A Conversation Worth Having - An Already Here Adventure

A choose-your-own-adventure practice book

An original temple welcome, complete practices, and choices you can follow on paper.

Begin at The temple garden on page 2.

Scenes are shuffled. Follow the page numbers at the end of each scene. You can stop or change direction whenever you choose.

The temple garden

An original fictional welcome

You step through a small gate into a well-kept garden. Beyond it stands a small but beautiful Theravada Buddhist temple. Inside, one man sits in meditation. His face resembles Siddhartha as you have seen him imagined in art. Incense is burning. Three meditation pads lie before him.

You may sit or move on. If you sit, he opens his eyes, smiles, and greets you: “Welcome. The path is wide. You may begin with your own ordinary experience, and see what it reveals.”

Your adventure

A Conversation Worth Having. A disagreement at a shared table becomes a chance to listen, clarify, answer, and sometimes pause.

“Try each invitation gently. You can question it, change direction, rest, or leave. Keep what helps and let the rest go. Ancient wisdom is an invitation to investigate, not a promise of an experience.”

Reading this book

Start using either choice below. After that, follow the page numbers rather than reading straight through. Scenes are deliberately shuffled; one scene may run over several pages. Choices appear at its end. In a PDF reader you can also click them. Keep a finger or bookmark at your current page when you pause. Two optional meetings with the man lead back to the exact scene you left.

Story and practice

This adventure is original fiction with modern practice pauses inspired by ancient wisdom. Choices and consequences are story devices, not historical events.

Detailed adaptation notes and gaps are available at the back of the book, so the telling can unfold without stopping for every editorial explanation.

Sources and wisdom

Topics for discussion

Choose what comes next

Sit, listen, and begin - turn to page 4.

Move on and enter the adventure - turn to page 4.

Optional: read how this telling was made - turn to page 45.

A Conversation Worth Having

At a shared table, two people remember the same small agreement differently. A reply is forming. The adventure begins before anyone needs to win.

The man begins a telling that will accompany the choices ahead. Its ancient lesson is larger than these brief exercises; the present-day scene is our invented doorway into it.

Picture a gathering where people are discussing what happened, what may happen, and what is happening now. The teaching turns attention from the subject alone toward the people doing the speaking. A person can be known by how they handle a question.

Notice, without grading

What was observable, and what would be useful next?

Sources and wisdom

Reflection on action

Topics for discussion

Choose what comes next

Begin with an ordinary moment - turn to page 30.

Explore a fictional shortcut - turn to page 21.

Step off the path for now - turn to page 15.

Optional: visit the man in the temple - the garden does not hurry - turn to page 25.

An uncomfortable correction

You must make the effort yourself.

Being corrected may feel unpleasant. Notice the feeling and the impulse that follows without turning either into an instruction.

A correction is offered to you. It may be partly right, wholly right, or based on a misunderstanding. The source asks people to remain with sound grounds rather than change the rules to escape discomfort. You can examine the particular correction without deciding whether you have been defeated as a person.

Practice pause

Unpleasant, and the response

1. Notice

If a harmless itch or small irritation is already present, notice it briefly. Never create discomfort.

2. Distinguish

Notice the unpleasant quality and any demand that it end.

3. Watch

Are these distinguishable? Adjust or scratch whenever you wish; do not endure pain.

4. Release

Take care of your comfort and finish the experiment.

5. Return

Let the exploration end. Notice your surroundings and the support beneath you. Resume ordinary activity when you feel ready.

6. Make It Yours

If this works for you, make it part of your practice. If it does not, let it go.

Notice, without grading

What was observable, and what would be useful next?

Sources and wisdom

Reflection on action

The arrow

Topics for discussion

Choose what comes next

Continue - turn to page 22.

Step off the path for now - turn to page 15.

Correct the part you can correct

If you misquoted or spoke harshly, a specific correction can be enough to begin repair. The other person chooses their response.

