

Buddhist Study and Meditation #6

November 2016

Dear PE members, needless to say I am moved by Tara's latest newsletter. It is clear to me she cares so much for all of you, and the information she shares is relevant no matter what your spiritual tradition. Do not confuse the Tara, who writes this newsletter, with the Tara card, [female embodiment of Buddha] offered on page 11.

I and all of us at PE wish you the best as this year comes to the end. Through the holiday season and solstice open yourselves up to love and the returning light. Difficult situations can sometimes be used to bring out the best in each of us. I imagine that holiday time can move very slowly in lock-up. Please consider using this time to explore the practices and concepts shared on this paper. Shine on-Gary

My dear **Sangha**,

If this is your first newsletter - Welcome! We hope you find our newsletter inspiring, informative and transformative! I'm so honored and grateful for your being in our circle. For those of you who have been with us- I rejoice with your progress! To know that you are experiencing more peace, or patience, or kindness fills my heart with no end. To hear that you are more able to deal with noise, or difficult emotions or challenges is so inspiring. You are living proof of the power and the gifts of spiritual practice. Keep up with your efforts! They will bring you more peace....

With so many members now (we have around 400!), I'm so sorry but I cannot answer all your letters. I read them all and if I don't write back to you personally I will try to answer your questions in newsletters.

Sangha is a great web of pure connection, a web made of light, compassion and consciousness. Our realizations ripple through these invisible and very real threads, touching us all. The bad stuff doesn't happen here. Even if you're not writing, consciousness flows beyond the limitations of time and space, and we are touched. Divine consciousness is omnipresent. The blessings of Buddha and Christ and Allah consciousness are everywhere. As we open to this divinity within, we receive these precious gifts effortlessly.

Bodhicitta is the longing to help all beings be truly happy. It is the desire to help all beings awaken and it is the foundation for all true happiness. Let this be the foundation of our sangha. With loving prayers, Tara

"Every morning our first thought should be a wish to devote the day to the good of all beings." Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche

THE FOUR IMMEASURABLES: A Foundation Practice

The Four Immeasurables are Love, Compassion, Joy and Equanimity. They are a foundation of Buddhist practice, and are expressed in this beautiful prayer, that can be recited or read silently before meditating, or they can be used as a contemplation. It opens us to our compassion and connection with all beings, and it sets our intention to be benefitting all beings with our practice.

May I and all sentient beings have happiness and the causes of happiness.

May I and all sentient beings be free of suffering and the causes of suffering.

May I and all sentient beings never be separated from the peace that is free from suffering.

May I and all sentient beings live in equanimity, free of bias, attachment, aversion and anger.

The Buddha taught the following to his son Rahula: "Practice loving kindness to overcome anger. Loving kindness has the capacity to bring happiness to others without demanding anything in return.

Practice compassion to overcome cruelty. Compassion has the capacity to remove the suffering of others without expecting anything in return.

Practice sympathetic joy to overcome hatred. Sympathetic joy arises when one rejoices over the happiness of others and wishes others well-being and success.

Practice non-attachment to overcome prejudice. Non-attachment is the way of looking at all things openly and equally. Myself and others are not separate. Do not reject one thing only to chase after another. I call these The Four Immeasurables. Practice them and become a source of vitality and happiness for others."

A Long Version of The Four Immeasurables

How wonderful it would be if all sentient beings were to abide in equanimity,

Free of hatred and attachment! May they abide in equanimity! I myself will cause them to abide in equanimity!

Please, guru-Buddha, grant me blessings to be able to do this.

How wonderful it would be if all sentient beings had happiness and the cause of happiness!

May they have happiness and its cause! I shall cause them to have these!

Please, guru-Buddha, grant me blessings to be able to do this.

How wonderful it would be if all sentient beings were free of suffering and its cause!

May they be free of suffering and its cause! I myself will free them from suffering and its cause!

Please, guru-Buddha, grant me blessings to be able to do this.

How wonderful it would be if all sentient beings were never separated from the happiness of higher rebirth and liberation! May they never be separated from the happiness of higher rebirth and liberation! I myself will cause them never to be separated from these! Please, guru-Buddha, grant me blessings to be able to do this.

LOVE

The definition of love in Buddhism is wanting others to be happy.

This love is unconditional and it requires a lot of courage and acceptance (including self-acceptance).

The "near enemy" of love, or a quality which appears similar, but is more an opposite is conditional love.

The opposite is wanting others to be unhappy, or having anger or hatred towards others.

A result which one needs to avoid is attachment.

This definition means that 'love' in Buddhism refers to something quite different from the ordinary term of love which is usually about attachment and desire. These are rarely without self-interest. Instead, in Buddhism it refers to detachment and the unselfish interest in others' welfare.

***'Even offering three hundred bowls of food three times a day does not match the spiritual merit gained in one moment of love.'* Nagarjuna**

Attachment and love are similar in that both of them draw us to the other person. But in fact, these two emotions are quite different. When we're attached we're drawn to someone because he or she meets our needs. In addition, there are lots of strings attached to our affection that we may or may not realize are there. With attachment, we go up and down like a yo-yo, depending on how the other person treats us, or how they make us feel. We obsess, "What do they think of me? Do they love me? Have I offended them? It's not very peaceful. On the other hand, the love we're generating on the Dharma path is unconditional. We simply want others to have happiness and the causes of happiness without any strings attached, without any expectations of what these people will do for us or how good they'll make us feel.

COMPASSION

The definition is: wanting others to be free from suffering.

