



One Heart- One Mind

*The Newsletter of the Association
of Engaged Buddhists*

SANGHA LODGE: 20 Victoria St Lewisham NSW 2049

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Meditation & Dhamma Teaching

7.30pm every Monday night.

- Join with others in sitting practice.

7.30pm every Wed night.

- Meditation evenings include a Dhamma talk followed by around half an hour of guided sitting practice. Beginners or more experienced meditators are equally welcome.
- There is no charge for the teachings although donations are welcome as this is Sangha Lodge's only means of support.

Dana Days

Dana Days are held on the first Sunday of each month. Attendees bring food to offer to the Sangha and to share with each other. This is a great way to show respect for the Sangha and enjoy a delicious meal with others in the lay community.

Please note that we must start promptly at 10:30am in order for the Sangha to finish eating by noon. The next Dana Day will be Sunday 3rd August 2014

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Finding the Real Middle Way

Having been away on retreat recently I have had much time to contemplate the path of practise and the realisation of that path in the middle way. The Buddha emphasises from his first public teaching until the end of his life the need to follow the middle way and yet we seem so often to find ourselves well away from the middle. Sometimes we might even feel that our lives are a bit like a pendulum swinging slowly or wildly from one extreme to the other. Expressed in the broadest possible terms this is the swinging arc between "giving oneself over to sensuality or giving oneself over to self-mortification". What drives this movement is of course our clinging and craving, our dissatisfaction and our aversion all col-

oured by the cloud of unknowing, ignorance or avija. It is relatively easy to see why we are caught in this apparently perpetual motion between these extremes if we look for the pivotal point of this crazy pendulum. The pivotal point, the place where the cord of the pendulum is pinned is of course our "self".

Whichever end of the arc we find ourselves at, whether pleasure or pain, sensuality or self-mortification we recognise in a wordless way that we are not able to remain there, that like Newton's third law : For every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction, we find ourselves moving away as soon as we arrive. Try as we might we cannot stay in the spot we have arrived at and if we choose to exercise some kind of force to do so we simply give rise to even more dukkha or suffering and unsatisfactoriness. This was a personal realisation of the Buddha and one that he wished to share with his first disciples. When we express it in this way it seems so simple and yet I think if we are honest we may know about this trap but still find our-

selves caught up in it. the Buddha's advice is in a way very simple, "avoiding both extremes",

"Avoiding both these extremes, the Tathagata (The Perfect One) has realized the Middle Path; it gives vision, gives knowledge, and leads to calm, to insight, to enlightenment and to Nibbana. And what is that Middle Path realized by the Tathagata? It is the Noble Eight-fold path, and nothing else, namely: right understanding, right thought, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness and right concentration. This is the Middle Path realized by the Tathagata which gives vision, which gives knowledge, and leads to calm, to insight, to enlightenment, and to Nibbana."

- from SN 56.11 *Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta: Setting in Motion the Wheel of Truth*

This too may sound rather simple in a way and we might nod wisely, knowingly and say to ourselves that oh yes we can see what the Buddha is talking



about, but knowing in an ordinary and conventional way and realising it like the Buddha are two different things. In fact it is possible that we may only have a vague sense of this middle path as we swing wildly past it on our way to the other extreme. In order to realise this teaching and to truly benefit from the experience and advice of the Buddha we must slow down the pendulum swing and come to rest. There is a wonderful paradox here of course and that is that the middle is always available to us if only we can see and recognise clearly where we are along the arc of dukkha, craving and aversion. Having seen where I am in the present moment it is possible to let go and return to the centre. Far too many of us however identify our "self" with one extreme or the other and so find it really difficult to let go and come back to the middle, the centre, the place of real and deepest peace. Only when we can let go of the whole idea of "self" and see its feeding grounds in sensuality or mortification can we become truly free and return to the centre. When we touch into the centre, the middle path, then the Noble Eightfold Path arises by itself because truly it has been never absent. It is simply that we have failed to see it. Oscillating wildly may be very exhilarating and exciting (or terrifying) but it is no way to live a full and happy life.

Give yourself a break, look carefully to see where you are and come back to the middle path. Let go of the pendulum's cord and enter into the deep pool of Nibbana.

