

# Buddhist Meditation Newsletter

Dear Friends,

This is Tara's latest Buddhist meditation packet. This packet is focused on the God Aspect named Tara, her namesake. I read through it once and realize I may have to read it many times to extract the information shared. This is not meant to be light, quick reading, but rather material to be slowly digested. You may have to read through sections of the packet a few times to absorb the content. Tara, the author, not the goddess will be taking a break from creating this newsletter for awhile. This will be the only Buddhist Meditation newsletter produced this year. **Inside the packet she has included an address where you can write her directly with any questions or concerns regarding your interest in Buddhism.** I am not sure if she will be able to answer every letter she receives but I know she reads them all. During this break Tara will put her energy to finding great book donations for our expedited book program. That is how she originally got involved with the program, and I am thrilled to have her step into this role. If you want more buddhist meditation packets or if you would like spirituality packets based on other faiths and practices write me and let me know.

I am going on a 10 day silent retreat at the end of March., It will be austere and we are not supposed to read, or look at screens during the retreat. Most of the 24 hour day is spent sitting with a little time for eating and sleeping. I am a little nervous, and also curious as to how this experience will be. It is call Vipassana Meditation and Tara mentions it in this packet. I know Tara has gained so much from sharing her love of Buddhism with you and I hope this packet will help you find balance and harmony within. We are all doing time on this planet, and any time we can get a more expanded view of the connectedness of all beings the sooner we will start taking care of one another and the world we live in. Blessings on us all,

Gary

My Dear Friends,

There is a special connection that awakens for beings in spiritual community. Beings who help us awaken are precious, and our heart and soul know this intuitively and open. We may even feel love for someone in our sangha- or be feeling love for me. This is beautiful but this has nothing to do with romantic love. Nothing. Romantic love is filled with changing emotions, illusions, hopes and fears and entanglement. This is not what our spiritual connection is about. The whole point of our spiritual journey, if you're sincerely on it, is to see through the entanglements of the mind, and to find what is pure, peaceful and unchanging within you. If you think this awakening feeling you have is about having a romantic relationship, look deeper within yourself. In truth it's about becoming the love that awakens. The connection you feel is with your deeper self. It is you awakening. The love is within you. It's not about the other person. We are opening to the One Love that is the essence of all beings. You have touched your essence - let go of the attachment to the other person you're projecting on. Look deeper within. Love is a Virtue. Love is a state of Being. Love is who you are.

If this is your first newsletter with us - a hearty welcome to our Sangha, our spiritual community! If you're already receiving newsletters...good to be in touch with you again.

I spend many hours working on our newsletters - I want each one to have moments that will inspire you, (with the quotes), and practices, tools you can make a part of your daily lives that will really help you find more peace, patience, and awareness. This letter offers simple powerful practices - like mindfulness, and working with the breath, that all of us benefit from, no matter what level of practice we do. I've also included a traditional Tibetan Buddhist practice called The Praises of 21 Taras. Tara is a female Buddha, and reading or softly speaking the text is considered a powerful blessing. I'd love to hear your feedback, and know if you want more practices like this or you prefer practices with breath and mindfulness.

Always, it's best to do the practices that you feel comfortable with. The spiritual path is about finding your way back to your pure natural, peaceful self, and this happens more clearly when we relax and do what's comfortable for us.

Please feel free to write to me if you have questions about your practice or your experiences, and I'll do my best to help to respond in a letter, or have your questions answered in a newsletter. I hope you all find valuable support and guidance in the words you'll read. Remember, a spiritual newsletter or book is more than a novel. Reading it through several times and doing the practices is how you will get the most benefit. You may find different gifts with each reading. There are tools

here you can practice for the rest of your life and keep benefiting from. I wish you all auspicious progress!!!  
Keep sending your favorite quotes. We love them, and they truly help your sangha friends.

For now you can continue to write to me at: Tara's Voice

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## **FROM A BOOK: LETTERS FROM THE DHAMMA BROTHERS**

*The Dhamma Brothers are a group of inmates who did extensive Buddhist meditation in prison-they did 10 day retreats, sitting many hours a day. Charles was often overpowered by his rage, and was afraid to face it head-on. Then he started doing Buddhist meditation called Vipassana, which is basically watching the breath and the impermanence of what arises. (More on this in another newsletter)*

My meditation practice has affected my life in different ways. Sometimes I am so peaceful, I am thought to be weak. And that poses many problems in this world of vultures. But sometimes I'm boiling inside from trying to cope with my situation. I appreciate being in this demanding and volatile environment, because I've learned that struggle is ordained. Each time I go through a troubled situation, I then experience the ease of knowing how to handle this type of situation the next time it arises. So, yes, meditation has helped me to find inner-peace. Mostly because I'm now more comfortable with my being in my own person. Meditation has helped me gain self-acceptance, where I don't need other people's opinions to validate my existence.

