

Discovering BUDDHISM

4. The Spiritual Teacher - Sample Assessment Questions

1. Expound on four of the advantages of properly relying on a spiritual teacher and four disadvantages of improper reliance.
2. Discuss the qualities required from the side of the student to have a beneficial student – teacher relationship.
3. Explain the practice of developing proper reliance on the spiritual teacher through thought and action.
4. What benefit do we receive from thinking about the kindness of the spiritual teacher?
5. Describe your understanding of how one goes about looking for and evaluating a prospective spiritual teacher.
6. Explain how to work with a crisis in your relationship with your spiritual mentor.

THE SPIRITUAL TEACHER

Suggested Public Exam Questions

1. Need for a teacher. Why does one need a spiritual teacher?
2. Finding a teacher. How does one find a teacher?
3. Different levels of teachers. What are the different levels of a spiritual teacher and how does one relate to the different levels?
(Levels: individual liberation, Mahayana teachers, tantric teachers.
Relate to teachers respectively as: representatives of the Buddha, like a Buddha, a Buddha)
4. Why does one need different types of spiritual teachers at different levels of spiritual practice?
5. Qualifications of a teacher. What are the qualifications of a Mahayana teacher? (ten from *Liberation in the Palm of Your Hand*)
6. Qualifications of a disciple. What are the qualifications of a Mahayana disciple? (intelligent, open-minded, willing to make effort)
7. Dealing with difficulties. What does one do when one encounters problems in a spiritual teacher & disciple relationship? What are some techniques that can be applied to restore the relationship?
8. What does one do if it just is not working despite the techniques?
9. Importance of checking up. Discuss the importance of examining the qualities of a potential spiritual teacher.
10. Respecting teachers. How should we view teachers of other traditions or teachers who teach something we do not understand or believe to be true?