This compassion happens when one feels bad for someone, and feels an urge to help.

The near enemy is pity, which keeps other at a distance, and does not have an urge to help.

The opposite is wanting others to suffer, or cruelty. A result which one needs to avoid is sentimentality.

Compassion thus refers to an unselfish, detached emotion which gives one a sense of urgency in wanting to help others. From a Buddhist perspective, helping others to reduce their

physical or mental suffering is very good, but the ultimate goal is to extinguish all suffering which comes by reaching enlightenment.

The attitude of a Bodhisattva is Bodhicitta: the wish to liberate **all** sentient beings from the sufferings of cyclic existence and to become a fully enlightened Buddha oneself in order to act as the perfect guide for them. This is the most honorable and idealistic motivation possible.

SYMPATHETIC JOY

The definition is: being happy with someone's fortune and/or happiness. Sympathetic joy here refers to the potential of bliss and happiness of all sentient beings, as they can all become Buddhas.

The opposite is jealousy, when one cannot accept the happiness of others.

Sympathetic joy is a great antidote to depression for oneself as well, but this should not be the main goal.

By rejoicing in others' progress on the spiritual path, one can actually share in their positive karma.

Sympathetic joy is an unselfish, very positive mental attitude which is beneficial for oneself and others.

EQUANIMITY

Equanimity in Buddhism means to have a clear-minded tranquil state of mind - not being overpowered by delusions, mental dullness or agitation. For example, with equanimity we do not distinguish between friend, enemy or stranger, but regard every sentient being as equal.

The near enemy is indifference. It is tempting to think that just 'not caring' is equanimity, but that is just a form of egotism, where we only care about ourselves.

The opposite of equanimity is anxiety, worry, stress and paranoia caused by dividing people into 'good' and 'bad'. A result which one needs to avoid is apathy as a result of 'not caring'.

Equanimity is the basis for unconditional, generous love, compassion and joy for other's happiness.

When we discriminate between friends and enemies, how can we want to help all sentient beings?

Equanimity is an unselfish, even state of mind which also prevents one from doing negative actions.

If one tries to befriend an enemy for a moment, he becomes your friend. The same thing occurs when one treats a friend as an enemy.

It is said that the awareness of a Buddha is completely even, taking in equally the joys and sorrows of all people, friends, loved ones, relatives, and those never met. This is the meaning of a statement made by so many great spiritual teachers, "Love your enemy." It doesn't mean love the person you hate. You can't do that. Love those who hate you. ~ ~ ~

A SIMPLE MEDITATION

Two of my teachers, Garchen Rinpoche and Phakyab Rinpoche, both are teaching the same meditation, so I thought I'd share it with you. It's simple and powerful, and can carry us into very profound states of consciousness.

1. Read or recite The Four Immeasurables or create your own prayer for all beings.
2. If you do not visualize, keep your attention on your belly, and if you can, let yourself feel the energy in your belly. If you don't feel anything energetic, feel the belly move as you breathe.
3. If you can visualize, imagine a tiny flame in the belly, about 3-4 fingers below the navel. Concentrate as clearly as you can on the flame, and warmth if you feel it. Rest in this for as long as you can. If the light fills your entire body, lightly notice this, and still keep your concentration on the flame in the belly.
4. If your mind is very active, you can do the Karmapa Kyenno mantra, Om Ah Hum mantra, or any other mantra you use, still keeping some of the attention on the belly's flame.

Dedication Prayer: You can use this prayer, or create your own.

Let there be Peace and Love among All Beings of the Universe.

-or-

*May the blessings of the Buddhas fill my heart with peace, light and love for the benefit of all beings.
May all beings be free from suffering.
May all beings live in equanimity, free from attachment, aversion and hatred.
May all beings be happy.
May all beings awaken.*

KARMAPA KYENNO (a mantra pronounced "Karmapa chenno")

"Embodiment of all Buddhas, you know me. Please help me."

A mantra is a word or phrase we repeat over and over. Mantras are filled with powerful spiritual energy and help purify our mind, emotions, and our negative karma (the negative thoughts, words and deeds we have done that created suffering for ourselves or others over lifetimes). Instead of putting our attention on the chatter of the mind, we put our attention on a mantra which is a pure energy that will actually deeply benefit us. Some mantras have been used by millions of beings, and are received by great masters from higher realms. Affirmations are also words or phrases we

repeat over and over. Affirmations can be very helpful tools to remind us to set the direction of our thoughts in positive directions.

Just as all beings can receive the blessings of Christ and Mohammed, everyone can connect with compassion of the Karmapa, whether they are Buddhist or not, by thinking or reciting the mantra that has been associated with him for over four hundred years. The Karmapa mantra was first introduced by the 8th Karmapa, in the 1500's, as part of a beautiful prayer called "Calling the Lama From Afar".

The power of the Karmapa mantra as described in a story by Lama Surya Das

One day the head of a nomadic household in desolate northern Tibet passed away. In such a sparsely inhabited region it was rare to find monasteries or lamas to perform Buddhist funeral rites, so the family wondered what to do. They noticed a ragged individual traveling on foot who appeared as if he could be a yogi or a beggar. The man turned out to be a lama, a Tibetan teacher. The grieving family requested his prayers for the deceased, and asked that he perform the rites of phowa, a powerful ritual that helps the spirit leave the body and go into the pure realms (pronounced 'poa'). The lama agreed.