So yes, it has helped me to recognize the fountain where I can always quench my thirst. Or having a spring within that has in fact enhanced the quality of my life. It's like having a never ending of having a place to be clean when I'm feeling soiled. It's all of that, and then some. I'm forever grateful to you for exposing me to the whole new world and making it possible for me and everyone else who was allowed to experience Vipassana meditation, to experience what we never experienced before. Thank you! Much Metta (loving kindness)  
CharlesX Ice

I still get angry, but it doesn't last. I still get offended, but I'm quickly over it. I still experience depressed moments, yet only for moments. I've been blessed with awareness and with skills. Now instead of being caught up I recognize what is arising and I try to skillfully allow it to pass away, without attaching myself.

Being able to feel good about the moment you are in is one of the most difficult things to do in a maximum-security prison. Guess what though? Being able to connect with what's authentic about my existence, being able to forgive myself and being able to hold myself accountable for what I experience has enabled me to feel good about life, living and me - right now. Omar Rahman

## **NOTES OF WISDOM: QUOTES FROM OUR SANGHA [the members of PE]**

### **Steven Lee Adkins Jr**

Far better it is to dare mighty things, to win glorious triumphs even though checkered by failure, than to take rank with those poor spirits who neither enjoy much nor suffer much because they live in the gray twilight that knows not victory nor defeat.  
Theodore Roosevelt

Your mind is a garden, you can either grow flowers in it or you can grow weeds. Anonymous

Love conquers all and costs nothing. Anonymous

### **Steven Attar**

We close our eyes-We close our eyes and dream-and the world has turned around again-  
When everybody is running in the big race, and having a good time-  
We might catch the Shadow-we might-  
I looked Death in the face last night - I saw Him in a mirror - and He said, "Please smile"  
He told me not to worry - He told me just to take my time...  
(We close our eyes -and the world has turned around again-)  
We close our eyes and dream - and another year has come and gone. Oneo Boineo?

### **Torrence Barton** (quoted from Letters from Dhamma Brothers)

The gleam in my eyes reflects the flame igniting my spirit, resembling that of a candlelight which burns internal discontentment. Aware that my being should be flowing as bright as the sun, thus I am driven. Wakefulness, discipline and peace are my destination. Carpooling with others ensures me of my arrival. The brilliance of their rays confirms for me, "They know the way."  
Peace be unto you.

**Rob Becker**

Our way is not to sit and acquire something. It is to express our true nature. Shunryo Suzuki

**Jeremy Brown: Hope is Power**

We are the power in everyone, We are the dance of the moon and sun

We are the hope that will not hide, We are the turning of the tide.

We are the people that will not die. We are the ones with wings that fly.

We are the sparks of the Divine, light shining in the night, We will never give up the fight.

We will all come One Together united beyond Forever

We are one, we re infinite joy and fun. Come sing with me, come and dance with me.

Let's raise our voice to he Highest Dimensions,

Let's accept Truthfully one another. Let our souls be light as a Feather.

We are the power in everyone we are the dance of the Moon and Sun,

We are the Hope that will not hide, we are the turning of the tide.

Patience is the cure for all our failings. Sri Chinmoy

**Jason Grant**

For those on the bodhisattva path (the path of spiritual awakening), loving and appreciating your friends, even when they are difficult, as they sometimes are, is the path's fullness and completion. Friendship ripens and deepens our capacity for compassion. Norman Fischer

Everything will be alright. Neem Karoli Baba

**James Hochschild**

I am not going to run away from this suffering. I want to use it in the best and richest way I can, so that I can become more compassionate and more helpful to others. Sogyal Rinpoche

**Michael Murphy**

Physically in the house of no release, but when the mind is practicing Dharma it becomes the house for achieving ultimate real liberation from the real samsaric prison. Lama Zopa Rinpoche

**Juan R. Rodriguez**

Everything in Nature moves in circles. What goes out must come back. Love and you will be loved. Extend joy and you will become more joyful. Dr. Ernest Holmes

**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.

**Joseph Williams**

We must be a lamp unto ourselves. Buddha

If the elephant of mind is bound on all sides by the cord of mindfulness,

All fear disappears and complete happiness comes.

All enemies: all the tigers, lions, elephants, bears, serpents (of our emotions),

And all the keepers of hell: the demons and the horrors,

All of these are bound by the mastery of your mind.

By the taming of that one mind, all are subdued

Because all fears and immeasurable sorrows are derived from the mind. Shantideva

**Zach Khelsey**

The best and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen or even touched. They must be felt with the heart. Helen Keller

Although the world is full of suffering, it is also full of the overcoming of it. Helen Keller

Everything has its wonders, even darkness and silence, and I learn, whatever state I may be in, to be content. Helen Keller

Enjoy when you can and endure when you must. Johann Wolfgang von Goether

When we are no longer able to change a situation, we are challenged to change ourselves. Victor Frankl

I fear more what is within me than what comes from without.

Martin Luther King

The most common way people give up their power is by thinking they don't have any. A. Walker

Reflect upon your present blessings - of which every man has many - not on your past misfortunes of which all men have some. Charles Dickens

There is a certain kind of spiritual maturity that can be attained only through the discipline of suffering. D.A. Carson

Strive not to be a success, but rather to be of value. Albert Einstein

Preach the gospel at all times, and when necessary use words. St Francis of Assisi

Do not agonize of yesterday, it's already gone. Do not borrow tomorrow's trouble, it not here. Rest in the Now. It's all there ever is. Z.K.

