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Topics:

- 1: Dharma talk: Take Sakyamuni Buddha as your teacher**
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Main content:

1: Dharma talk: Take Sakyamuni Buddha as your teacher

"Taking Sakyamuni Buddha as your teacher" is a deeply meaningful concept in Buddhism, rooted in the idea of turning to the historical Buddha, Sakyamuni, as the supreme guide on the path to awakening. Sakyamuni Buddha, through his life, teachings, and example, serves as the ultimate teacher who shows us the way to liberation from suffering and ignorance.

In the vast tradition of Buddhism, countless teachers have shared insights and wisdom over the centuries. Yet, at the heart of it all is Sakyamuni Buddha, the founder of Buddhism, who remains the most revered and essential teacher. To "take Sakyamuni Buddha as your teacher" is to dedicate oneself to learning from his life and teachings, applying them to one's own journey toward enlightenment. It is a commitment to follow the example of the Buddha, whose life was a testament to compassion, mindfulness, and deep wisdom.

Who is Sakyamuni Buddha? Sakyamuni Buddha, also known simply as the Buddha, was born as Siddhartha Gautama in what is now modern-day Nepal around 563 BCE. After living a life of luxury as a prince, he renounced his worldly life to seek answers to the existential questions of suffering and the nature of existence. After years of ascetic practice and meditation, he attained enlightenment under the Bodhi tree and became known as the Buddha, or the "Awakened One."

His teachings, known as the Dharma, laid the foundation for the entire Buddhist tradition. By taking Sakyamuni Buddha as your teacher, you are committing to follow his example of seeking truth, practicing mindfulness, and cultivating compassion in your daily life.

Why Take Sakyamuni Buddha as Your Teacher? The Buddha's life and teachings provide a profound model for living a life rooted in wisdom, ethical conduct, and spiritual practice.

Sakyamuni Buddha achieved full enlightenment and escaped the cycle of suffering (samsara). His teachings show that this liberation is possible for all beings. By taking him as your teacher, you are following in the footsteps of someone who has successfully traversed the path.

The Buddha did not keep his enlightenment to himself. Instead, he spent the rest of his life teaching others the path to freedom from suffering. His selfless dedication to the well-being of all beings is a central lesson for those who take him as their teacher: to cultivate not only wisdom but also boundless compassion.

The Buddha's teachings on the Four Noble Truths and the Eightfold Path provide a clear and practical guide to overcoming suffering in our lives. These teachings, though ancient, remain deeply relevant in

our modern world. They help us understand the causes of our suffering and offer a path to peace and happiness.

One of the first steps in taking Sakyamuni Buddha as your teacher is to study his teachings, known as the Dharma. This can be done by reading the sutras, listening to Dharma talks, and reflecting on key teachings such as the Four Noble Truths, the Eightfold Path, and the concept of non-self.

The Buddha's teachings are not meant to be merely intellectual concepts. They are meant to be lived. By practicing mindfulness, ethical conduct, and meditation, you can embody the wisdom and compassion that the Buddha exemplified. Whether it's being mindful in your actions, speaking with kindness, or cultivating patience, you are actively following the path he laid out.

Taking the Buddha as your teacher also involves developing faith in the path he taught. Faith in Buddhism is not blind belief but confidence in the efficacy of the Buddha's teachings based on your own experience. Regularly reflecting on the qualities of the Buddha—his compassion, wisdom, and determination—can deepen your connection to him as your spiritual teacher.

Taking Sakyamuni Buddha as your teacher is a profound act of trust and commitment. It means dedicating yourself to a path of wisdom, compassion, and mindfulness, inspired by the Buddha's example. By following his teachings, studying the Dharma, and cultivating a life of ethical conduct, you are not only honoring the Buddha but also walking the path toward your own liberation.