When he reached the man's deathbed and began his chants, the lama, said: "I am just a poor, uneducated practitioner of the Buddha's teachings. But I do have one positive quality: infinite faith in the living Buddha, named Lama Karmapa; he is like the great gate to Dewachen (a Buddhist heaven realm where one goes after death if they have the good karma to go!) His name is the magic password to that fabulous spiritual domain." Then he began reciting again and again the powerful mantra, "Karmapa Khyenno, Karmapa Khyenno!!" He chanted it loudly, again and again. After each rosary of one hundred and eight intense recitations, he would hit the corpse with his mala (prayer beads), commanding that, in the name of the Buddha Karmapa, the spirit of the deceased be reborn in Dewachen. After some time, everyone noticed that the signs of successful practice appeared on the corpse's body. Hair fell from the top of the corpse's head, there was a pleasant fragrance in the air, and a large bump appeared on his head where the subtle consciousness of the deceased departed for the other world.

Everyone present rejoiced, and gratefully thanked the lama. All began to faithfully practice the mantra Karmapa Kyenno, praying to realize the great bliss of Dewachen in this very lifetime.

The traveling lama continued on his journey. One day he heard that the great Karmapa was visiting south Tibet, so he went, hoping meet him and pay his respects. Upon finally reaching his destination, the first thing the clairvoyant Karmapa said to him was: "That was a difficult phowa we performed up there in the north, wasn't it?" The Karmapa laughed, hitting the other lama with his mala. At that moment

the man knew with unshakable certainty that the Karmapa is an omniscient living Buddha, who always keeps his disciples, wherever they are, in his heart and mind.

~ ~ ~ ~

~ ~ .

In 1996, it was observed that when the 17th Karmapa rubbed his robe against some stones, the words 'Karmapa khyenno' spontaneously appeared, as if the rock were responding with iron oxide script. The mantra was instituted by the 8th Karmapa. Its power in times of trouble and as a support for spiritual practice is well known.

"The recitation of Karmapa chenno is the invocation of the blessing, compassion, and all the activities of the Buddha." Tai Situ Rinpoche

Different Meditations with the Mantra Karmapa Kyenno

You can do any or all of these for as long as you comfortably can. When Garchen Rinpoche was asked by students which way should I visualize - with the Buddha (or guru/teacher) in front of me, or on top of my head, or inside my heart, again and again he would say - do whichever is comfortable for you. The Buddha gave 84,000 teachings so the needs of his disciples would be met, and they would have choices of which practices they felt best doing. Garchen Rinpoche reminds us to try to feel as much as you can while you meditate, to choose the practices that feel the best. The deeper the feeling, the stronger the experience we have, the greater the benefit will be. Kalu Rinpoche said better to do 1 mantra with genuine feeling than 100,000 feeling nothing. But if you don't feel any emotion - let your good intention be strong.

If you feel nothing, and the practice seems 'dry', notice that, relax, do some slow deep breaths, and be patient! Try not to judge yourself or kick yourself about it. This is an indication that you are strongly identified with the mind, and see that as a very important observation of how you work. We all start from wherever we are, and mindful awareness of where we are, is a precious awareness. With practice, the mind softens and the heart and consciousness open.

Be soft in the practice. Try not to be rigid or aggressive about what you want to experience. Try to let yourself be open and relaxed, allowing the blessings to naturally arise and fill you. We can experience states of being far beyond what we imagine we would. The mind is so limited compared with our spirit. These practices (visualizations and using the mantra), are the inner rivers of purity we ride upon that carry us beyond the limitations of the mind into the boundless nature of our inner being.

Relaxing and feeling is far more beneficial than trying to force or create an artificial experience, or just doing the meditation mechanically. Remember some days will be clearer than others, some meditations will feel better than others. But

sometimes the greatest work happens when we are challenged. Keep watering your consciousness with practice and patience, and your good and generous intentions - bodhicitta- will be the sunlight shining on your practice.

~Recite the mantra " Karmapa Khyenno" (Karmapa chenno) out loud (softly) or silently to yourself.

~Look at his picture, and imagine his blessings pouring into the top of your head and down into your body, purifying your body, speech and mind of all karma from all lifetimes, past and present. You can visualize light (any color)filling you. Imagine peace, love, joy, patience, or whatever qualities you long for filling you.

~Visualize the Karmapa's image in your mind as you recite Karmapa Khyenno, and relax into imagining, visualizing and/or feeling your mind merging with the Karmapa's mind. If you experience a presence, and your mind becomes silent with no mantra, rest in this. Go with whatever happens, letting yourself rest in the experience.

~If you can, see the blessings pouring through you and out to your loved ones, friends,... to all beings.

~Let yourself rest into whatever goodness you feel, and this will blossom.

~You can recite the mantra to yourself as you're going to sleep. The blessings and teachings will continue as you sleep, and it can make your rest deep, peaceful and healing. When you're ready for bed you can do the 'Dedication' prayers, and then begin the mantra and/or visualization.

At the end of practice, offer the Dedication Prayer (see previous page).

KNOW YOURSELF by SRI POONJA, Hindu master

There is no escape from Love, there is no east or west for Peace and Freedom.

No matter where you go it is always with you.

Satsang is the reminder that you are home, that you are the Home itself,

So you can't return 'back' from Satsang, it is your nature. This experience cannot be forgotten.

That which can be forgotten is forgotten by the mind, but the mind has no access to this experience.

But be careful and vigilant. You will keep the problems most dear to you

and so your old friends, your wicked habits, the asuras, will come back and invite you to suffer again. They are very strong and so you must be.

