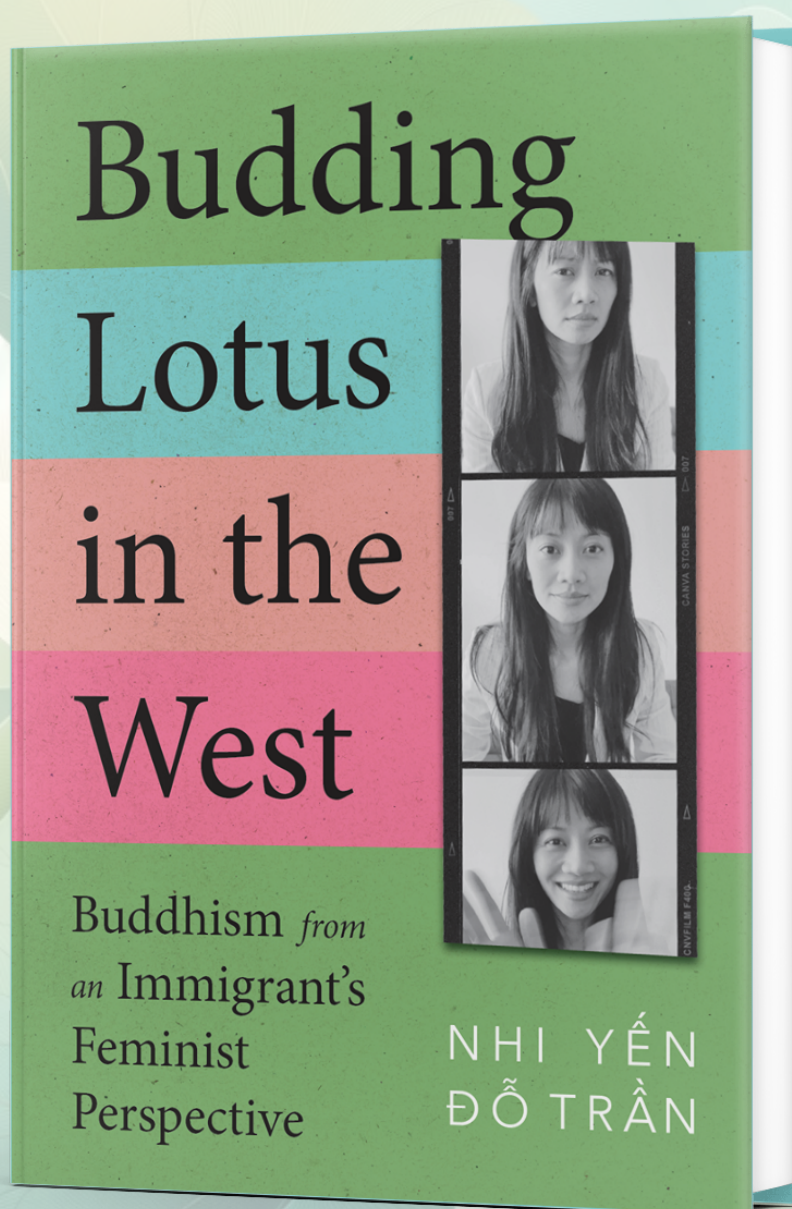


A READER'S GUIDE FOR
BUDDING LOTUS IN THE WEST
BY NHI YẾN ĐỖ TRẦN



BUDDING LOTUS IN THE WEST

A READER'S GUIDE

1. How would you summarize your emotional response to this book in a word or two? Were you challenged, engaged, motivated, or something else entirely?
2. Can you share an experience where you felt treated unfairly based on your identity or how others perceived you? Discuss parallels with the book's depiction of similar struggles.
3. Which of the author's personal stories resonated with you and why?
4. The portrayal of women in Buddhist texts is a key theme of the book. Discuss how this aligns or conflicts with your views, and its relevance to the wider conversation on gender equality.

Reflect on your encounters with discrepancies between the theoretical teachings and practical applications within Buddhist traditions. How have you navigated these contradictions, and what insights have you gained from these experiences?
5. Consider the author's experiences with romance on her spiritual path. Do these stories echo your own experiences or societal notions of women's roles in managing male impulses? How do these narratives shape our cultural understanding of gender roles?
6. Reflect on a moment when you challenged a spiritual teacher or community on a specific issue or consider how you might approach such a confrontation in the future. What prompted (or would prompt) you to speak up, and what was the result (or expected outcome)?
7. Share a personal story where a cultural or historical belief shaped your identity. How did you navigate this influence and what strategies have you adopted to honor the past while forging a path that reflects your current values and aspirations?
8. Has this book inspired you to explore or deepen your understanding of any specific topics, such as sexism, feminism, monasticism, mysticism, or another area? Which themes did you find yourself drawn to learn more about, and which, if any, did you wish were less emphasized?
9. In what ways has this book challenged you to think differently about your worldviews? Can you identify any beliefs or values that have shifted for you, and how has this shift manifested in your interactions or decisions?"
10. Considering the UN's 2024 prediction that achieving gender equality for women could take 300 years due to persistent issues like gender-based violence, a significant pay gap, and underrepresentation in politics, do you think achieving gender equality in spiritual communities, particularly Buddhism, will take more, less, or about the same amount of time? Why?
11. The book offers strategies for promoting gender equality within spiritual communities. What additional actions or goals could be included and what practical steps might you take to implement these strategies in your local context?
12. What topics related to fostering a more equal, inclusive, and compassionate society do you feel the book, or our discussions, have not yet addressed? How has the book equipped you to engage with these topics moving forward?
- 13.