May you be well and happy now and always,

Bhante Teja

Thanks to Our Visiting Teachers

We would like to thank the many visiting teachers who came to teach at Sangha Lodge during Bhante's retreat, both on Wednesday evenings and on the May & June Dana Days.

They include Venerable Sujato, Ajahn Ariyasilo and Ajahn Khemavaro from Wat Buddha Dhamma, Wandering Monk, Bhante Jason, Rev. Shigenobu Watanabe from Hongwangji Buddhist Mission of Australia at Lindfield, Dr Chien Hoong Gooi and Jim Teoh from the Buddhist Library, Grahame White from Vipassana Illawarra and Lynne Bousefield. It was a privilege to hear so many different expressions of the Dhamma from different traditions. We appreciate the considerable efforts that many of these teachers made to be with us and we look forward to future close relationships with them and with their support groups.

June Yoga Retreat

It's the perfect combination: yoga and Buddhist meditation, exercise for the body and mind. On the June long weekend we had it all when teacher Sue Toohey lead us through the highways and byways of both.

We woke to a tingling 5-7°C but soon warmed up as we stretched ourselves

this way and that, synchronizing our breath to our movements. We began slowly, flat on our backs pulling out the curls of sleep, then cradling, circling and twisting.

The previous evening Sue had taught us how to do ujjayi breathing. This audible breath, created by slightly closing the epiglottis in the throat, increases control of the breath and leads to a sort of calm ballet when twinned with various yoga movements or asanas.

The Buddhist aspect of the weekend focused on the 5 Hindrances: Desire (or Neediness), Anger, Sloth & Torpor, Restlessness & Worry, and Doubt. There was talk, discussion and meditation. Participants and teacher alike came clean with a lot of 'stuff' and we shared some practical antidotes to those pesky thoughts and emotions that plague us.

This was not a silent retreat. We had plenty of time to get to know our fellow students. By midday the sun was warm enough for us to gather on Bruce's beautiful large deck for lunch. The camellia that takes centre stage outside the dining room window was in full bloom. We savoured the flavours that Lily and Mae magically whipped up for us. Just before dusk, the elfing hour, we did our walking meditation.

The weekend slipped on by as we bent and opened. Engaging, disengaging, following the flow, working carefully through body and mind under the skilful direction of our teacher.

We left, calmer, clearer, our stomach muscles strengthened and our heart softened but stout.

Louise Egerton



May Retreat - The Healing Power of Words

During the weekend 9 -11 May Dr Beatriz Copello conducted a retreat entitled The Healing Power of words. The retreat involved a lot of writing, meditating and reflecting; participants also enjoyed the benefits of Yoga through the classes conducted by Susan Toohey.

Participants were introduced to many writing techniques that lead to healing and peace of mind; they were encouraged to be willing to see negative events differently, reinterpreting meanings and the events themselves.

Many of the writing exercises were designed to gain different perspectives, and creating a context for change and healing, turning the attention from surface matters to the invisible world of the subconscious mind.

Being patient, being willing to explore and accept the disowned, negative parts of the self, learning from the wisdom of the past and allowing life to unfold without frantic pushing or pulling was reflected on.

Giving up the need to be in control at all times, honoring and learning from feelings of frustration, blockage, and being stuck was discussed at length during this motivating and interesting retreat.

Simplifying life, practicing self-compassion, accepting and saying "yes" to life, willing to receive what life has to

offer, was perhaps the most crucial teaching of the weekend.

The weather was glorious, giving participants the chance to walk on the grounds of Vejjasala and enjoy the winter flowers and being in contact with nature.

The evaluations received were excellent. Participants reported to have enjoyed everything about the retreat, a particular mention was made about the "super yummy food" prepared by the volunteers Clarita Norman and Sue Toohey.

Beatriz Copello

Retreats at Vejjasala

Vejjasala has been busy in the last couple of months. Bhante held a healing meditation retreat in April, Beatriz Copello led a retreat called The Healing Power of Words in May and Sue Toohey's very popular yoga retreat in June was fully booked. Additionally a Sri Lankan meditation group from Canberra has booked to come regular, almost every month, until the end of the year.