There is a part you can correct. The correction can be plain. It does not have to be wrapped in an explanation that secretly takes it back. In this original scene, the other person need not reward you immediately. Honesty can still help make the next exchange less tangled.

A modern practice pause

After the choice

Before you begin

Choose a safe, ordinary situation. You may pause or finish at any time.

Take care

Repair does not require renewed contact with an unsafe person.

1. Invitation 1

Feel your support and recall one actual action from this adventure. If you only rehearsed it, keep that distinction clear.

2. Invitation 2

What effects did you observe on yourself and others? Separate observations from predictions, hopes, and bodily impressions.

3. Invitation 3

If you caused harm, acknowledge the specific action and consider a safe correction or repair. Ask a trusted person for guidance when needed; do not demand forgiveness.

4. Invitation 4

If the action was helpful, identify the conditions that made it easier and one way to repeat them. If the effects are unknown, leave them unknown and check later if appropriate.

5. Invitation 5

Set down the review. Return to an ordinary responsibility or rest; you do not need a verdict about your whole character.

After the practice

What will you keep, change, or check next time?

Notice, without grading

What was observable, and what would be useful next?

Sources and wisdom

Recognizing the direction

Reflection on action

Topics for discussion

Choose what comes next

Continue - turn to page 36.

Step off the path for now - turn to page 15.

A person across the table

You can want well-being for the other person while disagreeing, setting a boundary or ending the discussion.

Across the table is someone who also has a history with the subject. Understanding that does not require surrendering your own account. It gives a possible question a human destination. The shared table need not become a courtroom merely because the conversation matters.

Practice pause

Wishing well

1. Notice

Think of someone easy to like.

2. Distinguish

Offer a simple wish for their safety and well-being.

3. Watch

Notice the response. Later, if comfortable, include someone you feel neutral about.

4. Release

Let the wish rest. You need not start with a difficult relationship.

5. Return

Let the exploration end. Notice your surroundings and the support beneath you. Resume ordinary activity when you feel ready.

6. Make It Yours

If this works for you, make it part of your practice. If it does not, let it go.

Notice, without grading

What was observable, and what would be useful next?

Sources and wisdom

Cultivating care and steadiness

Reflection on action

Topics for discussion

Choose what comes next

Continue - turn to page 5.

Step off the path for now - turn to page 15.

Choose what would help this moment

Different circumstances may call for a different response. Each invitation returns to the shared stretch.

The man returns to another part of the lesson while the next choice has room to form.

Remain at the table while someone asks for clarification. Does the speaker stay with shared grounds, or change the rules when an answer becomes uncomfortable? Does a correction become an occasion for humiliation? A small mistake can be pounced on until nobody remembers the question.

Notice, without grading

What was observable, and what would be useful next?

Sources and wisdom

Reflection on action

Topics for discussion

Choose what comes next

Ask before answering - turn to page 16.

Take a respectful pause - turn to page 32.

Continue with the shared practice - turn to page 40.

Step off the path for now - turn to page 15.

A table nobody wants to return to

In this fictional branch, the speaker seizes on one mistaken word to humiliate the other person. Applause replaces understanding. The disagreement grows, and people stop bringing honest questions to the table.

The man does not rescue the imagined situation with a sudden lesson that makes its cost disappear. Someone has been left unheard, a need has gone unmet, or attention has become a wall. This consequence belongs to the fiction. You can retrace the turn and consider another response without practicing harm in your own life.

Notice, without grading

This fictional outcome is not a judgment about you. Retrace it, choose a different response, or leave for now.

Leaving the path

The man in the temple offers a quiet farewell. You can return to ordinary life now, or return to your bookmarked page another day. This pause is not a completed journey.

Sources and wisdom

Reflection on action

Topics for discussion

Choose what comes next

Try another direction - turn to page 21.

Visit the temple again - turn to page 2.

Be here for the discussion

Know your actual position. You can read the disagreement as fiction rather than rehearse a difficult personal encounter.

Before you speak, you arrive in the chair. The other person is still here, not yet reduced to the position you disagree with. The telling asks for the conditions of a conversation rather than a technique for winning it. A little contact with the room can help the next sentence belong to this meeting.