Break these old habits and you are free;
so travel with those in the same boat, associate with those
going in the same direction.
Go to Truth at any cost. Always keep Quiet.

When the circumstances of vasanas arise, so will the vasanas,
no matter how dormant they are, and especially if you are
Quiet.

A bullet kills once but a vasana kills again and again.
So vigilantly inquire: Who Am I?

Expectations are illusions, so don't run after them and don't get
involved in anger, lust, and greed.

Just don't involve yourself with them. Keeping Quiet and
content is the best weapon.

Joy will also destroy the demons and illusions of the mind.
Once you bury them do not dig them up again.
Where there is a flame there is light. Where there is
doubtlessness there is Grace.

You don't need to know me. Know your Self, this is most
important.

Instead of knowing others, Know Thyself

First know your Self and all else will be revealed to you.

Let there be Peace and Love among All Beings of the
Universe.

**[A vasana literally means 'wishing' or 'desiring', but is
used in Advaita in the sense of the sub-conscious or
latent tendencies in one's nature.]**

CULTIVATING MINDFULNESS IN OUR DAILY LIVES

*Once an old woman came to the Buddha and asked him how
to meditate. He told her to remain aware of every moment of
her hands as she drew water from the well, knowing that if she
did, she would soon find herself in that state of alert and
spacious calm that is meditation. Buddha story*

I highly recommend being mindful as many moments of the
day as possible! A great way to cultivate a strong mindful
awareness is to pick an action that you do every day, and
make a commitment to doing it mindfully for a day, a week, a
month, or whatever feels best for you. For example - every
time you drink, or eat, or brush your teeth, or open a door, or
do part of your job. You can start with one activity, then keep
adding another one the next cycle. So you'll be mindful when
you eat and drink, or walk and open a door, etc. This will
develop into deepening habits of being mindful, and you'll
begin to notice that without thinking or choosing to, you'll find
yourself naturally being more and more mindful, quiet,
centered and comfortable in yourself. The benefits of
mindfulness are profound - physically, mentally, emotionally

and spiritually. It is a path to true awakening, and to living in
ever deepening peace, joy, compassion and love.

If you're having trouble focusing while doing sitting meditation,
mindfulness is just as powerful a practice (for some, it's more
effective). And mindful action leads to quieter sitting practice.
Divine realizations will happen naturally as we slow down and
live in the true power of mindful awareness.

WHAT WE'VE BEEN PRACTICING FOR: TURNING TO PRACTICE. Thanissaro Bhikkhu

***"Pursue the practice, develop it, devote yourself
to it."*** Shakyamuni Buddha

In times of crisis, we often feel we don't have the time or
energy to practice, but those are precisely the times when the
practice is most necessary. This is what we've been practicing
for: the situations where the practice doesn't come easily.
When the winds of change reach hurricane force, our inner
refuge of mindfulness, concentration, and discernment is the
only thing that will keep us from getting blown away. When we
can be secure in our inner source for true happiness, we don't
expose ourselves to the devastation that comes when outside
hopes for happiness and security are dashed. We have our
shelter, our place of security, inside.

So take heart. Do what you can to help everyone in your path,
and dedicate the merit of your practice to all beings. We may
be powerless to change the past, but we do have the power to
shape the present and the future by what we do, moment to
moment. And we'll find the only true refuge there is: within.

**A PRISON OF DESIRE; WHAT IF YOUR THOUGHTS ARE
TOO PAINFUL TO BEAR?** *Ananda Baltrunas, Vietnam Vet,
served twenty years in a maximum security prison in
southern Indiana. Released in April 2003, he is an
ordained Buddhist priest at Udumbara Sangha Zen Center
in Evanston, Illinois.*

Every day of the twenty years I spent in prison for armed
robbery, I heard the word freedom tossed about as if it were a
prayer. For all of us convicts, it meant the same thing: to get
out, to be back in the world. This wonderful notion of freedom
occupied our days, our dreams, our fantasies. And for all that
talk of freedom, few of us could see that we were in bondage
long before we ever went to prison. Years of my life were spent
in a prison of my own desires and aversions: I used drugs,
alcohol and relationships like they were aspirin.

I resisted meditation practice my first few years inside for the
simple reason that I couldn't be alone with myself. The pain of

seeing what was in my heart was too great. I could navigate the world of prison much more easily than I could the cesspool of my own mind. The thoughts I had were of violence, sex, drug relapses. In my mind I had murdered, raped, stolen, and maimed. I did not want to be alone with that person.

When years had passed and I finally summoned the courage to turn and face myself, I thought I could manipulate my mind. I would sit for hours and try to direct my thoughts away from the anguished memories of the past, the recriminations and the bitterness and the violence. It didn't dawn on me that I had no control over the arising of my thoughts. I was not thinking the thoughts; they were thinking themselves. When I realized this, I was profoundly relieved. The thoughts were not me, and whatever judgment I might make about them was totally unnecessary. My responsibility was only to sit with them, without motive, agenda, or intention.

When I look for freedom today I find it not in fantasy or in dreams, but in my meditation practice. What kind of freedom is it that exists in doing nothing? It is the freedom not to interfere or react. It is the freedom to merely observe. I don't have to judge the trauma that arises in mind. I don't have to get involved with the hundred narratives that might try to occupy my mind during the day. In not clinging to thoughts and ideas, wants and desires, hatreds and resentments, the bondages of my most negative thoughts and emotions have faded into a haze that still arises but no longer dominates my life. I have found freedom: it is the freedom of non-attachment, the freedom to not cling and to not resist. It is the freedom to allow myself to be with myself.

