

Here are some ideas for your reflection during the week:

1) First: *So we don't try. And we get really good at being imperfect at these practices that are not actually what we think they are.* Since this truth is the bedrock of Zen, it would be good for you to be able to explain this to an imaginary other person in a simple way that they can understand.

2) Second: *Buddhas are those who have wholeheartedly encountered and authenticated ordinariness.* What would be the difference between the way authenticated ordinariness would look vs the regular ordinariness that we all know about?

3) Third: Please explain in your own words why bodhisattvas are devoted to these practices, but they are not devoted to the good results these practices bring.

4) Fourth: We can still aspire to the perfection of no-gaining simultaneously with having a gaining idea. How is this possible?

5) Fifth: Activities such as generosity are valued by all religions and by people who have no religion as well. What makes them perfections?

6) Sixth: Just to summarize, the order of development toward buddhahood is: 1) arousing the Mahayana disposition (which is compassionate and aimed toward helping others) 2) arousing bodhicitta (where one is inspired to work primarily for the benefit of others) 3) bodhisattva practice (which is training in living the Precepts and the Paramitas) 4) buddhahood (the state that allows us to be the most effective of all possible helpers of others.) With a quiet mind, please take this in so that it makes sense and you could easily explain it to someone else.