Practice pause

Knowing this position

1. Notice

Notice whether you are sitting, standing, walking, or lying down.

2. Distinguish

How do you know? Notice contact and position without adjusting them.

3. Watch

Stay with that ordinary knowledge briefly.

4. Release

Continue your activity; there is nothing to retain.

5. Return

Let the exploration end. Notice your surroundings and the support beneath you. Resume ordinary activity when you feel ready.

6. Make It Yours

If this works for you, make it part of your practice. If it does not, let it go.

Notice, without grading

What was observable, and what would be useful next?

Sources and wisdom

Establishing mindfulness

Reflection on action

Topics for discussion

Choose what comes next

Continue - turn to page 18.

Step off the path for now - turn to page 15.

The journey can continue elsewhere

A task, another person, rest or a different practice may be the next useful part of the walk.

The man leaves the gate unlatched. The imagined scene can remain unfinished while you answer a person, move your body, eat, or rest. Leaving the path is not made into a flaw in your character. A bookmark is an invitation, not a debt; the story can meet you again if returning is useful.

Notice, without grading

Your previous scene remains available in your account when signed in, or in this browser for guests when storage works.

An ordinary pause

You may close the book, explore ordinary life, and return to this page whenever you choose. Leaving can be part of walking the path.

Leaving the path

The man in the temple offers a quiet farewell. You can return to ordinary life now, or return to your bookmarked page another day. This pause is not a completed journey.

Sources and wisdom

Reflection on action

Topics for discussion

Choose what comes next

Visit the temple again - turn to page 2.

Ask before answering

There may be a useful question beneath the first reply. Leave room to learn what the other person means.

The man returns to another part of the lesson while the next choice has room to form.

Remain at the table while someone asks for clarification. Does the speaker stay with shared grounds, or change the rules when an answer becomes uncomfortable? Does a correction become an occasion for humiliation? A small mistake can be pounced on until nobody remembers the question.

Practice pause

Pause the next sentence

1. Notice

Choose a minor repetitive argument, not an urgent problem. This is an experiment with your thinking; no bodily response is required.

2. Distinguish

Notice the next example, rebuttal, or sentence you are about to add. Name its job: defending, predicting, blaming, or something else.

3. Watch

For a few seconds, leave that contribution unfinished and notice one ordinary sound or visible object. Does the argument keep going, pause, or return? “Still arguing” is an honest observation.

4. Release

Return to something ordinary. If the thought continues, do not wrestle with it.

5. Return

Let the exploration end. Notice your surroundings and the support beneath you. Resume ordinary activity when you feel ready.

6. Make It Yours

If this works for you, make it part of your practice. If it does not, let it go.

Notice, without grading

What was observable, and what would be useful next?

Sources and wisdom

Reflection on action

Relaxation of thoughts

Topics for discussion

Two sorts of thinking

Choose what comes next

Return to the shared stretch - turn to page 40.

Step off the path for now - turn to page 15.

Optional: visit the man in the temple - carry only what helps - turn to page 20.

Recognize the rehearsed reply

A reply can be recognized as a thought before it is delivered. Notice its direction without needing to suppress it.

A rehearsed reply is ready. It contains a perfectly timed correction and leaves no room for surprise. You notice that the reply was written before this version of the other person's thought had finished. The old teaching's concern for listening has found a very ordinary obstacle.

Practice pause

Recognize a thought

1. Notice

Sit comfortably and notice a thought when you become aware of one.

2. Distinguish

Is it a plan, a wish, an objection, or another kind of thinking?

3. Watch

Can you notice the thinking as well as its subject? There is no need to find a separate observer.

4. Release

Let attention return to the room. Nothing must be silenced.

5. Return

Let the exploration end. Notice your surroundings and the support beneath you. Resume ordinary activity when you feel ready.

6. Make It Yours

If this works for you, make it part of your practice. If it does not, let it go.

