

Exploration 11 (a repeat of Exploration 9):

Ideally do this exercise over 5 days and outside if possible. Pick one element and its colour a day: earth/golden, water/blue, air/green, fire/orangey red, space/white or free of colour. These can be quick, just a taste, and then move on. For each:

1. Remembering the importance of direct perception, being present with body and mind together, take a comfortable and relaxed position and have an example of the day's colour easily within the range of your eye gaze. Sit with the colour simply for a bit. Then...
2. As free of projections, associations, memories, feelings, and likes or dislikes as possible, imagine the element associated with the colour. What does that element smell like? What does it sound like? What does it taste like? What does it feel like? What does it look like? Then...
3. Go back to the colour and imagine the feeling quality of the element with the colour. Then...
4. Let it all go and relax without doing anything in particular until you feel ready to do something else or your thoughts start taking over. Before you stop, acknowledge that you are ending this portion of the exploration, then get up and move on.
5. After, note down some adjectives that describe the qualities, feelings, and energy tone associate with each colour/element combo.
6. Repeat steps 1-5 the next day, and so on, until you have explored all 5 colours and elements.
7. Reviewing your experience do you see how and why these colours and elements may be used as basic symbols for the different flavours of enlightened activity?

Exploration 12:

Repeat exercise 10, from class 5, but this time pick one or two Buddhist figures you are drawn to. List the adjectives and qualities, descriptors you associate with them.

Briefly, what is it that draws you to them?

What are their identifying characteristics? Do they have a certain outfit? Certain powers or power? A signature pose or movement? Something that they carry with them or who accompanies them? A certain hairstyle? A certain place they especially like? Or one they do not? Think of all the things that signify them and represent their qualities.

If you feel like it and have time, find one or more representations of them (suggested places to look besides any books you might be using a Google images search or go to a museum website, like Himalayan Art Resources).

If you feel like it and have time, make a representation of them.

Exploration 13:

Find a written version of the Heart Sutra in your language (readily available by searching the web). Or use the Four Immeasurables (see Resources page). If possible, but not necessary, find an audio version of the same (YouTube is a great source for such). Have at hand some paper and something to write with. Could be a big piece of blank paper and a brush or it could be a notebook and a pen—whatever you are comfortable with.

Sit comfortably and bring your body and mind to the present moment.

Chant the liturgy while continuing to sit simply. Imagine you are chanting it as a way to tell what happened on Vulture Peak Mountain. If you wish, you could also have a representation of Buddha in front of you. When finished...

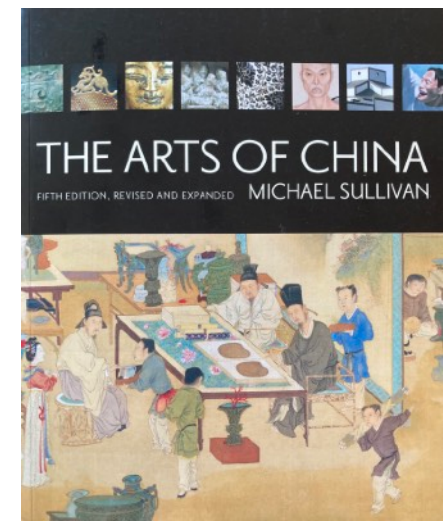
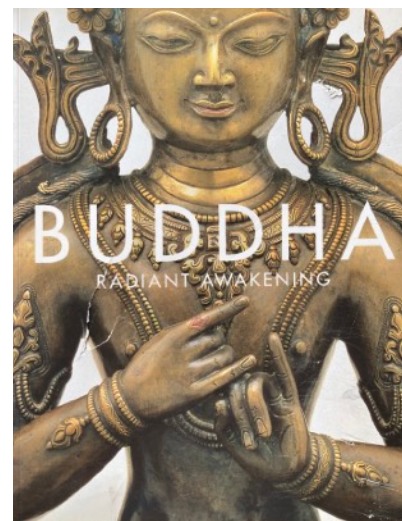
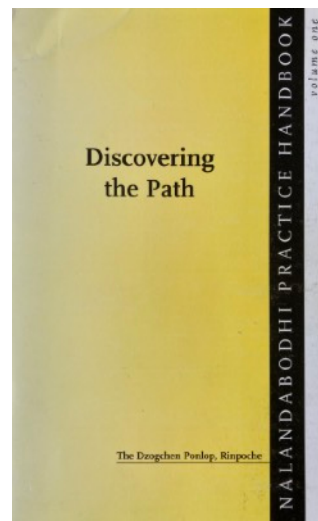
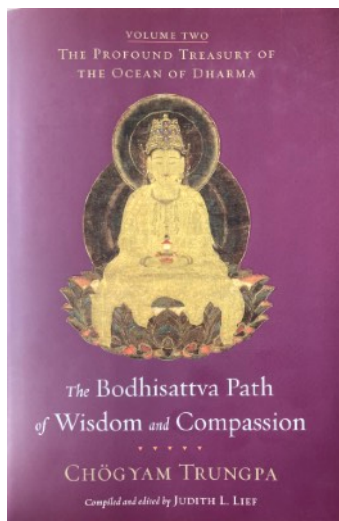
relax and sit until you are settled, then...

Pick up your writing implement and start writing out the Heart Sutra while concentrating on the words, their sound, and while imagining the presence of the event, as if you are describing and preserving it for others. When finished...

relax and sit until you are settled, then...

Conclude with an aspiration.

Later, or on another day, do the same but this time recount the event in your own words.



Relevant Books for Class 6

Readings:

Review previous readings or catch up on readings

Optional:

- Try the explorations that have not yet tried. How do they relate to your experience and Buddhist art?
- Watch "Journey to the West" and/or read "Monkey King: Journey to the West."
What Buddhist imagery and allusions do you recognize?



Buddhist Visual Literacy: Bodhisattva Ideal Throughout Asian Art



Class 7: Thursday April 14

- NA: 9am PT, 10am MT, 12pm ET, 1pm AT • EU: 6pm CET • Taiwan, 1am