refuge in the Dharma,
the way of understanding and of love.
I take refuge in the Sangha,
the community that lives in harmony and awareness.

Bell

Dwelling in the refuge of Buddha,
I clearly see the path of light and beauty in the world.
Dwelling in the refuge of Dharma,
I learn to open many doors on the path of transformation.
Dwelling in the refuge of Sangha,
shining light that supports me,
keeping my practice free of obstruction.

Bell

Taking refuge in the Buddha in myself,
I aspire to help all people recognise their own awakened nature,
realising the mind of love.
Taking refuge in the Dharma in myself,
I aspire to help all people fully master the ways of practice
and walk together on the path of liberation.
Taking refuge in the Sangha in myself,
I aspire to help all people build fourfold communities,
to embrace all beings and support their transformation.

Two bells

Sharing the Merit (or Sutra Closing Verse)

Reciting the sutras, practising the way of awareness,
gives rise to benefits without limit.
We vow to share the fruits with all beings.
We vow to offer tribute to parents, teachers, friends, and numerous beings
who give guidance and support along the path.

Three bells

3.2 Recitation Ceremonies

Recitation of the Three Refuges, the Two Promises & the Five Mindfulness Trainings

To open the ceremony

Any of the following may be included (see earlier in this Chapter 3.1):

- ◆ Sitting Meditation (12 minutes),
- ◆ Incense Offering, or
- ◆ Touching of the Earth



Mindfulness Trainings Recitation Booklet

Sutra Opening Verse

Three bells

Namo Tassa Bhagavato Arahato Samma Sambuddhassa
 Namō Tassa Bhagavato Arahato Samma Sambuddhassa
 Namō Tassa Bhagavato Arahato Samma Sambuddhassa

Bell

The Dharma is deep and lovely.
 We now have a chance to see,
 study, and practise it.
 We vow to realise its true meaning.

Bell

The Insight that Brings Us to the Other Shore

Avalokiteshvara
 while practising deeply with
 the Insight that Brings Us to the Other Shore,
 suddenly discovered that
 all of the five Skandhas are equally empty,
 and with this realisation
 he overcame all Ill-being.

“Listen Sariputra,
 this Body itself is Emptiness
 and Emptiness itself is this Body.
 This Body is not other than Emptiness
 and Emptiness is not other than this Body.
 The same is true of Feelings,
 Perceptions, Mental Formations,
 and Consciousness.



Listen Sariputra,
all phenomena bear the mark of Emptiness;
their true nature is the nature of
no Birth no Death,
no Being no Non-being,
no Defilement no Purity,
no Increasing no Decreasing.

That is why in Emptiness,
Body, Feelings, Perceptions,
Mental Formations and Consciousness
are not separate self-entities.

The Eighteen Realms of Phenomena
which are the six Sense Organs,
the six Sense Objects,
and the six Consciousnesses
are also not separate self-entities.

The Twelve Links of Interdependent Arising
and their Extinction
are also not separate self-entities.
Ill-being, the Causes of Ill-being,
The End of Ill-being, the Path,
insight and attainment,
are also not separate self-entities.

Whoever can see this
no longer needs anything to attain.

Bodhisattvas who practise
the Insight that Brings Us to the Other Shore
see no more obstacles in their mind,
and because there
are no more obstacles in their mind,
they can overcome all fear,
destroy all wrong perceptions
and realise Perfect Nirvana.

All Buddhas in the past, present and future
by practising the Insight that Brings Us to the Other Shore
are all capable of attaining
Authentic and Perfect Enlightenment.

Therefore Sariputra,
 it should be known that
 the Insight that Brings Us to the Other Shore
 is a Great Mantra,
 the most illuminating mantra,
 the highest mantra,
 a mantra beyond compare,
 the True Wisdom that has the power
 to put an end to all kinds of suffering.

Therefore let us proclaim
 a mantra to praise
 the Insight that Brings Us to the Other Shore.

Gate, Gate, Paragate, Parasamgate, Bodhi Svaha!
Gate, Gate, Paragate, Parasamgate, Bodhi Svaha!
Gate, Gate, Paragate, Parasamgate, Bodhi Svaha!"

Two bells

Introductory Words

Today the community has gathered to recite the Three Refuges, the Two Promises and the Five Mindfulness Trainings. First we will recite the Three Refuges and the Two Promises. Young members of the community, please come forward. Upon hearing the sound of the bell, please bow three times to show your gratitude to the Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha.

Three Bells – the young people touch the Earth once with each of the three bells.