We have two further retreats planned for 2014, another yoga retreat and another meditation retreat with Bhante, and two further Nalanda weekends, the topics to be announced soon. Also Megan Thorpe will be leading a retreat in November and there may be a group from the Buddhist Library in October. It is very gratifying to see Vejjasala being used to such good effect, not only by us, but by other groups seeking a tranquil place to hold their own retreats.

Caroline Lurie

Retreat Co-ordinator

Poems

When we are really sick

We look for a miracle...

but miracles don't come by.

For it is in the seat of the heart and mind
(citta)

That Clarity and healing begin.

So give peace to our mind and search no
further

or we go deep into a dark forest
with no light to lead us out of the
woods.

Lily Koo

May I deny myself that that I don't need.

May I deny myself that that harms me.

May I deny myself that that indulges
me.

May I deny myself that that is frivolous.

May my life be filled with wisdom.

May my life be filled with love.

May my life be filled with peace.

May my life be filled with friendships.

Beatriz Copello





Association News

Sue Toohey

Food Fair 2014 - Roselea Community Centre- Sunday 27 July, 10am – 3pm

Preparations for the 2014 Food Fair are well underway. 19 stall holders are confirmed and we are looking for donations for ingredients for some of the bigger stalls. We will be needing cooked chicken, boiled & peeled eggs, cooking oil, plus large quantities of bottled water, both for sale and to offer to those working on the food stalls. Also needed are people who can prepare the rice cake for the Kueh Kak stall (recipe provided.) Plus if you have a folding table at home we would appreciate a loan for the day. Seating has been tight in previous years so we would like to be able to set up more tables for diners this year.

If you can help with any of these items please call Sue Toohey on 0421 973 785.

The Food Fair is our major Fund Raiser for the year. It provides nearly one third of the operating expenses of Sangha Lodge so please support the event and bring as many of your friends as you can.

Lunch at the Marigold

Saturday 30 August is sold out thanks to the great efforts of our ticket sellers. We do need several ushers on the day to show people to their tables so if you are attending and you would like to do this please let Lean Lee or Sue Toohey know.

Upcoming Changes to Association Positions

Membership Secretary: We would like to thank Michael Harding, for the work he has done as our Membership Secretary. The Membership Secretary keeps the register of members and their contact details, as required by the government for all incorporated associations. Michael did not so much choose this role as inherited it, so we applaud his perseverance in continuing to keep the re-

cords and wrestling with the rather unforgiving software over the past 2 years. Our treasurer, Lean Lee, will take over this role on a trial basis and attempt to bring the membership records into our MYOB financial system so that membership details are recorded at the same time as membership dues are paid. Good luck to both Michael and Lean.

Retreat Coordinator: Caroline Lurie, our very efficient retreat coordinator for the past several years, has indicated that she would like to stand down from that position at the end of the year. She would be very happy to train anyone who might be willing to take on the role. The Retreat Coordinator does not need to attend each retreat as most of the work can be done from home. It is an important role for the Association and does require someone who is well organized. The tasks involved are keeping the calendar of events at Vejjasala and taking bookings from other groups who might want to use it, preparing advertising flyers for each of the Association retreats, taking registrations for retreats, allocating rooms to participants, booking the catering team for each retreat, preparing participant lists, retreat programs & feedback forms & preparing a short report for the management committee after each retreat.

If you think you could contribute to the Association through this very important role please send us an email at sanghalodgeretreat@gmail.com

Coming Retreats and Workshops

As Wingello can be very cold in the winter (at least for those used to the very mild Sydney climate!) we have decided not to schedule retreats for the two coldest months of the year. Consequently our next planned retreat will be one for AEB members and friends on

the weekend of 12 – 14 September and led by Ven. Tejadhammo. Look out for the flyers and registration forms closer to the date.

Cooking for Retreats

Since the last newsletter we have had 2 retreats each of which was catered for by a new cooking team. The quality of the food was mentioned many times in the feedback sheets as one of the delights of the retreat. Both sets of cooks found it an enjoyable experience and if you are thinking that this is something that you might like to do in future we can arrange for you to talk to someone who has done it and who can give you some tips. We have recipes and menu plans available or you can work with your own favourite recipes. Please talk to Caroline 9692 9540 or Sue 0421 973 785 if you would like to give this a try.