Notice, without grading

What was observable, and what would be useful next?

Sources and wisdom

Reflection on action

Topics for discussion

Two sorts of thinking

Choose what comes next

Continue - turn to page 26.

Step off the path for now - turn to page 15.

Carry only what helps

An optional meeting - original fiction

You find the man beside the temple garden. He makes room for you to sit. This meeting is a pause in the adventure, not a required practice.

The man speaks

“You may disagree without adding contempt. Ask a real question, acknowledge what you do not know, and consider whether this is the right time to continue.”

He smiles. “When you are ready, return to where you left the story.”

Sources and wisdom

Topics for discussion

Choose what comes next

Return to “Ask before answering” - turn to page 17.

A fictional shortcut

Turn a small mistake into a public defeat. This direction is a story to examine, not an instruction to perform.

A shortcut offers to remove the uncertainty that has made the journey human. You can hear why the offer is attractive without accepting its terms. The man leaves the fictional consequence available to inspect, and leaves another direction open. The point is discovery, not catching a reader in a mistake.

Notice, without grading

What was observable, and what would be useful next?

Sources and wisdom

Reflection on action

Topics for discussion

Choose what comes next

Follow the fictional consequence - turn to page 12.

Begin with the shared practice instead - turn to page 30.

Step off the path for now - turn to page 15.

An optional personal exploration

You can try a personally developed exercise, or continue without it. Its practical usefulness can be considered separately from its uncertain correspondence to the source.

The man distinguishes this doorway from the old teaching. A represented place or remembered experience may help someone explore attention; another person may find nothing useful in it. Neither response needs a defense. This part of the story gives you permission to experiment without treating a vivid image as evidence of an external event or a spiritual result.

Notice, without grading

What was observable, and what would be useful next?

Sources and wisdom

Reflection on action

Topics for discussion

Choose what comes next

Try remember a real source of support - turn to page 42.

Continue without this exploration - turn to page 34.

Step off the path for now - turn to page 15.

Truth and consequences

Before speaking, consider whether the statement is true and what effect saying it may have. Silence is also an action to consider.

Truth does not remove the need to consider consequences. An accurate detail can still be used to humiliate. The man tells how a conversation becomes unfit for understanding when anger, ridicule, and catching at minor errors become its work. You can feel the temptation without making it the next sentence.

A modern practice pause

Before the reply

Before you begin

Choose a safe, ordinary situation. You may pause or finish at any time.

Take care

No message needs to be sent. Keep boundaries and necessary protective action.

1. Invitation 1

Use a low-stakes message, real or imagined. Keep your hands comfortably supported. Leave urgent or unsafe situations to practical care.

2. Invitation 2

Before replying, ask whether the words are truthful and whether sending them is likely to harm you, the other person, or both. Bodily tension is information, not the answer to that question.

3. Invitation 3

Draft one accurate sentence without an accusation about a motive you cannot know. If it would cause avoidable harm, revise it or choose not to send it.

4. Invitation 4

If you speak or send, remain attentive to the effects. Stop or correct course when harm becomes apparent. You can also leave the draft unsent.

After the practice

What did you choose, and what still needs checking?

Notice, without grading

What was observable, and what would be useful next?

Sources and wisdom

Analysis of the path

Reflection on action

Topics for discussion

Choose what comes next

Continue - turn to page 9.

Step off the path for now - turn to page 15.

The garden does not hurry

An optional meeting - original fiction

You find the man beside the temple garden. He makes room for you to sit. This meeting is a pause in the adventure, not a required practice.

The man speaks

“A worthwhile conversation makes room for truth and for the person hearing it. Notice when the wish to understand changes into the wish to defeat.”

He smiles. “When you are ready, return to where you left the story.”

Sources and wisdom

Topics for discussion

Choose what comes next

Return to “A Conversation Worth Having” - turn to page 4.

What is the answer for?

Consider whether the forming answer aims to clarify, protect a boundary, impress, or injure. Mixed intentions can be noticed.