TEACHINGS ON THE MIND by BARDO TULKU *He used to reside and teach at KTD, Karmapa's main center in the US in Woodstock NY. I often sat with him there.*

It is "thoughts" that have cast us into, and keep us in, samsara. But it is through the recognition of the nature of thoughts that we achieve nirvana. We always have a choice. We can follow thought, be overpowered by it, swept away by it, and when that happens we accumulate karma and we prolong samsara. Or, [we can] simply see the nature of the thought, in which case the thought itself provides an opportunity for insight into the mind's nature.

Although the nature of our mind, emptiness, is unchanging, the mind can either be overpowered by thoughts, in which case it accumulates karma and perpetuates samsara, or it can see the nature of its own thoughts. Therefore we say: "The discovery of freedom from thought is made *within* thought." We cannot discover freedom from the deception of thought by stopping thoughts; we can and must discover it by seeing the nature of thoughts as they arise. **[Saṃsāra is a Sanskrit word that means "wandering" or "world", with the**

connotation of cyclic, circuitous change. It also refers to the theory of rebirth and "cyclicity of all life, matter, existence", a fundamental assumption of all [Indian religions](#)]

LAYERS OF CONSCIOUSNESS by KIP MAZUY There are many layers to this moment. At the most surfaced layer is the sense of being a person that you are creating, that you are actively doing and protecting. You create a self-image of yourself that you project to yourself and others.

Underneath that is the more real and conditioned personality; what you are actually feeling and experiencing. If your surfaced personality is attention seeking, you might find underneath that you feel unloved. With each layer you become aware, you expand beyond it. You might find the sense of impersonal being beyond that, and then witness consciousness, nothingness. Divine love, all the way into formless infinite peace and joy and beyond.

The order of layers is not important, but rather the fact that they are all here in this moment. This moment is infinite. It is just that your attention gets caught in a certain layer and until there is enough awareness in that layer, and the desire to be free from it, it remains there.

But as awareness expands, attention becomes free to awaken to a deeper level of experience.

You don't lose the other layers, you are simply free (& drawn) to be immersed in a deeper layer of peace. Being aware like this is one way, just allowing what is to be and resting in awareness. In this, awareness expands beyond it. But another way that opens up is simply directing your attention to this presence. Even if you have just a taste of peace or bliss, by immersing your attention in it, this is where you go. Once there is enough awareness and peace, you don't have to go from layer to layer.

You can simply go directly to the deepest level of peace. You have realized just by immersing your attention in it. It is not going anywhere. It is just becoming aware of what is where in the depths of this moment and immersing your attention in it.

QUOTES FROM US: OUR SANGHA SHARING WISDOM

Thich Nhat Hahn said the next Buddha is the Sangha, the spiritual community. That is all of us. Everyone of us. We find gems of wisdom in books, or we come up with them ourselves as we get inspired, and as we get more awake, as we become the voice of wisdom. When share these treasures with others it is a precious act of generosity. Someone's heart will be touched, someone's soul inspired, someone will find a treasure here that truly helps them find their way. Someone will use these words as a light on a dark day, as a rope of kindness

when they're needing to be lifted out of their gloom or despair or searching. And these quotes do just that. Quotes are powerful teachings: they carry the essence of wisdom in a few words. We remember the quotes that inspire us. As we journey together, one light lights another...and so it glows, and so it grows...Thank you all for your great gifts of sharing :-) the quotes below were sent in by those members of PE who are ongoing members of this Buddhist Spirituality and Meditation program

All quotes are by the one submitting them, unless we have a different name after the quote.

Sorry if I missed anyone...

Adrian Barahona

The impermanence of thoughts mirror the passing of clouds.
As clouds clear the sky, leaving a deep spotless blue,
The mind can get clear of thoughts, leaving it spotless blue.

Before emotions arise is called balance;
When emotions arise yet are moderate, this is called harmony.

Brian Davis

Deep and quiet, simple, clear, unformed. A truth that is like nectar, I have found.

Whoever I explain it to, no one will understand. So, in the jungle, silent, I remain.

~The wise treasure the awareness that they have cultivated as their most precious possession.

~By endeavor, vigilance, restraint and self-control, let the wise make islands of themselves which no flood can overwhelm.

~If we open our hearts, anyone, including the people who drive us crazy, can be our teacher. **Pema Chodron**

Cesar Molina: A Look Out the Window

I looked out the window at 10:00 AM
and I see Namhak Osel. Blending with the three times.
Sitting on top of a sun as light rays reached the 10 directions.
Joy and expansion of the alay followed...**Changchub lodro nyima**

Jana Clark: Stillness of Being

I am the place mankind dreams about, this center of stillness.
Yet, when found and realized, it encircles the universe.
People on their spiritual journey will notice they become much tamer,
Less 'involved', less affected by external events. Their perceptions change.
And when life presents challenges, solutions pop into their heads.
Life becomes altogether smoother and joyful.
This stillness can only be reached in silence, can only be kept in quietness, can only be felt in serenity.

Jonathan Jacobson

A human being is part of the whole called by us "the universe", a part limited in time and space.

He experiences himself, his thoughts and feelings, as something separate from the rest - a kind of optical delusion of consciousness. This delusion is a kind of prison for us, restricting us to our personal desires and affection for a few persons nearest to us. Our task must be to free ourselves from this prison by widening the circle of understanding and compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature in its beauty. **Albert Einstein**

Stephan Land

We are the experience, not one having an experience.