The Three Refuges

Young students of the Buddha, you have taken refuge in the Buddha, the one who shows you the way in this life; in the Dharma, the way of understanding and love; and in the Sangha, the community that lives in harmony and awareness. It is beneficial to recite the Three Refuges regularly. Will the entire community please join the young people in repeating after me:

I take refuge in the Buddha,
 the one who shows me the way in this life.

Bell

I take refuge in the Dharma,
 the way of understanding and love.

Bell

I take refuge in the Sangha,
 the community that lives in harmony and awareness.

Two bells



The Two Promises *(for children)*

Young students of the Buddha, we have completed the recitation of the Three Refuges. Now we will recite the Two Promises that you have made with the Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha. Will the entire community please join the young people in repeating after me:

I vow to develop understanding, in order to live peacefully with people, animals, plants and minerals.

This is the first promise you have made with the Buddha, our teacher. Have you tried to learn more about it and to keep your promise during the past (two) weeks?

Bell

I vow to develop compassion, in order to protect the lives of people, animals, plants and minerals.

This is the second promise you have made with the Buddha, our teacher. Have you tried to learn more about it and to keep your promise during the past (two) weeks?

Bell

Young students of the Enlightened One, understanding and love are the two most important teachings of the Buddha. If we do not make the effort to be open, to understand the suffering of other people, we will not be able to love them and to live in harmony with them. We should also try to understand and protect the lives of animals, plants and minerals and live in harmony with them. If we cannot understand, we cannot love. The Buddha teaches us to look at living beings with the eyes of love and understanding. Please learn to practise this teaching.

Young people, upon hearing the sound of the bell, please stand up and bow three times to the Three Jewels, and then you can leave.

Three Bells – the young people touch the Earth once with each of the three bells



Sanghakarman Procedure

Sanghakarman Master: Has the entire community assembled?

Sangha Convenor: The entire community has assembled.

Sanghakarman Master: Is there harmony in the community?

Sangha Convenor: Yes, there is harmony.

Sanghakarman Master: Is there anyone not able to be present who has asked to be represented and who has declared themselves to have done their best to study and practise the mindfulness trainings?

Sangha Convenor: No, there is not. Or Yes, [name], for health reasons, cannot be at the recitation today. They have asked [name] to represent them and declares that they have done their best to study and practise the mindfulness trainings.

Sanghakarman Master: Why has the community assembled today?

Sangha convenor: The community has assembled to practise the recitation of the Five Mindfulness Trainings.

Sanghakarman Master: Noble community, please listen. Today, [date], has been declared to be the Mindfulness Training Recitation Day. The community has assembled at the appointed time and is ready to hear and to recite the mindfulness trainings in an atmosphere of harmony. Thus, the recitation can proceed. Is this statement clear and complete?

Everyone: Clear and complete.

(Repeat question and answer three times)

Bell

Reciting the Five Mindfulness Trainings

Dear Sangha, this is the moment when we enjoy reciting the Five Mindfulness Trainings together. The Five Mindfulness Trainings represent the Buddhist vision for a global spirituality and ethic. They are a concrete expression of the Buddha's teachings on the Four Noble Truths and the Noble Eightfold Path, the path of right understanding and true love, leading to healing, transformation and happiness for ourselves and for the world. To practise the Five Mindfulness Trainings is to cultivate the insight of interbeing, or Right View, which can remove all discrimination, intolerance, anger, fear and despair. If we live according to the Five Mindfulness Trainings, we are already on the path of a bodhisattva. Knowing we are on that path, we are not lost in confusion about our life in the present or in fears about the future.

Please listen to each mindfulness training with a serene mind, breathe mindfully and answer yes silently, every time you see that you have made an effort to study, practise and observe the mindfulness training read.



The First Mindfulness Training: Reverence for life

Aware of the suffering caused by the destruction of life, I am committed to cultivating the insight of interbeing and compassion, and to learning ways to protect the lives of people, animals, plants and our Earth. I am determined not to kill, not to let others kill and not to support any act of killing in the world, in my thinking or in my way of life. 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.

This is the first of the Five Mindfulness Trainings. Have you made an effort to study, practise and observe it during the past month (two weeks)?

(3 breaths) [Bell]

The Second Mindfulness Training: True Happiness

Aware of the suffering caused by exploitation, social injustice, stealing and oppression, I am committed to practising generosity in my thinking, speaking and acting. I am determined not to steal and not to possess anything that should belong to others; and I will share my time, energy and material resources with those who are in need. I will practise looking deeply to see that the happiness and suffering of others are not separate from my own happiness and suffering; that true happiness is not possible without understanding and compassion; and that running after wealth, fame, power and sensual pleasures can bring much suffering and despair. 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. I am committed to practising Right Livelihood so that I can help reduce the suffering of living beings on Earth and reverse the process of global warming.

