



**Lead Smart
Coaching LLC™**
leadsmartcoaching.com

Mentoring Guidelines & Resources for Order of Interbeing Aspirants©

Valerie Brown, JD, MA, PCC Lead Smart Coaching, LLC

www.leadsmartcoaching.com 215-933-9978

“When you love someone, the best thing you can offer is your presence. How can you love if you are not there?” Thich Nhat Hanh

The purpose of this mentoring relationship is to provide support, guidance, nurturance, and practical information related to the Aspirant process within the Order of Interbeing (OI). Mentoring relationships are mutually beneficial and deeply enriching for both partners, as each person brings significant gifts, understandings, skills, and experiences that create a dynamic and evolving opportunity for mutual growth and learning. Mentoring does not end at the completion of the OI Aspirant process. In many ways, this is the beginning of deepening mutual understanding and support. The following suggestions and guidelines are meant to create a richer sense of possibility and shared responsibility and accountability for the mentoring relationship, and they are designed to support the mentee in his or her growth and development.

1. ***Get to know one another:*** It is my hope that we will take time to get to know each other as persons and as OI members. Taking time to come into relationship with one another will help build trust and understanding, as well as help create a firmer foundation for moving together into our relationship. We might learn about each other’s work, families, interests and passions. We may talk about learning and communication styles. We might discuss a schedule of meetings. Because some of the mentoring will be done at a distance, it will also take clear intention and follow-through on the part of both the mentor and mentee to be in relationship this way.

2. ***Talk about the expectations, assumptions and questions we each bring to the relationship:*** Each person comes with a different set of previous experiences, as well as different depths of experience. We may wish to talk together about the assumptions and questions we are bringing.

3. ***Together explore the roles and responsibilities of both the mentor and the mentee.*** Coming to this mentoring relationship with “beginner’s mind” is important. In the

mentoring relationship, as both mentor and mentee—we should ask ourselves what went well, what didn't. This will also help determine if our mentoring relationship is promising and workable. While chemistry between mentor and mentee is very helpful, perhaps a more fruitful question to ask is: "Can I work productively with this person? Do I honestly feel that I can further my learning with this person?" Be open and listen.

4. Practice mutual discernment regarding readiness: Engagement in the mentoring process is a core component of the OI Aspirant process and beyond. In addition, the mentoring relationship is key to addressing and discerning OI readiness. There are several levels of discernment in a determination of OI readiness. In this process I value your insight and self-perceptions, as well as the collective discernment of the local Dharma Teacher, local mentor, and local sangha.

5. As a mentee, I recommend that you consider the *Second Body Practice* to support the mentoring relationship and your aspirations. For more information: <http://www.stillwatermpc.org/practice-resources/second-body-practice-resources/>

6. As a mentee, I recommend that you begin the *Pre-Aspirant or Aspirant process by reviewing the Questions for Reflection*. Whether the mentee decides to move forward or not, this is a very good place to begin to consider your aspirations. <http://orderofinterbeing.org/docs/Application%20to%20Become%20an%20Aspirant%20to%20the%20Order%20of%20Interbeing%20Core%20Community.pdf>

7. The mentor and mentee should connect with the local sangha and local Dharma Teacher(s) to ensure openness and cooperation. The mentee should reach out to the local Dharma Teacher and local sangha to support harmony among all parties involved in the ordination process.

8. Understanding, healing and transforming racial and social inequity within ourselves and within our communities is critical to creating *Beloved Community articulated by Thich Nhat Hanh and his friend, Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.* Therefore, I strongly recommend that mentees consider appropriate educational training to understand the causes and conditions of inequity within themselves and within society. **For persons who identify as White, here are some important resources:**

Peggy McIntosh, The Invisible Knapsack of White Privilege: <https://nationalseedproject.org/white-privilege-unpacking-the-invisible-knapsack>

Derek Wing Sue on Micro-aggressions: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-ltWFYVW2Y>

Ibram Kendi, How to Be an Anti-Racist, <https://www.ibramxkendi.com/books-1>

Robin DiAngelo, What It Means to Be White? <https://www.amazon.com/What-Does-Mean-White->

[Counterpoints/dp/1433131102/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1523245795&sr=8-1&keywords=what+it+means+to+be+white](https://www.amazon.com/Counterpoints/dp/1433131102/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1523245795&sr=8-1&keywords=what+it+means+to+be+white)

Robin DiAngelo, What Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism, <https://www.amazon.com/White-Fragility-People-About-Racism/dp/0807047414>

Larry Yang, Awakening Together, https://www.amazon.com/Awakening-Together-Spiritual-Inclusivity-Community/dp/1614293511/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1523245874&sr=1-1&keywords=larry+yang