Richard Sharp

~There are two types of love: A love that has a reason, and a love that has no reason.

The love that has a reason is a love that will not last, because when the reason is gone, so is the love.

A love that has no reason is a love that lasts forever.

~The purpose of creation cannot be understood at the level of the intellect. You have to ride above the level of the intellect to understand the purpose of creation. We have to grow spiritually within ourselves to understand.

~Revenge does not long remain unrevenged.

~Spiritual knowledge is the king of education, the most secret of all secrets. It is the purest knowledge, and because it gives direct perception of the self by realization, it is the perfection of religion.

Dale Moore

~Still looking for happiness in samsara.

~You only lose what you cling to.

William Williamson

Love is one thing you can keep giving away and still never run out of.

Ralph Duncan

In the sweat lodge I can look deep down into the flame of my spirit, to exist without existing.

Matthew Norris

~The peace will indeed come, but it will be the fruit, not of pushing away distractions, but of meeting thoughts and feelings with stillness instead of commentary.

~We move from being a victim of what is happening to a witness.

~Trying to push pain away increases suffering. If you can be still before the pain and not wrestle with it, this is awareness.

Jack Patterson

Come, come, whoever you are. Wanderer, worshiper, lover of leaving

Ours is not a caravan of despair. Come, it does not matter if you've broken your vow a thousand times.

Still, come and yet again come! **Rumi**

Pure awareness is transcending, ever transcending,
Transcending transcendence,
Transcending even the transcendence of transcendence. This is Awakened Mind! Swaha!

Thomas Robson

After what seemed like an eternity I became aware that I was dreaming an awful dream.

My dream, like being harassed and lost with no direction. I began to wake myself up. The dream became aware. What I've been able to ascertain so far...Love is the key. Excuses are the stumbling blocks that bring us back to the beginning.

Kua Yung

~To live a single day and hear a good teaching is better than to live a hundred years without such teachings.

~If someone's body and mind are under control they should give evidence to it in virtuous deeds. This is a sacred duty. Faith will then be their wealth. Sincerity will give their life a sweet savor, and to accumulate virtues will be their sacred tasks.

Todd Pate

~Greatness comes by serving others.

~No matter where you are and what you face, within your heart peace is possible.

Fortunately deep within us, there is a direct connection to the divine. There is a part of our being that is beyond the personal self. You can consciously choose to identify with that part, rather than with the ego mind and body. When you do this, a natural transformation begins to take place within you. Over time, as you observe this transformation, you will see what it's like to be coming towards God. You actually begin to know what it feels like to be moving in the direction of spirit. The changes you see within you are reflective of the forces you're approaching. Just as rain makes you wet and fire makes you warm, so you can know the nature of God by looking into the mirror of your transformed self. This is not a philosophy. It is a direct experience. **Michael A. Singer** (The Untethered Soul)

~I cannot control how others treat me, but I can control my own response. I choose to relate to others based on my own character, not theirs. Soulchology 101

~Between the stimulus and the response there is a space. And in that space lies our power and our freedom. **Victor Frankl**

Walt Bulkeley

Attachment to thoughts, and emotions are a programmed response of the human condition. Our jealousy, pride and ego try to cause us to make being awake an emotional journey. When we realize that being awake is just that, being awake, we don't have to attach to any of the emotional desires, or frustrations that we have been taught about. How is letting someone else's actions affect your happiness benefitting you?

William Williamson

Ah - Ba - Ra - Ka - Kya (mantra you can repeat over and over as a meditation)

Ah The original and non born

Ba The beyond all limitation

Ra The absolutely without stain

Ka The manifestation and without any dependence

Kya The absolutely and totally Empty

Time and Distance are One, Mind and Universe are One

Perception and Reality are One

The more one travels the more one stays in one place, One is the Universe.

It's so secret it doesn't even exist, the effulgence is so profound. Majestic Eloquence of Synthesis.

Corbett Yost

~By studying ourselves before we're taken over by our emotions, we create the causes of peace and joy for us all.

Pema Chodron

~People must learn to hate and if they can learn to hate, they can be taught to love, for love comes more naturally to the human heart than its opposite. **Nelson Mandela**

~The first practice is the practice of indiscriminating virtue: care for those who are deserving. Also, and equally, care for those who are not. **Lao Tzu**

~It is only after the deepest darkness that the greatest joy can come; it is only after slavery and prison that the sweetest appreciation of freedom can come. **Malcolm X**

Kalvin Lee Youman: the Philosopher

Even in failure there is wisdom.

It's not who we are, it's the moves we make.

Z.L.King

~You have not lived today until you have done something for someone who can never repay you. **Bunyan**

~This issue (Inside Dharma) is dedicated to 'those who are courageous enough to create a path for others to follow'.

Scott Zirus

Just as a sweet-smelling and beautiful lotus can grow from a pile of discarded waste, the radiance of a true disciple of the Buddha outshines dark shadows cast by ignorance.

Dhammapada

His Holiness the Twelfth Gyalwang Drukchen Rinpoche:

I call on you, my teachers - regard me with compassion!

I sincerely wish to receive your blessings,
Please regard your child's longing desire.
Please bless me with the resolve to attain realization.
Please bless me to have a steady and smooth mind,
So that for this life and those to follow,

As a true practitioner whose heart and mind are in harmony and accord,

The special intention to help others is spontaneously present.

May I be able to benefit measureless beings.