This is the second of the Five Mindfulness Trainings. Have you made an effort to study, practise and observe it during the past month (two weeks)?

(3 breaths) [Bell]

The Third Mindfulness Training: True Love

Aware of the suffering caused by sexual misconduct, I am committed to cultivating responsibility and learning ways to protect the safety and integrity of individuals, couples, families and society. Knowing that sexual desire is not love and that sexual activity motivated by craving always harms myself as well as others, I am determined not to engage in sexual relations without true love and a deep, long-term commitment made known to my family and friends. I will do everything in my power to protect children from sexual abuse and to prevent couples and families from being broken by sexual misconduct. Seeing that body and mind are in unison, I am committed to learning appropriate ways to take care of my sexual energy and to cultivate loving kindness, compassion, joy and inclusiveness which are the four basic elements of true love, for my greater happiness and the greater happiness of others. Practising true love, I know that I will continue beautifully in the future.

This is the third of the Five Mindfulness Trainings. Have you made an effort to study, practise and observe it during the past month (two weeks)?

(3 breaths) [Bell]

The Fourth Mindfulness Training: Loving Speech and Deep Listening

Aware of the suffering caused by unmindful speech and the inability to listen to others, I am committed to cultivating loving speech and compassionate listening in order to relieve suffering and to promote reconciliation and peace in myself and among other people, ethnic and religious groups and nations. Knowing that words can create happiness or suffering, I am committed to speaking truthfully using words that inspire confidence, joy and hope. When anger is manifesting in me, I am determined not to speak. I will practise mindful breathing and walking in order to recognise and to look deeply into my anger. I know that the roots of anger can be found in my wrong perceptions and lack of understanding of the suffering in myself and in the other person. I will speak and listen in a way that can help myself and the other person to release suffering and see the way out of difficult situations. I am determined not to spread news that I do not know to be certain and not to utter words that can cause division or discord. I will practise Right Diligence to nourish my capacity for understanding, love, joy and inclusiveness and gradually transform anger, violence and fear that lie deep in my consciousness.

This is the fourth of the Five Mindfulness Trainings. Have you made an effort to study, practise and observe it during the past month (two weeks)?

(3 breaths) [Bell]

The Fifth Mindfulness Training: Nourishment and Healing

Aware of the suffering caused by unmindful consumption, I am committed to cultivating good health, both physical and mental, for myself, my family and my society by practising mindful eating, drinking and consuming. I will practise looking deeply into my consumption of the Four Kinds of Nutriment, namely edible foods, sense impressions, volition and consciousness. I am determined not to gamble, or to use alcohol, drugs, or any other products which contain toxins, such as certain websites, electronic games, TV programs, films, magazines, books and conversations. I will practise coming back to the present moment to be in touch with the refreshing, healing and nourishing elements in me and around me, not letting regrets and sorrow drag me back into the past nor letting anxieties, fear, or craving pull me out of the present moment. I am determined not to try to cover up loneliness, anxiety, or other suffering by losing myself in consumption. I will contemplate interbeing and consume in a way that preserves peace, joy and well-being in my body and consciousness and in the collective body and consciousness of my family, my society and the Earth.

This is the fifth of the Five Mindfulness Trainings. Have you made an effort to study, practise and observe it during the past month (two weeks)?

(3 breaths) [Bell]



Conclusion

Dear Sangha, we have recited the Five Mindfulness Trainings, the foundation of happiness for the individual, the family and society. We thank all our brothers and sisters for helping us to do it serenely. We should recite them regularly so that our study and practice of the Mindfulness Trainings can deepen day by day.

Two Bells

The Three Refuges *(recite or chant)*

I take refuge in the Buddha, the one who shows me the way in this life.
I take refuge in the Dharma, the way of understanding and of love.
I take refuge in the Sangha, the community that lives in harmony and awareness.

Bell

Dwelling in the refuge of Buddha, I clearly see the path of light and beauty in the world.
Dwelling in the refuge of the Dharma, I learn to open many doors on the path of transformation.
Dwelling in the refuge of Sangha, shining light that support me,
keeping my practice free of obstruction.

Bell

Taking refuge in the Buddha in myself, I aspire to help all people recognise their own awakened nature, realising the mind of love.
Taking refuge in the Dharma in myself, I aspire to help all people fully master the ways of practice and walk together on the path of liberation.
Taking refuge in the Sangha in myself, I aspire to help all people build fourfold communities, to embrace all beings and support their transformation.