What is the answer supposed to do? Clear up a fact, ask what was meant, distinguish two claims, or decline a premise that cannot fairly be accepted? The cups have not moved, but the possibilities around them widen. The loudest reply is not automatically the most relevant one.

Practice pause

Recognition and intention

1. Notice

Look at an ordinary object such as a cup.

2. Distinguish

Distinguish its visible appearance, recognizing “cup,” and any intention to pick it up.

3. Watch

Is every part equally apparent? Does recognizing it immediately lead to doing something?

4. Release

Leave the cup alone or use it. Finish with ordinary activity.

5. Return

Let the exploration end. Notice your surroundings and the support beneath you. Resume ordinary activity when you feel ready.

6. Make It Yours

If this works for you, make it part of your practice. If it does not, let it go.

Notice, without grading

What was observable, and what would be useful next?

Sources and wisdom

How elaboration gathers

Reflection on action

The fourfold round

Topics for discussion

Choose what comes next

Continue - turn to page 11.

Step off the path for now - turn to page 15.

The next part belongs to your day

Let the story and exercises finish. You can choose an ordinary activity, take a rest or explore another adventure.

The place you have been exploring continues beyond your part in it. There is still work to do and information nobody possesses yet. The man is waiting at the temple to receive an ordinary person, not an example of a completed teaching. A useful direction can be carried without making the story’s ending settle the rest of your life.

Notice, without grading

Which small observation or action is worth carrying forward? Completion records participation only.

Back at the temple

You return through the well-kept garden to the small temple. Incense drifts past the three meditation pads. The man opens his eyes, smiles, and welcomes you back.

The man speaks

You visited a disagreement with room to listen, clarify and repair. Understanding can matter more than delivering the last word.

“You are welcome to walk another adventure, or return to ordinary life. There is nothing you need to prove before you go.”

An ending

To return to ordinary life, close the book here. Finishing marks participation, not an attainment.

Sources and wisdom

Reflection on action

Topics for discussion

Choose what comes next

Sit in the temple and begin a fresh visit - turn to page 2.

Before the next sentence

One meaningful word that brings peace is worth more than a speech of a thousand empty words.

Let the hands have a moment without a task. The pause leaves the choice of speaking or waiting open.

A shared table has become a place for a disagreement. Cups remain between the people, small signs that they expected an ordinary visit. The man recalls an old teaching that asks how a person responds to questions. A direct answer, a careful distinction, a question in return, or setting a confused question aside can each be the useful move.

Practice pause

Hands at rest

1. Notice

Place your hands on a comfortable surface. Notice their temperature and points of contact.

2. Invite

Notice the contact of your palm and fingers separately. If moving is comfortable, lift one finger a little and set it down; otherwise compare two points of contact.

3. Listen

Compare the pressure before and after, or between the two points. Which details can you describe? Temperature or pressure may stay unchanged.

4. Respond

When ready, pick up an ordinary object and notice its contact with your hands.

5. Return

Let the exploration end. Notice your surroundings and the support beneath you. Resume ordinary activity when you feel ready.

6. Make It Yours

If this works for you, make it part of your practice. If it does not, let it go.

Notice, without grading

What was observable, and what would be useful next?

Sources and wisdom

Establishing mindfulness

Reflection on action

Topics for discussion

Choose what comes next

Continue - turn to page 13.

Step off the path for now - turn to page 15.

Take a respectful pause

An immediate response is not always needed. A clear time to return can preserve the possibility of discussion.

The man returns to another part of the lesson while the next choice has room to form.

Move to the listening side. An answer is being offered, but the listener is already preparing a victory. Words reach the ears without being allowed to change anything. The teaching links real listening with understanding, and understanding with leaving what is harmful behind.

Practice pause

Put the next sentence down

1. Notice

Notice an unimportant argument running in words.

2. Distinguish

Distinguish the thought that is already here from the next sentence you are preparing.

3. Watch

For a moment, leave the next sentence unwritten. What remains?

4. Release

If words continue, let them. Turn toward an ordinary useful activity.

