

Information sheet for screening *Animals and the Buddha*

Thank you for your interest in showing our film to your sangha, dharma center, meditation center, monastery, or in your local area. You can show the film from Youtube, after downloading the film from our website, or by using a DVD. Below are some suggestions for the screening. Our only request is that in keeping with the tradition of disseminating the teachings for free, you not charge admission.

1. If this is a screening for the general public, we suggest showing the entire film at once. It is approximately 50 minutes long. This can be followed by a general discussion. If you are screening for your meditation group or your sangha, decide whether it is better to show the film all at once or show it in three different segments spread out over three sessions. The film is divided into three parts – The Teachings, Our Relationship to Animals, and What You Can Do. By showing it in three segments you can show one section at a time and then discuss the issues raised in that section. In either case, here are some possible questions to consider:

Part I: The Teachings

What is the First Precept?

Does the First Precept include animals?

Does compassion include animals?

Do animals suffer?

Discuss ways in which animals are similar to humans. Are the differences between humans and animals morally relevant?

What do the teachings tell us about eating animals?

If you are familiar with this subject, briefly mention that there are two main Buddhist lineages – Mahayana and Theravada. If you are comfortable, discuss the differences.

What do the Mahayana scriptures say about eating animals? Do they leave any doubt?

Discuss the three purities mentioned in the Theravada scriptures. Are they relevant to laypeople with access to healthy, vegan food?

Part II. Our Relationship to Animals

Have people talk about their own experiences with animals, including their companion animals.

Ask them to tell stories.

The film says that animals have their own, unique personalities. Do they agree?

Have people describe their feelings when they saw animals being harmed in the film?

Do they make a connection between animals killed for food and what they eat?

Did the film help them make that connection?

If anyone mentions the three purities or if you want to raise it on your own, ask the question posed in the film: When they buy meat at a store or restaurant, was the animal 'killed for them'?

What did they learn about the way animals are treated in the meat, egg and dairy industries?

Many people believe buying eggs and dairy products from local or organic farms doesn't harm animals. After watching the film, did their opinion of this change?

Part III. What You Can Do

How many people are vegetarian? Vegan?

The film talks about a transition. Discuss this, and ask people who have made the transition to share their own experiences, including how it started.

Talk about how tasty and healthy a vegan diet is. Discuss recipes and resources.

Were people aware that many products such as shampoo, soap and make-up are tested on animals? Discuss this and the availability of cruelty-free products.

Talk about insects and the practice of not harming them.

Talk about compassion and what it means to extend it to animals.

2. Encourage people to join Dharma Voices for Animals. This can be done in several ways:
 - a. Have a laptop or laptops available for people to join immediately. Have it open to the Become a Member page. Let people know that membership is free and that by joining they will make our voice for animals stronger. It will only take a few minutes to become part of a world-wide organization.
 - b. Have forms ready for people to fill out that have all the information contained in the membership form on the website. We recommend making a copy of the blank form straight from the web page. Enter the information for each new member yourself after the event. Tell people that they will receive an email and must respond in order to complete the process. Let people know that membership is free and that by joining they will make our voice for animals stronger. It will only take a few minutes to become part of a world-wide organization.
 - c. Encourage people to join on their own and direct them to our website. Give them a flyer which has the website on it (see 3 below). Let people know that membership is free and that by joining they will make our voice for animals stronger. It will only take a few minutes to become part of a world-wide organization.
3. We encourage you to have copies of the flyer **Introduction to DVA** available. To find it, go to the Resources page of our website. Near the top you will see documents to download and printout.
4. DVA is a volunteer 501(c)(3) nonprofit which relies on donations to fund our activities. Set up a donation basket – if it is for your sangha call it a dana basket – and encourage people to donate. Do this with signs and/or a discussion of dana during the presentation. Let people know that their donations are tax-deductible.