Two bells

Sharing the Merit

Reciting the trainings, practising the way of awareness,
gives rise to benefits without limit.
We vow to share the fruits with all beings.
We vow to offer tribute to parents, teachers,
friends and numerous beings
Who give guidance and support along the path.

Three bells

Recitation of the Fourteen Mindfulness Trainings

To open the ceremony

Any of the following may be included:

- ◆ Sitting Meditation (12 minutes),
- ◆ Incense Offering, or
- ◆ Touching of the Earth

Sutra Opening Verse

Three bells

Namo Tassa Bhagavato Arahato Samma Sambuddhassa
 Namō Tassa Bhagavato Arahato Samma Sambuddhassa
 Namō Tassa Bhagavato Arahato Samma Sambuddhassa

Bell

The Dharma is deep and lovely.
 We now have a chance to see,
 study and practise it.
 We vow to realise its true meaning.

Bell

The Insight that Brings Us to the Other Shore

Avalokiteshvara
 while practising deeply with
 the Insight that Brings Us to the Other Shore,
 suddenly discovered that
 all of the five Skandhas are equally empty,
 and with this realisation
 he overcame all Ill-being.

“Listen Sariputra,
 this Body itself is Emptiness
 and Emptiness itself is this Body.
 This Body is not other than Emptiness
 and Emptiness is not other than this Body.
 The same is true of Feelings,
 Perceptions, Mental Formations,
 and Consciousness.

Listen Sariputra,
 all phenomena bear the mark of Emptiness;
 their true nature is the nature of
 no Birth no Death,



no Being no Non-being,
no Defilement no Purity,
no Increasing no Decreasing.

That is why in Emptiness,
Body, Feelings, Perceptions,
Mental Formations and Consciousness
are not separate self-entities.

The Eighteen Realms of Phenomena
which are the six Sense Organs,
the six Sense Objects,
and the six Consciousnesses
are also not separate self-entities.

The Twelve Links of Interdependent Arising
and their Extinction
are also not separate self-entities.
Ill-being, the Causes of Ill-being,
The End of Ill-being, the Path,
insight and attainment,
are also not separate self-entities.

Whoever can see this
no longer needs anything to attain.

Bodhisattvas who practise
the Insight that Brings Us to the Other Shore
see no more obstacles in their mind,
and because there
are no more obstacles in their mind,
they can overcome all fear,
destroy all wrong perceptions
and realise Perfect Nirvana.

All Buddhas in the past, present and future
by practising the Insight that Brings Us to the Other Shore
are all capable of attaining
Authentic and Perfect Enlightenment.

Therefore Sariputra,
it should be known that
the Insight that Brings Us to the Other Shore
is a Great Mantra,
the most illuminating mantra,
the highest mantra,
a mantra beyond compare,

the True Wisdom that has the power
to put an end to all kinds of suffering.

Therefore let us proclaim
a mantra to praise
the Insight that Brings Us to the Other Shore.

Gate, Gate, Paragate, Parasamgate, Bodhi Svaha!
Gate, Gate, Paragate, Parasamgate, Bodhi Svaha!
Gate, Gate, Paragate, Parasamgate, Bodhi Svaha!"

Two bells



Sanghakarman Procedure

Sanghakarman Master: Has the entire community assembled?

Sangha Convenor: The entire community has assembled.

Sanghakarman Master: Is there harmony in the community?

Sangha Convenor: Yes, there is harmony.

Sanghakarman Master: Is there anyone not able to be present who has asked to be represented and who has declared themselves to have done their best to study and practise the mindfulness trainings?

Sangha Convenor: No, there is not. *Or* Yes, [name], for health reasons, cannot be at the recitation today. They have asked [name] to represent them and declares that they have done their best to study and practise the mindfulness trainings.

Sanghakarman Master: Why has the community assembled today?

Sangha convenor: The community has assembled to practise the recitation of the Five Mindfulness Trainings.

Sanghakarman Master: Noble community, please listen. Today, [date], has been declared to be the Mindfulness Training Recitation Day. The community has assembled at the appointed time and is ready to hear and to recite the mindfulness trainings in an atmosphere of harmony. Thus, the recitation can proceed. Is this statement clear and complete?

Everyone: Clear and complete.

