



Name: _____

Date: _____

Grade: _____

TEACHER TRAINING: PART I (Fall Term)

ANSWER KEY FOR CLASS FIVE

- 1) What are the two functions or purposes in studying the qualities of an ideal teacher?

First, such a study helps you in your own personal search for your own perfect teacher; you look for a teacher who manifests some or all of these qualities to you. Second, a list of the qualities that make up an ideal teacher gives each of us something to strive for and develop in our selves if we are to serve others by teaching.

- 2) Explain what Geshe Michael means when he says that the perfect teacher should have “a big toolbox.”

They should have a wide and deep knowledge of many different masters’ work. “You are looking to find and you are looking to become a master who knows many great methods of doing what they do, and they are very good at each of them.”

- 3) What does it mean to say that teacher should be like “the air we breathe?”

The teacher should be available to his or her students. “And so regardless of what qualities they may have, it doesn’t matter if they are not available. If you can’t be with them or if they haven’t made some plan for making someone available to you, then it doesn’t matter.”

- 4) “Teachers should be like a master sculptor of every stone, with a master plan.” Explain.

A great teacher should be able to size up a student and have a vision of what the student could become. And the teacher should have a master plan for the student, perhaps covering as much as twenty to thirty years.

- 5) Why is a good teacher like an echo?

They must provide feedback to the student as to how the student is doing. They should require some kind of homework of the student, and then check to see that the student did the work and how they did.



6) Why is a master teacher like a “general with orders?”

A teacher is like a general in that he or she should have an aura of authority and be in control of the class. “There should be a sense of respect for this teacher. . . [and] the teacher should try to encourage this atmosphere of respect for the teacher and for what’s being taught. Students shouldn’t interrupt the teacher frequently, or sidetrack the class. The teacher should be in control of the class.” And the teacher should have “orders,” in the sense of clear expectations of the student.

7) A teacher should be like “a chameleon on the same old rock.” Explain.

The “same old rock” refers to the fact that a teacher should be consistent in two ways: the teachings should be internally free of contradiction, and the path they show you much be consistent – starting with a good foundation and then building to higher levels. The teacher should be like a chameleon in the sense that the teacher should not be afraid to give the appearance of contradicting themselves, if they think it would help the student learn and grow.

8) Why should a good teacher be “a teacher of learning and teaching?”

A teacher must teach a student *how* to be a good student, how to learn what the teacher is trying to teach them. “If a student can’t learn how to be a student and follow instructions, even from the first day, then it will surely fail; they will never learn anything.” And from the very beginning, a teacher should be teaching the student how to teach, especially by example.

9) Why is a good teacher “glad to go to first grade?”

Great teachers love to learn and are not reluctant to humble themselves before other teachers and learn something new. “Great teachers are never finished learning and are always willing to go back to first grade.”

10) A good teacher knows when it’s time to give “a push from the nest.” Explain.

A good teacher knows that it is easy for some kind of co-dependency to arise between him and her and the student. A good teacher remembers that the goal is to create a new master and is happy when the student goes off and starts teaching their own students.

11) Why should a good teacher practice “peer revelry?”

Great masters are never jealous of other masters, but rather “revel” in their successes. (This, by the way, is an important karmic cause for your own success as a teacher.)



12) In what ways is a master teacher like an “old pair of shoes.”

First, a teacher should not expect thanks or gratitude from the student, but rather “believe in what you’re teaching so much that you may never hear thanks, and you will never worry about it.” Second, the teacher is dependable, like a broken-in pair of shoes. A student should feel that the teacher will always be there for him or her.

13) Why should a good teacher be like “a new edition of an old book?”

A good teacher must first master the entire tradition and the masters who came before him or her. But then when it’s time to teach what one has learned, a master teacher makes it a “new edition,” making the knowledge relevant and accessible to the audience. (This is also sometimes known as “core and morph.”)

14) What is meant by the phrase “one or two gathered in the arena?”

It means that a teacher should be both happy to teach even one or two students, if that’s all that show up, but should also develop the ability to get up in front of many people and teach without being nervous, without “being so proud as to worry about how you look or what people will say.”