MORE INSPIRATIONAL QUOTES

Always recognize the dreamlike qualities of life and reduce attachment and aversion. Practice good-heartedness toward all beings. Be loving and compassionate, no matter what others do to you. What they will do will not matter so much when you see it as a dream. The trick is to have positive intention during the dream. This is the essential point. This is true spirituality. **Chakdud Tulku Rinpoche**

Many things help you with concentration, so they can be useful parts of practice. But finally, there is no substitute for insightful seeing or for understanding how you create suffering for yourself; and in the process - in seeing into and through it - how to let go of it. It's a life of awareness. **Larry Rosenberg**

Learning to open to, face, and relax with our suffering is absolutely essential for our hearts. When we can gracefully be with everything that arises, a deep peace will begin to blossom within us. There will be nothing to run from. And from that, our genuine equanimity, peace, love and joy will awaken. It is our own inner nature. It is who we genuinely are, not something we need to get from the outside, or something we even need to work on to achieve. What we're doing is clearing off the dust that's covering the jewel of our own true radiance of being. Then we will shine in all of our true spiritual radiance. **Tara**

Quotes of Mahatma Gandhi

I am endeavoring to see God through service to humanity, for I know that God is neither in heaven, nor down below, but in everyone.

How I find it possible to control anger would be a useless question, for it is a habit that everyone must cultivate and must succeed in forming *by constant practice*.

I have made the frankest admission of my many sins. But I do not carry their burden on my shoulders. If I am journeying Godward, as I feel I am, it is safe with me.

Teach this triple truth to all: A generous heart, kind speech, and a life of service and compassion are the things which renew humanity.

I am so conscious of the imperfections of the species to which I belong. My remedy is to deal with the wrong wherever I see it, not to hurt the wrongdoer; even as I would not like to be hurt for the wrongs I continually do.

I have learnt through bitter experience the one supreme lesson to conserve my anger, and as heat conserved is transmuted into energy, even so our anger controlled can be transmitted into a power which can move the world.

I am poor, struggling and yearning to be wholly truthful and wholly nonviolent in thought, word, and deed, but am ever failing to reach the ideal which I know to be true. It is a painful climb, but the pain of it is a positive pleasure to me. Every step upward makes me feel stronger and more fit for the next.

Quotes of the Buddha

When the mind is pure, joy follows like a shadow that never leaves. What you think you become.

Let us rise up and be thankful, for if we didn't learn a lot today, at least we learned a little. If we didn't learn a little, at least we didn't get sick. And if we got sick, at least we didn't die. So let us all be thankful.

You can search throughout the entire universe for someone who is more desiring of your love and affection than you are yourself, and that person is not to be found anywhere. You, yourself, as much as anybody in the entire universe, deserve your love and affection.

Praise and blame, gain and loss, pleasure and sorrow come and go like the wind.

To be happy, rest like the giant tree in the midst of them all.

Teach this triple truth to all: A generous heart, kind speech, and a life of service and compassion are the things which renew humanity. Every morning we are born again. What we do today is what matters most.

Radiate boundless love towards the entire world- above, below, and across unhindered without ill will, without any form of hatred.

Know well what leads you forward and what holds you back, and choose the path that leads to wisdom.

Do not overrate what you have received, nor envy others. He who envies others does not obtain peace of mind.

Quotes of the Dalai Lama

The most important factor in maintaining peace within oneself, in the face of any difficulty, is one's mental attitude. If it is distorted by such feelings as anger, attachment or jealousy, then even the most comfortable environment will bring one no peace. On the other hand, if one's attitude is generally calm and gentle, then even a hostile environment will have little effect. Since the basic source of peace and happiness is one's own mental attitude, it is worthwhile adopting every means to develop it in a positive way.

In your daily life, how do you become an instrument of social change? You become in yourself the statement of love, the statement of choiceless awareness, you become the moment so that everyone that comes near you is liberated by your presence if they are ready. You do nothing to anybody. You live your life. Which life do you live? Whatever your dharma (the calling of the path of your life) demands. If your work is to protest the injustice of races, you protest. If your work is to raise a family, you raise a family. If your work is to be a good lawyer, you're a good lawyer. If your work is to be a shoemaker, you're a shoemaker. If your work is to meditate in a cave, you meditate in a cave. No blame, no reward. You do your dharma. Each act you do you do as a vehicle for becoming this meditative, loving, present moment. This statement of love. the statement of choiceless awareness. You become the moment.

As Buddhists, while we practice our own teaching we must respect other faiths. Develop a good heart that longs for other beings to find lasting happiness. Always practice kindness.

~ ~

Additional News

**You can write directly to me at
Tara's Voice
PO Box 524
Valley Cottage, NY 10989**

~White Tara cards and Karmapa pictures in color are still available for everyone who wants one. Tara is the female Buddha of protection, as well as boundless peace and love. You'll receive a Tara meditation with the card. The Karmapa, like the Dalai Lama, is considered to be a Bodhisattva- his life is the embodiment of the compassion and power of the Buddhas. A Karmapa meditation is included in this newsletter.

~We hope to have an Art Exhibit at the Valley Cottage Library in 2017! Please send in any artwork you'd like to include. If we have at least 26 pieces, it'll happen. Make sure you sign your artwork.

~Please put your full name address in your letter - not just on the envelope. Sometimes envelopes get lost!

~You need to write to the organizations on the list if you want books, magazines, etc about Buddhism. Sorry, I do not have the manpower to write to the organizations for you.

~Please continue to send your favorite and original quotes.

~Let's start a Favorite Book List. Let me know what books you've loved and why and we'll share it.