(Repeat question and answer three times)

Bell



Reciting the Fourteen Mindfulness Trainings

Dear Sangha, this is the moment when we enjoy reciting the Fourteen Mindfulness Trainings of the Order of Interbeing. The Fourteen Mindfulness Trainings are the very essence of the Order of Interbeing. They are the torch lighting our path, the boat carrying us, the teacher guiding us. They allow us to touch the nature of interbeing in everything that is and to see that our happiness is not separate from the happiness of others. Interbeing is not a theory; it is a reality that can be directly experienced by each of us at any moment in our daily lives. The Fourteen Mindfulness Trainings help us cultivate concentration and insight which free us from fear and the illusion of a separate self. Please listen to each mindfulness training with a serene mind. The mindfulness trainings serve as a clear mirror in which to look at ourselves. Say yes, silently, every time you see that you have made an effort to study, practise and observe the mindfulness training read.

These, then, are the Fourteen Mindfulness Trainings of the Order of Interbeing.

The First Mindfulness Training: Openness

Aware of the suffering created by fanaticism and intolerance, we are determined not to be 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 learn to look deeply and develop understanding and compassion. They are not doctrines to fight, kill or die for. We understand that fanaticism in its many forms is the result of perceiving things in a dualistic and discriminative manner. We will train ourselves to look at everything with openness and the insight of interbeing in order to transform dogmatism and violence in ourselves and in the world.

This is the first Mindfulness Training of the Order of Interbeing. Have we made an effort to study, practise and observe it during the past month?

(3 breaths) [Bell]

The Second Mindfulness Training: Non-Attachment to Views

Aware of the suffering created by attachment to views and wrong perceptions, we are determined to avoid being narrow-minded and bound to present views. We are committed to learning and practising non-attachment from views and being open to others' insights and experiences in order to benefit from the collective wisdom. Insight is revealed through the practice of compassionate listening, deep looking and letting go of notions rather than through the accumulation of intellectual knowledge. We are aware that the knowledge we presently possess is not changeless, absolute truth. Truth is found in life and we will observe life within and around us in every moment, ready to learn throughout our lives.

This is the second Mindfulness Training of the Order of Interbeing. Have we made an effort to study, practise and observe it during the past month?

(3 breaths) [Bell]

The Third Mindfulness Training: 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 narrowness through loving speech and compassionate dialogue.

This is the third Mindfulness Training of the Order of Interbeing. Have we made an effort to study, practise and observe it during the past month?

(3 breaths) [Bell]

The Fourth Mindfulness Training: Taking Care of Suffering

Aware that looking deeply at our own suffering can help us cultivate understanding and compassion, we are determined to come home to ourselves, to recognise, accept, embrace and listen to our own suffering with the energy of mindfulness. We will do our best not to run away from our suffering or cover it up through consumption, but practise conscious breathing and walking to look deeply into the roots of our suffering. We know we can only find the path leading to the transformation of suffering when we understand the roots of our suffering. Once we have understood our own suffering, we will be able to understand the suffering of others. We are committed to finding ways, including personal contact and using the telephone, electronic, audio-visual and other means, to be with those who suffer, so we can help them transform their suffering into compassion, peace and joy.

This is the fourth Mindfulness Training of the Order of Interbeing. Have we made an effort to study, practise and observe it during the past month?

(3 breaths) [Bell]

The Fifth Mindfulness Training: Compassionate, Healthy Living

Aware that happiness is rooted in peace, solidity, freedom and compassion, we are determined not to accumulate wealth while millions are hungry and dying, nor to take as the aim of our life fame, profit, wealth or sensual pleasure, which can bring much suffering and despair. We will practise looking deeply into how we nourish our body and mind with edible foods, sense impressions, volition and consciousness. We are committed not to gamble or to use alcohol, drugs or any other products that bring toxins into our own and the collective body and consciousness such as certain websites, electronic games, TV programs, films, magazines, books and conversations. We will consume in a way that preserves compassion, peace, joy and well-being in our bodies and consciousness and in the collective body and consciousness of our families, our society and the Earth.

This is the fifth Mindfulness Trainings of the Order of Interbeing. Have we made an effort to study, practise and observe it during the past month?

(3 breaths) [Bell]



The Sixth Mindfulness Training: Taking Care of Anger

Aware that anger blocks communication and creates suffering, we are committed to taking care of our energy of anger when it arises, and to recognising and transforming the seeds of anger that lie deep in our consciousness. When anger manifests, we are determined not to do or say anything, but to practise mindful breathing or mindful walking to acknowledge, embrace and look deeply into our anger. We know that the roots of anger are not outside of ourselves but can be found in our wrong perceptions and lack of understanding of the suffering in ourselves and the other person. By contemplating impermanence, we will be able to look with the eyes of compassion at ourselves and those we think are the cause of our anger and to recognise the preciousness of our relationships. We will practise Right Diligence in order to nourish our capacity of understanding, love, joy and inclusiveness, gradually transforming our anger, violence and fear and helping others do the same.