Updates to Buildings & Grounds at Vejjasala

The buildings and grounds at Vejjasala are looking very well cared for thanks to all of Bruce Chatfield's work on maintenance and the gardening work that has been done by Dave Denton together with Alex Lee and a party of volunteers. Starting this month Bruce will be working to convert the bathroom adjacent to the Smith room to one that is suitable for wheelchair access. Sara Chesterman, a wheelchair user who was a guest at Vejjasala has provided extensive notes on what is needed and Bruce will undertake the work of removing a large walk-in wardrobe to enlarge the bathroom area, bringing the shower floor up to level with the bathroom floor, retiling the floor, replacing vanity basin and shower screens and installing hand rails. Our gratitude goes to Bruce for all of the hard work and also to Alex Lee for donating the new tiles. *Sue Toohey*

What would Buddha Do? Series

This five weeks series on "What would Buddha do?" will lead by one of the inspiring teachers, **Bhante Tejadhammo**. In this series, Bhante will show us the notion on the five essential concerns of our daily life through drawing examples from some of the prominent, interesting and practical Suttas (Scriptures) from the Buddha's time. We will explore the closest source we



by **Bhante Tejadhammo**

have to the teachings from the historical Buddha: **the Scriptures**. Come to learn how these wonderful teachings are still closely relevant to us in this modern days.

Tuesday 7pm - 9pm at Buddhist Library

What would Buddha do to...

- 1st July Sustain favourable relationship (All forms of relationship)*
- 8th July Live with purpose in turbulent times*
- 15th July Overcome bad habits*
- 22th July Oh conflict! and the exposition of non-conflict*
- 29th July Using the mind creatively*

The sessions will include meditation practice and discussions on the scriptures topics. The course is designed for beginners and suitable for advanced learners to continue deepen their understanding and practical experiences in learning the scriptures and Buddha's teachings.



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www.buddhistlibrary.org.au

Please register at **www.buddhistlibrary.org.au/event**

Quotable Quotes

Bhante's teaching on the Rhinoceros Sutta prompted some thoughts on how to be in a relationship and still seek solitude. Perhaps some suggestion comes from the words of Rainer Maria Rilke:

"I hold this to be the highest task of a bond between two people: that each should stand guard over the solitude of the other."

Rainer Maria Rilke

German Poet 1875-1926

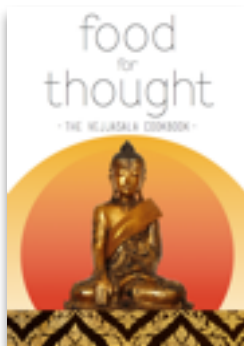
Food for Thought

The Association is pleased to have produced Food for Thought, a recipe book written by Jan McCarthy who does the catering for our retreats at Vejjasala. Food for Thought is an A5 (150X 210 cm) spiral bound book of 128 pages, with many photos in full colour. It features 10 chapters and over 100 vegetarian recipes. All proceeds for the sale of the book go to The Association.

Copies of the book can be bought from Sangha Lodge (see Gus Real) for \$25. You can also purchase copies by mail order. To do this please arrange and electronic funds transfer for \$30 (\$25 for book and \$5 for postage and handling) to the Association's bank account. The details of this are:

Association of Engaged Buddhists
St George Bank
BSB: 112 879
Account number:
 131328823

Please put FFT and your full name in the reference box for the transaction and email a copy of the transaction confirmation along with your full postal address to Jan McCarthy at janmccarthy.1@gmail.com and Cc to kahrenwhite@iprimus.com.au. Alternatively, you can pay by cheque, forwarding this and your full address (printed



clearly) to Jan McCarthy, 10 Carysfort St, Blackheath, NSW, 2785.

Vejjasala Grounds Report

Just a note firstly about how beautiful the buildings and grounds of Vejjasala are looking. The work that Bruce has done fixing up the main house is amazing. I got a clear sense that the house is being cared for and that will hopefully be the feeling that people get when they visit.

The work that Dave, Pip and Fran's have done on the grounds is a joy to behold. There are jonquils out everywhere and a light coloured wombat was walking around taking things in with me. Birds everywhere!