5. Return

Let the exploration end. Notice your surroundings and the support beneath you. Resume ordinary activity when you feel ready.

6. Make It Yours

If this works for you, make it part of your practice. If it does not, let it go.

Notice, without grading

What was observable, and what would be useful next?

Sources and wisdom

Reflection on action

Relaxation of thoughts

Topics for discussion

Choose what comes next

Return to the shared stretch - turn to page 40.

Step off the path for now - turn to page 15.

When one sentence becomes a whole person

A small disagreement can recruit a long history. Notice the story gathering before treating it as a complete account.

One sentence begins turning into a verdict about the speaker. You hear the change in yourself. The man leaves a pause there: a claim can be challenged without making every detail of a life stand trial. A little accuracy about the scope of a disagreement may save a great deal of needless suffering.

Practice pause

How a story gathers

1. Notice

Notice a mild irritation or expectation.

2. Distinguish

Separate what was seen or heard from recognition, feeling tone, and subsequent thinking.

3. Watch

Where do memory, prediction, and an urge join in? Do not assume you can recover the exact sequence.

4. Release

Leave the unfinished map and choose a useful next action.

5. Return

Let the exploration end. Notice your surroundings and the support beneath you. Resume ordinary activity when you feel ready.

6. Make It Yours

If this works for you, make it part of your practice. If it does not, let it go.

Notice, without grading

What was observable, and what would be useful next?

Sources and wisdom

How elaboration gathers

Reflection on action

Topics for discussion

Choose what comes next

Continue - turn to page 7.

Step off the path for now - turn to page 15.

When agreement is not available

Care may mean a practical boundary or a pause. You do not need a pleasing ending to act considerately.

Agreement is not available just now. There may still be a useful limit, a question to return to, or a respectful ending. The old lesson concerns the direction toward understanding and leaving harm behind, not the production of an agreeable scene at any cost. You can put the cup down without slamming it.

Practice pause

Meeting difficulty with care

1. Notice

Bring to mind an ordinary difficulty someone is having.

2. Distinguish

Notice judgment, if present, and the possibility of wishing them relief.

3. Watch

Offer care without taking over their experience. What changes, if anything?

4. Release

Choose practical kindness if appropriate, or leave the intention there.

5. Return

Let the exploration end. Notice your surroundings and the support beneath you. Resume ordinary activity when you feel ready.

6. Make It Yours

If this works for you, make it part of your practice. If it does not, let it go.

Notice, without grading

What was observable, and what would be useful next?

Sources and wisdom

Cultivating care and steadiness

Reflection on action

Topics for discussion

Choose what comes next

Continue - turn to page 38.

Step off the path for now - turn to page 15.

Let the conversation end

Keep your actions, speech, and thoughts free from harm, and you follow the way taught by the wise.

Leave the shared table. Return to one ordinary activity without replaying every sentence for a final verdict.

The chairs remain after the conversation. Something may be clearer, and something may be unfinished. The man asks what kind of next meeting the words have made possible. That question can continue in ordinary life without requiring the discussion to be replayed until every sentence has been perfected.

Practice pause

Ease without a review

1. Notice

If an easy moment is present, notice it. If not, simply sit comfortably.

2. Distinguish

Distinguish ease from excitement about being calm or checking whether it will last.

3. Watch

Let that extra evaluation rest briefly. Notice what remains.

4. Release

Look around and continue your day. There is no state to preserve.

5. Return

Let the exploration end. Notice your surroundings and the support beneath you. Resume ordinary activity when you feel ready.

6. Make It Yours

If this works for you, make it part of your practice. If it does not, let it go.

Notice, without grading

What was observable, and what would be useful next?

Sources and wisdom

Mindfulness of breathing

Reflection on action

Topics for discussion

Two sorts of thinking

Choose what comes next

Continue - turn to page 28.

Step off the path for now - turn to page 15.

Give a question room

A wise person removes harmful habits little by little, as a metalworker removes impurities from silver.