This is the sixth Mindfulness Training of the Order of Interbeing. Have we made an effort to study, practise and observe it during the past month?

(3 breaths) [Bell]

The Seventh Mindfulness Training: Dwelling Happily in the Present Moment

Aware that life is available only in the present moment, we are committed to training ourselves to live deeply each moment of daily life. We will try not to lose ourselves in dispersion or be carried away by regrets about the past, worries about the future, or craving, anger or jealousy in the present. We will practise mindful breathing to be aware of what is happening in the here and now. We are determined to learn the art of mindful living by touching the wondrous, refreshing and healing elements that are inside and around us, in all situations. In this way, we will be able to cultivate seeds of joy, peace, love and understanding in ourselves, thus facilitating the work of transformation and healing in our consciousness. We are aware that happiness depends primarily on our mental attitude and not on external conditions and that we can live happily in the present moment simply by remembering that we already have more than enough conditions to be happy.

This is the seventh Mindfulness Training of the Order of Interbeing. Have we made an effort to study, practise and observe it during the past month?

(3 breaths) [Bell]

The Eighth Mindfulness Training: True Community and Communication

Aware that lack of communication always brings separation and suffering, we are committed to training ourselves in the practice of compassionate listening and loving speech. Knowing that true community is rooted in inclusiveness and in the concrete practice of the harmony of views, thinking and speech, we will practise to share our understanding and experiences with members in our community in order to arrive at collective insight. We are determined to learn to listen deeply without judging or reacting and to refrain from uttering words that can create discord or cause the

community to break. Whenever difficulties arise, we will remain in our Sangha and practise looking deeply into ourselves and others to recognise all the causes and conditions, including our own habit energies, that have brought about the difficulties. We will take responsibility for all the ways we may have contributed to the conflict and keep communication open. We will not behave as a victim but be active in finding ways to reconcile and resolve all conflicts, however small.

This is the eighth Mindfulness Training of the Order of Interbeing. Have we made an effort to study, practise and observe it during the past month?

(3 breaths) [Bell]

The Ninth Mindfulness Training: Truthful and Loving Speech

Aware that words can create happiness or suffering, we are committed to learning to speak truthfully, lovingly and constructively. We will use only words that inspire joy, confidence and hope as well as promote reconciliation and peace in ourselves and among other people. We will speak and listen in a way that can help ourselves and others to transform suffering and see the way out of difficult situations. We are determined not to say untruthful things for the sake of personal interest or to impress people, nor to utter words that might cause division or hatred. We will protect the joy and harmony of our Sangha by refraining from speaking about the faults of another person in their absence and always ask ourselves whether our perceptions are correct. We will speak only with the intention to understand and help transform the situation. We will not spread rumours nor criticize or condemn things of which we are not sure. We will do our best to speak out about situations of injustice, even when doing so may make difficulties for us or threaten our safety.

This is the ninth Mindfulness Training of the Order of Interbeing. Have we made an effort to study, practise and observe it during the past month?

(3 breaths) [Bell]

The Tenth Mindfulness Training: Protecting and Nourishing the Sangha

Aware that the essence and aim of a Sangha is the practice of understanding and compassion, we are determined not to use the Buddhist community for personal power or profit or transform our community into a political instrument. However, as members of a spiritual community, we should take a clear stand against oppression and injustice. We should strive to change the situation, without taking sides in a conflict. We are committed to looking with the eyes of interbeing and learning to see ourselves and others as cells in one Sangha body. As a true cell in the Sangha body, generating mindfulness, concentration and insight to nourish ourselves and the whole community, each of us is at the same time a cell in the Buddha body. We will actively build brotherhood and sisterhood, flow as a river and practise to develop the three real powers - love, understanding and cutting through afflictions - to realise collective awakening.

This is the tenth Mindfulness Training of the Order of Interbeing. Have we made an effort to study, practise and observe it during the past month?

(3 breaths) [Bell]



The Eleventh Mindfulness Training: Right Livelihood

Aware that great violence and injustice have been done to our environment and society, we are committed not to live with a vocation that is harmful to humans or nature. We will do our best to select a livelihood that contributes to the wellbeing of all species on Earth and helps realise our ideal of understanding and compassion. Aware of economic, political and social realities around the world, as well as our interrelationship with the ecosystem, we are determined to behave responsibly as consumers and citizens. We will not invest in or purchase from companies that contribute to the depletion of natural resources, harm the Earth and deprive others of their chance to live.

This is the eleventh Mindfulness Training of the Order of Interbeing. Have we made an effort to study, practise and observe it during the past month?