I wish you all great peace and kindness on your journey, and in your world. Remember with every moment of effort, you are closer to your Self. We are the journey, and every moment is a precious opportunity for compassion, patience, wisdom, love and kindness towards ourselves and others. Anything is possible with effort and patience.

We all have the capacity to be great sources of refuge for ourselves and others. We can find acts of kindness that aren't considered weakness, even if they're done in the silence of our beings as prayers for others. We can find the stillness within the storms. We can watch the chaos from silence and peace. May our beautiful intentions carry us all, like golden boats on a sacred river. May you be a light for yourself and others. Know you are on a path of Peace. The winds of Grace are always blowing. All we need to do is set our sails.

With peaceful loving prayers,

Tara

Revised Buddhist Prison Resource List

~Please let us know if any of these listings are no longer active

American Buddhist Association - Books of various traditions
10515 North Latson Rd. Howell, MI 48855

American Buddhist Seminary - Information on Buddhism and Meditation
2717 Haste St., Berkeley CA 94704

Amitabha Buddhist Center - Free books to prisoners
650 S. Burnadino Avenue, Sunnyvale CA 94087

California Buddhist Vihara Society - Free books on mahayana/therquack
4797 Myrtle Drive, Concord CA 94521

Center for Spiritual Living - "Science of Mind" magazine
573 Part Point Drive, Golden CO 80401

Chan Meditation Center - Books and correspondence course
90-536 Carona Avenue, Elmhurt NY 11373

Compassion Works for all - Good newsletter "Dharma Friends"

P.O. BOX 7708, Cotati CA 94931

Dharma Companions - Books, pamphlets, magazines. Will answer questions on Buddhism (Not a pen-pal program)
P.O. BOX 762 Cotati CA 94931

Dharma Friendship Foundation - Tapes of guided meditation and books by venerable chodron upon request.
P.O. BOX 23040, Seattle WA 98102

Dharma Publishing - Will send books to prison libraries
35788 Hauser Bridge rd., Cazadlero CA 95421

Freeing the Mind - Correspondence program for prisoners and free books
P.O. BOX 12037, San Francisco CA 94112

Heart Mountain Project - Free meditation manual
1223 S. St. Francis Dr., STE C, Santa Fe, NM 87505

Human Kindness Foundation - Free books by Bo Lozoff: We're All Doing Time, Deep and Simple, Linage (very recommended)
P.O. BOX 61619, Durham NC 27715

Inside Dharma - Newsletter, pen pals, books, and other materials
P.O. BOX 220721, Kirkwood MO 63122

Insight Meditation Society - Free Newsletter
1230 Pleasant St. Barre MA 01005

International Buddhist Monastic Inst. - Books and tapes
9250 Columbus Ave., North Hills, CA 91343

Khanti Outreach Project - Journal and correspondence with prisoners
14 Heartwood Circle, Newmarket NH 03857

Lama Yeshe Wisdom Archive's - Very recommended, free books by Lama Yeshe
PO BOX 356, Weston MA 02493

Liberation Prison Project - Provides teachers and refuge by proxy
PO BOX 33036, Raleigh, NC 27636

Love, Serve, Remember Foundation - "Be Hero Now" book by Ram Das
23852 PCH # 762, Malibu CA 90265

Netta Forest Monastery - Free books to prisoners
PO BOX 1409, Valley Center, CA 92082

Mindfulness Bell - newsletter
2496 Melru Lane, Escondido CA 92026

Valijor Prison Dharma Service - Free alter cards and information on Buddhism
PO BOX 1177, Mt. Shasta, CA 96067

Community of Mindful Living - Books focus on Zen - Thich nhat Itanh. Zen and yoga manual
PO BOX 7355, Bereley, CA 94707

Prison Mindfulness Institute - Free books
11 South Angell St., Ste #303, Providence RI 02906

Project Clear Light - Lojong Correspondence Course
2220 Postoffice St. Ste B, Galveston TX 77550

Purple Lotus Society - Newsletter
636 San Mateo Avenue, San Bruno, CA 94066

Ram Dass Tape Library Foundation - Audio tapes of Ram Das
524 San Anselmo Avenue #203, San Anselmo CA 94960

Ratna Peace Initiative - Good correspondence course
6800 79th Street, Ste 200, Niwot CO 80503

Sutra Translation Center - "The story of Buddha," "The Fundamentals of Meditation Practice," and "Thus Have I Heard" books
2611 Davidson Ave, Bronx NY 10468

Temple of Enlightenment - "A Path to True Happiness" "Love in Buddhism" and other books.
3070 Albany Cres, Bronx NY 10463

Wisdom Publications - Books focus on Tibetan and Theravada Traditions. Two free books every other month.
199 Elm Street, Somerville MA 02144

Yin-Shun Foundation - Books "Living Meditation," "Living Insight," and "Fundamentals of Buddhism"
67 Lawrence Rd., Lafayette NJ 07848

Zen Mountain Monastery - Books, newsletter and audio tapes. Correspondence course available.
PO BOX 197, S. Plank Rd. Mt Temper, NY 12457

CTA/Durland Alternatives Library
Prisoner Express
127 Anabel Taylor Hall
Ithaca, NY 14853

Non Profit Organization
U.S. Postage Paid
Permit 448
Ithaca, NY 14850

Buddhist Meditation and Study Guide-

This gift of awareness is brought to you by Prisoner Express and the Durland Alternatives Library. The Alternatives Library is a project partner of the Center for Transformative Action

Garchen Rinpoche



the 17th Karmapa