The next question might ask for a fact, a qualification or clarification. A pause can help you see which is useful.

You let a question remain in the room long enough to be heard. Perhaps it concerns what happened, perhaps what may happen next. The source includes both, and the present too. Keeping the subject clear can be a kind of care when the wish to defend a whole identity starts taking over.

Practice pause

A brief gap

1. Notice

Notice a nonessential impulse, such as opening another video.

2. Distinguish

If comfortable, allow a few seconds before acting. The duration is unimportant.

3. Watch

What is the impulse doing during this pause? Does another thought join it?

4. Release

Act or leave it. Do not delay necessary care or attention to your surroundings.

5. Return

Let the exploration end. Notice your surroundings and the support beneath you. Resume ordinary activity when you feel ready.

6. Make It Yours

If this works for you, make it part of your practice. If it does not, let it go.

Notice, without grading

What was observable, and what would be useful next?

Sources and wisdom

Establishing mindfulness

How elaboration gathers

Reflection on action

Topics for discussion

Choose what comes next

Continue - turn to page 23.

Step off the path for now - turn to page 15.

Remember a real source of support

A person or represented guardian may remind you of real support. The image is optional; make no claim that it can answer for the other person.

The man distinguishes this doorway from the old teaching. A represented place or remembered experience may help someone explore attention; another person may find nothing useful in it. Neither response needs a defense. This part of the story gives you permission to experiment without treating a vivid image as evidence of an external event or a spiritual result.

Practice pause

Give your guardians real names

Before you begin

Write the name of one trusted person, community resource, or professional you could contact. Let a guardian or meeting place in your imagined setting represent that real connection. If nobody comes to mind, identify a suitable support service instead.

Take care

Keep this brief, seated or lying safely. Stop at dizziness, panic, disorientation, an unsettling sense of unreality, or other concerning effects. Use the return steps. Do not push through; if effects persist or worry you, seek professional support. Unusual does not mean advanced.

1. Prepare

Write the name of one trusted person, community resource, or professional you could contact. Let a guardian or meeting place in your imagined setting represent that real connection. If nobody comes to mind, identify a suitable support service instead.

2. Experiment

With an ordinary point of support beneath you, rehearse “Could you listen for a few minutes?” Notice the difference between imagining help and preparing the first sentence. Speak, type, or use your usual communication method.

3. Compare

Notice whether imagined company changes the feel of being on your own. It may also suggest a clearer next step toward connection. Check how to reach that person or service and whether the request is appropriate. Contact them when useful and make a second option if needed.

4. Return

Look around and name familiar objects. Feel the chair or floor. Move your hands and feet. Stand or walk only when steady and appropriate, then resume ordinary activity.

5. Make It Yours

If this works for you, make it part of your practice. If it does not, let it go.

An optional personal exploration

This modern method is not established as an instruction in the referenced teaching. Try it only if useful; its relationship and limits are explained in the adaptation notes.

Notice, without grading

Was this useful today? An image, memory or feeling does not establish the source’s reported outcomes.

Sources and wisdom

Fruits of the contemplative life

Reflection on action

Topics for discussion

Choose what comes next

Return to the shared stretch - turn to page 34.

Step off the path for now - turn to page 15.

How this telling was made

Original telling and modern practice

The temple man, present-day settings, connective descriptions, and reader choices are original literary framing. Historical stories retain their recorded direction. Dialogue is modern paraphrase, not a claimed historical quotation. Practice pauses are modern invitations; reading an outcome does not establish that outcome in the reader.

About the adaptation

Original contemporary fiction and practice invitations informed by the linked wisdom sources. No invented event or dialogue is attributed to a historical teacher.

The source and this adventure

The wisdom reference discusses suitable answers, staying with the subject, listening and avoiding humiliation. This fictional disagreement and its bodily pauses are modern additions. A calm tone does not make a statement true, and productive discussion never requires remaining in an unsafe conversation.

Optional personal exploration

A person or represented guardian may remind you of real support. The image is optional; make no claim that it can answer for the other person. The exact method is not an instruction recovered from this source. Keep what helps and let the rest go.