(3 breaths) [Bell]

The Twelfth Mindfulness Training: Reverence for Life

Aware that much suffering is caused by war and conflict, we are determined to cultivate nonviolence, compassion and the insight of interbeing in our daily lives and promote peace education, mindful mediation and reconciliation within families, communities, ethnic and religious groups, nations and in the world. We are committed not to kill and not to let others kill. We will not support any act of killing in the world, in our thinking, or in our way of life. We will diligently practise deep looking with our Sangha to discover better ways to protect life, prevent war and build peace.

This is the twelfth Mindfulness Training of the Order of Interbeing. Have we made an effort to study, practise and observe it during the past month?

(3 breaths) [Bell]

The Thirteenth Mindfulness Training: Generosity

Aware of the suffering caused by exploitation, social injustice, stealing and oppression, we are committed to cultivating generosity in our way of thinking, speaking and acting. We will learn better ways to work for the wellbeing of people, animals, plants and minerals and will practise generosity by sharing our time, energy and material resources with those who are in need. We are determined not to steal and not to possess anything that should belong to others. We will respect the property of others, but will try to prevent others from profiting from human suffering or the suffering of other beings.

This is the thirteenth Mindfulness Training of the Order of Interbeing. Have we made an effort to study, practise and observe it during the past month?

(3 breaths) [Bell]



The Fourteenth Mindfulness Training: True Love

Aware that sexual desire is not love and that sexual relations motivated by craving cannot dissipate the feeling of loneliness but will create more suffering, frustration and isolation, we are determined not to engage in sexual relations without mutual understanding, love and a deep long-term commitment made known to our family and friends. Seeing that body and mind are one, we are committed to learning appropriate ways to take care of our sexual energy and to cultivating loving kindness, compassion, joy and inclusiveness for our own happiness and the happiness of others. We must be aware of future suffering that may be caused by sexual relations. We know that to preserve the happiness of ourselves and others, we must respect the rights and commitments of ourselves and others. We will do everything in our power to protect children from sexual abuse and to protect couples and families from being broken by sexual misconduct. We will treat our bodies with compassion and respect. We are determined to look deeply into the Four Nutriments and learn ways to preserve and channel our vital energies (sexual, breath, spirit) for the realisation of our bodhisattva ideal. We will be fully aware of the responsibility of bringing new lives into the world and will meditate upon their future environment.

This is the fourteenth Mindfulness Training of the Order of Interbeing. Have we made an effort to study, practise and observe it during the past month?

(3 breaths) [Bell]

Concluding Words

Brothers and sisters, we have recited the Fourteen Mindfulness Trainings of the Order of Interbeing as the community has wished. We thank all our sisters and brothers for helping us to do it serenely.

Bell

The Three Refuges *(recite or chant)*

I take refuge in the Buddha, the one who shows me the way in this life.

I take refuge in the Dharma, the way of understanding and of love.

I take refuge in the Sangha, the community that lives in harmony and awareness.

Bell

Dwelling in the refuge of Buddha, I clearly see the path of light and beauty in the world.

Dwelling in the refuge of the Dharma, I learn to open many doors on the path of transformation.

Dwelling in the refuge of Sangha, shining light that support me,
keeping my practice free of obstruction.

Bell

Taking refuge in the Buddha in myself, I aspire to help all people recognise their own awakened nature, realising the mind of love.

Taking refuge in the Dharma in myself, I aspire to help all people fully master the ways of practice and walk together on the path of liberation.

Taking refuge in the Sangha in myself, I aspire to help all people build fourfold communities, to embrace all beings and support their transformation.

Two bells

Sharing the Merit

Reciting the trainings, practising the way of awareness,
Gives rise to benefits without limit.

We vow to share the fruits with all beings.

We vow to offer tribute to parents, teachers,

Friends and numerous beings

Who give guidance and support along the path.

Three bells





3.3 Touchings of the Earth – prostrations

The Three Touchings of the Earth

Guidelines for this practice, written by Thich Nhat Hanh, are given in Chapter 1.14 of this Manual. These will be helpful to those offering the ceremony in their own community. Facilitators may also like to consider beforehand, whether they wish to adapt the text below to be more appropriate to those who will take part in the Three Touchings of the Earth.



1. Touching the Earth, I connect with ancestors and descendants of both my spiritual and my blood families.

Bell – all touch the Earth

(Text to be read by the facilitator and contemplated by those prostrating, adapted suitably for those taking part in the ceremony.)