Understand structural racism through the lens of Deep Diversity with Shakil Choudhury: <http://deepdiversity.animaleadership.com>

Additional Resources from John Bell, Dharma teacher to cultivate White Awakeness :

Videos

- [“Birth of a White Nation”](#)
- [Race. The Power of an Illusion.](#) Available for purchase
- [Cracking the Codes,](#) interviews
- [“What Kind of Asian Are You”](#) – comedy skit, example of unaware white privilege

Articles

- [“Our Analysis”](#) from White Awake website
- [“What is White Supremacy”](#)
- [“Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack”](#)
- [“The Vast & Beautiful World of Indigenous Europe”](#)
- [“Seven Ways White People Can Help End Racism”](#)
- [“Beginning Anew with My European Ancestry”](#)
- [“White Fragility: Why It's So Hard to Talk to Whites About Racism”](#)
- [“Code of Ethics for Anti-Racist White Allies”](#)
- [“Spiritual Bypass Bypasses Justice”](#)
- [“Definitions”](#) of terms
- [“What's In It for Me? Why Do Whites Engage in Racial Equity Work?”](#)
- [“Dealing with Difficult Emotions”](#)
- [“29 Stupid Harmful Things White People Do and What We Can Do Instead”](#)

Books

- *What Does It Mean to Be White? Developing White Racial Literacy* by Robin DiAngelo. Highly recommended by John as a solid, thoughtful overview

- *Awakening Together: The Spiritual Practice of Inclusivity and Community* by Larry Yang. A blueprint for building the Beloved Community in our PV Sangha
- *Radical Dharma: Talking Race, Love, and Liberation* by Rev. angel Kyoto williams, Lama Rod Owens, with Jasmine Syedullah, PhD.
- *Waking Up White, and Finding Myself in the Story of Race* by Debby Irving.

Websites:

- ARISE—Awakening through Race, Intersectionality, and Social Equity, Plum Village
<https://arisesangha.org/>
- White Awake. An initiative of the Washington, DC Insight Meditation Community
www.whiteawake.org. Includes “Wellbriety Journey to Forgiveness”, re: [boarding schools](#).

Trainings

These trainings are suitable for White-identified persons and persons who identify as BIPOC and are recommended by Valerie Brown:

- <https://sandrakim.com>
- <http://www.kairajewel.com/>
- <https://www.mariselabgomez.com/socialhealthconceptsandpractice/>
- <http://www.racialequityresourceguide.org/guides-workshops/training-for-change>
- <https://www.pisab.org>
- <https://www.whiteprivilegeconference.com>
- <https://www.ibramxkendi.com/antiracism-center-2>

Resources for People Who Identify as Black, Indigenous, or People of Color:

Brittany Cooper, Eloquent Rage <https://read.macmillan.com/lp/eloquent-rage/>

Not Quite, Note White by Sharmila Sen,
<https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/553643/not-quite-not-white-by-sharmila-sen/9780143131380/>

Ruth King, Healing the Broken Body of the Sangha:
<https://www.lionsroar.com/healing-the-broken-body-of-sangha/>

Spiritual Bypass in the Mindfulness Movement:
https://www.academia.edu/34353436/Spiritual_Bypassing_in_the_Contemporary_Mindfulness_Movement

Zenju Manuel, Finding Home: <https://tricycle.org/magazine/the-hunger-for-home/>

Larry Yang, Awakening Together, https://www.amazon.com/Awakening-Together-Spiritual-Inclusivity-Community/dp/1614293511/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1523245874&sr=1-1&keywords=larry+yang

Awakening through Race, Intersectionality, and Social Equity:
<https://arisesangha.org>

Sweet Blossoming POC Sangha in the tradition of Zen Master Thich Nhat Hanh:
POCSanghaonline@gmail.com

People of Color Sangha, New York Insight: <https://www.nyimc.org/event/people-of-color-sangha-2018-08-13-2018-11-19-2019-01-07/2019-01-07/>

Brooklyn Zen Center, People of Color Group:
<https://brooklynzen.org/programs/people-of-color-group/>

Video on Black & Buddhist in America:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cWeOKjU9F6o>

angel Kyodo williams, On Being with Krista Tippett, October 31, 2019:
<https://onbeing.org/programs/angel-kyodo-williams-the-world-is-our-field-of-practice/>

Gathering II: Black Buddhist of African Descent:
<https://calendar.spiritrock.org/events/the-gathering-buddhist-sangha-of-african-descent-weekend-retreat/>

Yoga for All: <https://yogaforalltraining.com/blog/jessamyn-stanley-and-the-yoga-journal-debacle/>