Practice beyond the story

Short exercises and fictional outcomes do not complete the training or establish liberation. Ethical conduct, sustained practice, source study and suitable real-world support remain relevant. Your reflections are not collected.

Pause the next sentence

adaptation. Pause the next sentence: This invitation adapts an operation from the cited discourse: recognizing and not feeding unhelpful thought. Regulation or preference alone does not establish ethical skillfulness; all four efforts and consequences need consideration.

Put the next sentence down

adaptation. Put the next sentence down: This invitation adapts an operation from the cited discourse: leaving pursuit or elaboration. A temporary pause is not cessation of craving; useful thinking and necessary care remain available.

Hands at rest

supporting. Hands at rest: Attending to ordinary physical experience can prepare bodily mindfulness. This modern sensory comparison omits the full mindfulness framework and does not establish insight.

Knowing this position

adaptation. Knowing this position: This invitation adapts an operation from the cited discourse: knowing the body. This modern sensory comparison omits the full mindfulness framework and does not establish insight.

Meeting difficulty with care

adaptation. Meeting difficulty with care: This invitation adapts an operation from the cited discourse: cultivating care. Modern imagery, permission, and interpersonal techniques are adaptations; the full cultivation is not covered.

Ease without a review

adaptation. Ease without a review: This invitation adapts an operation from the cited discourse: settling body and mind. Natural breathing and temporary ease do not cover the sixteen trainings or establish deep collectedness.

Recognize a thought

adaptation. Recognize a thought: This invitation adapts an operation from the cited discourse: recognizing and not feeding unhelpful thought. Regulation or preference alone does not establish ethical skillfulness; all four efforts and consequences need consideration.

Recognition and intention

adaptation. Recognition and intention: This invitation adapts an operation from the cited discourse: distinguishing experiential categories. Changes in viewpoint, naming, or boundaries do not establish not-self, nonduality, or release.

A brief gap

adaptation. A brief gap: This invitation adapts an operation from the cited discourse: recognizing and investigating wanting. Regulation or preference alone does not establish ethical skillfulness; all four efforts and consequences need consideration.

Before the reply

adaptation. Before the reply: New practice addressing: Conduct in daily life. Original contemporary script. It introduces part of the cited training and requires real-world repetition; no attainment is inferred.

Wishing well

adaptation. Wishing well: This invitation adapts an operation from the cited discourse: cultivating care. Modern imagery, permission, and interpersonal techniques are adaptations; the full cultivation is not covered.

Unpleasant, and the response

adaptation. Unpleasant, and the response: This invitation adapts an operation from the cited discourse: recognizing feeling and response. Acceptance, soothing, or reduced distress alone does not establish source-based steadiness of mind or require accepting harm.

How a story gathers

adaptation. How a story gathers: This invitation adapts an operation from the cited discourse: recognizing and not feeding unhelpful thought. Regulation or preference alone does not establish ethical skillfulness; all four efforts and consequences need consideration.

After the choice

adaptation. After the choice: New practice addressing: Conduct in daily life. Original contemporary script. It introduces part of the cited training and requires real-world repetition; no attainment is inferred.

Give your guardians real names

uncertain. Give your guardians real names: An imagined form has a thematic resemblance to the mind-made-body passage; it may also be explored for its practical value. The uncertainty concerns textual correspondence, not a verdict on personal usefulness. Fruits of the contemplative life places the described a body represented in the mind after extensive conduct and concentration. These modern constructions are optional personal explorations, not evidence of that attainment. Keep what helps and let the rest go.

Sources and wisdom

Analysis of the path

Cultivating care and steadiness

Establishing mindfulness

Fruits of the contemplative life

How elaboration gathers

Mindfulness of breathing

Recognizing the direction

Reflection on action

Relaxation of thoughts

The arrow

The fourfold round

Topics for discussion

Two sorts of thinking

Choose what comes next

Return to the temple garden - turn to page 2.