My spiritual ancestors include the Buddha, the Bodhisattvas, the noble Sangha of Buddhist disciples, *[include names of others you would like to include]* and my own spiritual teachers still alive or already passed away. They are present in me because they have transmitted to me seeds of peace, wisdom, love and happiness. They have woken up in me my resource of understanding and compassion. When I look at all my spiritual ancestors, I see those who are perfect in the practice of the mindfulness trainings, understanding and compassion, and those who are still imperfect. I accept them all because I see within myself shortcomings and weaknesses.

Aware that my practice of mindfulness trainings is not always perfect, and that I am not always as understanding and compassionate as I would like to be, I open my heart and accept all my spiritual descendants. Some of my descendants practise the mindfulness trainings, understanding and compassion in a way which invites confidence and respect, but there are also those who come across many difficulties and are constantly subject to ups and downs in their practice.

In the same way, I accept all my ancestors on my mother's side and my father's side of the family. I accept all their good qualities and their virtuous actions, and I also accept all their weaknesses. I open my heart and accept all my blood descendants with their good qualities, their talents, and also their weaknesses.

My spiritual ancestors, blood ancestors, spiritual descendants and blood descendants are all part of me. I am them and they are me. I do not have a separate self. All exist as part of a wonderful stream of life which is constantly moving.

Three breaths

Bell – all stand up

2. Touching the earth, I connect with all people and all species that are alive at this moment in this world with me.

Bell – everyone touches the Earth

I am one with the wonderful pattern of life that radiates out in all directions. I see the close connection between myself and others, how we share happiness and suffering. I am one with those who were born disabled or who have become disabled because of war, accident or illness. I am one with those who are caught in a situation of war or oppression. I am one with those who find no happiness in family life, who have no roots and no peace of mind, who are hungry for understanding and love and who are looking for something beautiful, wholesome and true to embrace and to believe in. I am someone at the point of death who is very afraid and does not know what is going to happen. I am a child who lives in a place where there is miserable poverty and disease, whose legs and arms are like sticks and who has no future. I am also the manufacturer of bombs that are sold to poor countries.

I am the frog swimming in the pond and I am also the snake who needs the body of the frog to nourish its own body. I am the caterpillar or the ant that the bird is looking for to eat, and I am also the bird that is looking for the caterpillar or the ant. I am the forest that is being cut down. I am the rivers and the air that are being polluted, and I am also the person who cuts down the forest and pollutes the rivers and the air. I see myself in all species and I see all species in me.

I am one with the great beings who have realised the truth of no birth and no death and are able to look at the forms of birth and death, happiness and suffering, with calm eyes. I am one with those people – who can be found a little bit everywhere – who have sufficient peace of mind, understanding and love, who are able to touch what is wonderful, nourishing and healing, who also have the capacity to embrace the world with a heart of love and arms of caring action. I am someone who has enough peace, joy and freedom and is able to offer fearlessness and joy to living beings around themselves. I see that I am not lonely and cut off. The love and the happiness of great beings on this planet help me not to sink in despair. They help me to live my life in a meaningful way with true peace and happiness. I see them all in me and I see myself in all of them.

Three breaths

Bell – all stand up





3. Touching the earth, I let go of my idea that I am this body and my life span is limited.

Bell – all touch the Earth

I see that this body, made up of the four elements, is not really me and I am not limited by this body. I am part of a stream of life of spiritual and blood ancestors, which for thousands of years has been flowing into the present and flows on for thousands of years into the future. I am one with my ancestors. I am one with all people and all species, whether they are peaceful and fearless, or suffering and afraid.

At this very moment, I am present everywhere on this planet. I am also present in the past and in the future. The disintegration of this body does not touch me, just as when the plum blossom falls, it does not mean the end of the plum tree. I see myself as a wave on the surface of the ocean. My nature is the ocean water. I see myself in all the other waves and all the other waves in me. The appearance and disappearance of the form of the wave does not affect the ocean.

My Dharma body and spiritual life are not subject to birth and death. I see the presence of myself before my body manifested and after my body has disintegrated. Even in this moment, I see how I exist elsewhere than in this body. Seventy or eighty years is not my lifespan. My lifespan, like the lifespan of a leaf or of a Buddha, is limitless. I have gone beyond the idea that I am a body that is separated in space and time from all other forms of life.

Three breaths

Bell – all stand up



The Five Touchings of the Earth

The prostrations in this longer version, to be found in *Chanting from the Heart*, are as follows:

1. We bow down in gratitude to all ancestors in our blood family
2. We bow down in gratitude to all ancestors in our spiritual family
3. We bow down in gratitude to this land and all the ancestors who made it available
4. We bow down in gratitude and compassion to transmit our energy to those we love
5. We bow down in understanding and compassion to reconcile ourselves to all those who have made us suffer.