



Name: _____

Date: _____

Grade: _____

TEACHER TRAINING: PART I (Fall Term)

ANSWER KEY FOR CLASS FOUR

1. Alexander Berzin delineates seven different (but not mutually exclusive) types of spiritual teachers. Name them and say a bit about what is distinctive about each type of teacher.

- a) **Buddhism Professors** – University professors who teach the student the history of Buddhism and other topics, including the contents of the Buddha’s teachings, from an “objective” or purely informational standpoint.
- b) **Dharma Instructors** – Dharma instructors have some level of scriptural knowledge, but in addition also explain Buddhism from an experiential point of view, derived from trying to put the teachings into practice.
- c) **Meditation or Ritual Trainers** – teachers with experience and competence in training students in meditation or ritual, or both.
- d) **Spiritual Mentors** – teachers (“gurus,” “Lamas,” etc.) who inspire and teach their disciples through embodying the teachings into their personalities and by their example. Spiritual mentors try to teach their students how to reach similar levels of self-transformation.
- e) **Refuge or Vow Preceptors** – those in whose presence disciples take refuge and pratimoksha vows.
- f) **Mahayana Masters** – those in whose presence disciples take bodhisattva vows. In a larger sense, they are the spiritual mentors whose teachings on compassion and bodhicitta lead disciples to develop aspiriting bodhicitta and then to take bodhisattva vows.
- g) **Tantric Masters** – those who give empowerments of any of the four classes of tantra to the student; or, according to some, spiritual mentors of the two higher classes of tantra (yoga and highest yoga tantra).
- h) **Root Gurus** – “the spiritual mentors who turn disciples’ hearts and minds most ardently to the Buddhist path. They are the strongest sources of inspiration to sustain disciples throughout their spiritual journeys.”

2. When, according to Pabongka Rinpoche, should one investigate a prospective teacher to see if he or she does or does not have the necessary attributes of a proper teacher?

Pabongka Rinpoche says one should make such an investigation *before* undertaking to serve that teacher.



3. What are the ten attributes of a proper teacher according to Maitreya's *Ornament of Mahayana Sutras*?

- 1) They should be "subdued," meaning the mind has been subdued by the practice of morality.
- 2) They should be "calm," having calmed all mental distraction through the practice of concentration.
- 3) They should be "quiet," which means they have quieted the erroneous beliefs in a real self through having practiced wisdom.
- 4) They should have virtuous qualities superior to one's own.
- 5) They should be energetic.
- 6) They should be learned in scripture.
- 7) They should have "realized suchness," meaning "having gained an understanding of the correct view through wisdom born of listening," specifically the view held by the Madhyamika Prasangika school.
- 8) They should be endowed with eloquence.
- 9) They should have a compassionate nature.
- 10) They should ignore weariness.

4. If teacher cannot be found who has all ten of these qualities, what are the five they should at least have?

- 1-3) A mind which has achieved self-discipline by means of the three trainings.
- 4) A compassionate nature.
- 5) A realization of suchness.

5. Pabongka Rinpoche says "If even such qualities as the five which were mentioned become rare in these degenerate times," we should try to find a teacher who at least has three virtues. Name them.

- 1) They should have more virtues than faults.
- 2) They should give more importance to future lives than to this life.
- 3) They should be more concerned about others than about themselves.



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6. Quote the relevant portion of verse given in Je Tsongkapa's *Lam Rim Chenmo* from *The Tantra Requested by Subahu* on the qualities a teacher should have in this degenerate time.

**“These assistants should have intelligence, a good appearance, great purity,
Be of reputable lineage, and inclined toward the teachings.
They should have great confidence, perseverance, and have disciplined the
senses.
They should speak pleasantly, be generous and compassionate,
Forbear hunger, thirst, and the afflictions,
They should be focused, adept, grateful,
And have faith in the three jewels.
Since those who have all such good qualities
Are very rare in this age of strife,
Mantra practitioners should rely on an assistant who has
One half, one quarter, or an eighth of these qualities.”**

7. What are the four reasons Pabongka Rinpoche lists for gaining an understanding, based on reasoning and scriptural authority, that our spiritual teacher is in fact a Buddha?

- 1) Vajradhara affirmed that our guru is a Buddha when he declared in scripture that he would return to us in our teacher's form.**
- 2) A guru is the agent for all Buddhas' activities**
- 3) Even nowadays Buddhas and Bodhisattvas are acting on behalf of all sentient beings.**
- 4) Our perceptions are unreliable.**

8. What are the four ways Pabongka Rinpoche gives for generating respect for the spiritual teacher by recalling the teacher's kindness?

- 1) Consider that the guru is more kind than the Buddhas in general.**
- 2) Think about his or her kindness in teaching you the dharma.**
- 3) Think about his or her kindness in blessing your mind.**
- 4) Reflect on his or her kindness in using material objects to gather disciples.**