

## **What is Engaged Buddhism?**

Vietnamese Zen master Thich Nhat Hanh is credited with coining the phrase “Engaged Buddhism.” During the Vietnam War, he and his community of monks and nuns had to decide what to do when the villages around them were being bombed—should they continue to meditate in their monastery, or should they go out into the streets to help the people who had been hurt? They decided to do both—to help people and to do so in mindfulness.

Engaged Buddhists draw on the teachings of the Buddha to inform their actions on issues such as war, nuclear weapons, poverty, globalization, the criminal justice system, and climate change. A key passage from the Dhammapada states: “In this world, hate never yet dispelled hate. Only love dispels hate.” (Excerpt from "An Introduction to Engaged Buddhism" by Maia Duerr.)

## **What is Engaged Buddhism for Families?**

Engaged Family Practice is an online-only offering that arose during Covid Shelter-in-Place and at a time of dramatic social change (Black Lives Matter, MeToo, Climate Change).

As one component of the larger Youth & Family Program, this online community supports the ongoing growth of well-being within family systems through dharma practice—with a special lens on guiding children through the challenges of modern times.

Previous programs focused on the work of heroes and bodhisattvas, including water protector Autumn Peltier and racial justice advocate Ella Baker who said: "We who believe in freedom cannot rest until it comes."

By focusing on what we can do during difficult times, we nourish bodhicitta in our family systems—the mind that strives toward awakening and compassion for the benefit of all beings.

Now entering a second year of implementation, the program is evolving with parents as the focus of the offering, and to provide them with the tools and frame to integrate dharma into their family system and their community through an online platform.