2: Buddhist Diet Health: Celery

Celery is a popular vegetable in many plant-based diets, including the Buddhist diet, known for its light, refreshing flavor and numerous health benefits. Its crisp texture and subtle flavor make it a versatile ingredient in a variety of dishes. Additionally, celery holds cultural significance in some Buddhist traditions, as it supports a mindful and balanced approach to eating.

Health Benefits of Celery

Celery is valued not only for its taste but also for its impressive range of health benefits. It's a low-calorie, nutrient-dense vegetable that fits perfectly into a diet that promotes physical well-being to support spiritual practice.

Rich in Antioxidants

Celery contains flavonoids, vitamin C, and beta carotene, which act as antioxidants to protect cells from damage caused by free radicals. These antioxidants play a role in reducing inflammation and supporting overall health.

Supports Digestive Health

High in fiber and water content, celery promotes healthy digestion and regular bowel movements, making it ideal for maintaining a clean and light diet—essential for meditation and mindfulness.

Hydration and Detoxification

With its high water content, celery is excellent for keeping the body hydrated, supporting kidney function, and helping to flush out toxins. This aligns with the Buddhist diet's focus on light, purifying foods that enhance clarity of body and mind.

Heart Health Benefits

Celery is rich in potassium and phytochemicals, both of which help regulate blood pressure and support cardiovascular health. In the context of the Buddhist practice, a healthy heart supports overall vitality and endurance for long periods of meditation.

Anti-Inflammatory Properties

The plant compounds in celery, including apigenin and luteolin, have anti-inflammatory effects, which may help reduce the risk of chronic diseases and ease joint pain. This aligns with the broader goal of maintaining physical health to support spiritual well-being.

The clean, crisp nature of celery symbolizes purity and clarity, which are important values in Buddhism. Consuming light, wholesome foods like celery helps cultivate clarity of mind, which is essential for deep meditation and spiritual insight.

Celery's mildly bitter flavor represents balance in Buddhist culinary practices. Its inclusion in dishes helps temper richer, sweeter ingredients, reflecting the Middle Way—the principle of balance between extremes in life and practice.

Celery's simplicity and easy cultivation link it to nature and sustainability, which are key aspects of mindful living in Buddhist traditions. Eating locally grown, seasonal vegetables like celery encourages gratitude for the earth's resources and supports an eco-friendly lifestyle.

Celery, with its numerous health benefits, culinary versatility, and cultural significance, is an important part of the Buddhist diet. Its ability to support digestion, heart health, and hydration, while also symbolizing clarity and balance, makes it a valuable ingredient for those seeking physical and spiritual well-being. Incorporating celery into your meals not only nourishes the body but also supports the mind's journey toward peace and mindfulness.

3: Buddhist Diet Culinary: Stir Fried Dried Tofu with Celery



Ingredients:

200g dried tofu, cut into thin strips

3-4 celery stalks, sliced diagonally into thin pieces

1 tablespoon soy sauce (or tamari for gluten-free)
1 tablespoon sesame oil
1 tablespoon vegetable oil
1/2 teaspoon salt, or to taste
1/4 teaspoon white pepper
1 teaspoon light soy sauce (optional, for extra umami)
1/2 teaspoon sugar (optional, to balance the flavors)

Steps:

1. Cut the dried tofu into thin strips. Slice the celery diagonally for a more aesthetic presentation and crunch. If using carrots, slice them thinly as well.
2. Cook the Dried Tofu:
Add the sliced dried tofu strips to the pan. Stir-fry for 2-3 minutes, allowing the tofu to lightly brown.
3. Add the Vegetables:
Add the sliced celery to the pan. Stir-fry for another 3-4 minutes, until the vegetables are just tender but still crunchy.
4. Season the Dish:
Add the soy sauce, sesame oil, salt, white pepper, and optional light soy sauce and sugar. Stir well to coat the tofu and vegetables evenly. Adjust seasoning to taste.
5. Serve:
Remove from heat and serve hot. Garnish with toasted sesame seeds or a sprinkle of crushed peanuts for extra texture if desired.