On the development side, we are just about to resubmit our change of usage so that Vejjasala becomes recognised as a "Place of Worship" by the local council. Our initial application was sent back to us as needing more information and a new application will likely be submitted by around the end of June.

Much metta

Lachlan

Reader Recommends

For this issue, our reader who recommends a useful book is Sue Toohey, our Association Chairperson. Her recommendations are:

Living in the Light of Death: On the Art of Being Truly Alive by Larry Rosenberg
 Shambhala Publications, 2001, ISBN: 9781570628207

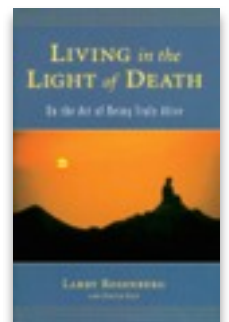
Sue says that she has read the book twice now and finds it very clearly written and filled with useful advice on dealing with pain, aging and loss. She notes that this may sound depressing but it's really not.

The publishers give the following outline:

This book presents the Buddhist approach to facing the inevitable facts of growing older, getting sick, and dying. These tough realities are not given much attention by many people until midlife, when they become harder to avoid. Using a Buddhist text known as the Five Subjects for Frequent Recollection, Larry Rosenberg shows how intimacy with the realities of aging can actually be used as a means to liberation. When we become intimate with these inevitable aspects of life, he writes, we also become intimate with ourselves, with others, with the world — indeed with all things.

<http://www.shambhala.com/living-in-the-light-of-death.html>

Living in the Light of Death: On the Art of Being Truly Alive is available from the Buddhist Library



INTERNATIONAL FOOD FAIR

SUNDAY 27TH JULY 2014

10:00 AM - 3:00 PM

ROSELEA COMMUNITY CENTRE

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Donations

You may or may not realise that Sangha Lodge is solely funded from your donations. Following the teaching of the Buddha, we do not charge for teachings or meditation evenings, preferring instead to rely on our members' generosity. Unfortunately, this often means a shortfall when it comes to meeting our weekly expenses from the donation box on a Wednesday night. It would be much easier for the Centre to function if we were able to rely on regular donations from more members and guests of the centre.

One easy way to arrange for funds to be regularly transferred is via Internet Banking. Most Banks now offer a 'pay anyone' service whereby you are able to set up a regular monthly transfer to any nominated account. If you would like to set up this kind of regular donation to Sangha Lodge you will need the following account information - Bank: St George BSB#: 112 879 Account#: 131328823 Account Name: Association of Engaged Buddhists. If you would like to make a tax deductible donation to the Building Fund please make your direct transfer to the following account: Bank: St George BSB: 112-879 Account Number: 430589986 Account Name: Association of Engaged Buddhists.

In order that we can budget our funds effectively and where appropriate supply you with a receipt for tax purposes we would appreciate it if you would email office@engagedbuddhists.org.au with the details of your regular transfer or tax deductible donation. Your Dana (generosity) is greatly appreciated by the many people who come to the centre or are served by it in the wider community (hospitals, hospices and private visits by the Sangha). Please help, even a small monthly donation can make a big difference to Sangha Lodge.

Association Membership

If you would like to become a member of the Association and thus receive this newsletter (if you don't already!), please fill in a membership form and leave it with a Committee member. You can pick one up from Sangha Lodge the next time you visit, or ring our office and get one posted to you. Membership is due for renewal each September and costs \$50/year.

For Those in Need

Please keep our brothers and sisters who are ill or struggling with some other distress in your thoughts during the day. This short prayer for freedom from suffering may help you be mindful of their needs.

Prayer for Freedom from Suffering

May all beings everywhere plagued with sufferings of body and mind quickly be freed from their illnesses.

May those frightened cease to be afraid, and may those bound be free.

May the powerless find power, and may people think of befriending one another.

May those who find themselves in trackless, fearful wilderness--the children, the aged, the unprotected--be guarded by beneficent celestials, and may they swiftly attain Buddhahood

If you know of someone who would like to be remembered by our community, let Bhante know and we can mention them in future issues of the Newsletter. Even when there are no particular friends to remember, we ask you to send thoughts of good will in general to those who are experiencing hardship or pain.