### **Charles M. Yonkings**

Truth surrounds you. It is in the air, it is in the fragrance of the flowers, it is in the flow of the river, it is in the green leaves, it is in the stars, it is in the dust. It is in you. Osho

A human being is part of a whole, called by us the 'universe', a part limited in time and space. He experiences himself, his thoughts and feelings as something separated from the rest - a kind of optical delusion of his consciousness. This delusion is a kind of prison for us, restricting us to our personal desires and to affection for a few persons nearest us. Our task must be to free ourselves from this prison by widening our circles of compassion to embrace all living beings and the whole of nature in its beauty. Albert Einstein.

That which is called a 'demon' is not some great black thing that petrifies whoever it sees. A demon is anything that obstructs the achievement of freedom. There is no greater devil than this fixation to a self. So until this ego-fixation is cut off, all the demons wait with open mouths. For this reason you need to exert yourself at a skillful method to sever the devil of ego-fixation.

Machig Labdron (Tibetan female enlightened being)

### FROM THE HUMAN KINDNESS FOUNDATION NEWSLETTER

*I highly recommend the book: We're All Doing Time from the Human Kindness Foundation. I've spent time with Bo, the author. He dedicated his life to helping inmates become prison monks. I thought this communication between an inmate and the HKF was worth including for you ...*

Dear HKF,

I am a 26 year old male. Due to the most unfortunate or the highest blessing, I am in prison for crimes that are absolutely

not true. I am simply here because the mother of my daughter wanted me out of the picture. As you can imagine, I have much anger within me. I find myself hating her and being angry. I also find myself worrying. I've gone from being a contributing member of society to a menace - all according to this spiteful woman who placed me here.

How can I use this experience to do good? How do I move on from this? I've considered suicide but I am afraid of leaving behind those who love me - my children, friends, family. Please direct me to whatever you think is best. With love and peace, J.

Dear J,

Thank you for writing to us. After I read your letter I was reflecting on how to answer you, and I saw an old friend, R. R did more than 20 years in No. Carolina prisons for a nonviolent crime. He's one of the many people we know who not only survived such a difficult thing, but came through it with dignity and compassion. It's not an easy path, but it is possible, so don't give up.

Another friend, M, still in prison says that he reaches out to younger men, acting as an older brother or friend, helping them get through the early years of incarceration. His example as an older male who is strong, calm, and kind means a lot to some of them. Maybe it helps them believe that they can choose that kind of path for themselves.

You're right about the people who love you. They need you. Even if you're not able to be in touch with your children right now, eventually they will wonder about you. Imagine the difference between looking for your father and finding that he gave up or finding that he became a man of peace and deep kindness. What a powerful gift you can be to your children. For now, when worries about the future arise, do your best to set those aside. You have plenty to work on right here, right now. Go back to your excellent question: "How can I use this experience and do good?" Look around you and see what good you can do. It might be as simple as nodding at someone you pass in the unit. Or listening to someone who is lonely, or reading to someone who doesn't know English, or say a silent prayer for someone who is having a terrible day.

One more thing, and this one is hard to talk about. Whatever happened between you and your daughter's mother, even if you didn't do anything that was against the law, look deeply into yourself and face anything you did that you regret. You don't have to tell anyone about it, but if there's anything you could have done better in that situation, admit it to yourself. Take responsibility in your heart for any unkindness you

showed, and work to become a person who treats people better. This might take some time, and is likely to be painful. We all make mistakes, and some of those mistakes contribute to terrible consequences. Facing our own part is important to healing. I know you can make a good life for yourself. With deep respect, C.

## INSPIRATIONAL QUOTES

Don't hate. Meditate. Human Kindness Foundation

If you knew, as I do, the power of giving, you would not let a single meal pass without sharing some of it. Buddha

As far as Buddha Nature is concerned, there is no different between sinner and sage.

One enlightened thought and one is a Buddha.

One foolish, selfish thought and one is an ordinary person.

Zen Patriarch Hui Neng

The thought manifests as a word; The word manifests as the deed;

The deed develops into habit; And habit hardens into character.

So watch the thought and its ways with care, And let it spring from love

Born out of concern for all beings. Buddha

With an eye made quiet by the power of harmony, and the deep power of joy, we see into the life of things. William Wordsworth, poet.

No effort is complete without prayer - without definite recognition that the best human endeavor is of no effort if it has not God's blessing behind it. Mahatma Gandhi

A pearl goes up for auction. No one has enough so the pearl buys itself. Rumi

Sit with your friends, don't go back to sleep. Don't sink like a fish to the bottom of the sea, Life's water flows from darkness. Search the darkness, don't run from it. Night travelers are full of light, and you are too. Don't leave this companionship, your spiritual friends. Rumi, Sufi poet

There are two parallel tasks in spiritual life. One is to discover selflessness, the other is to develop a healthy sense of self.

Both sides of that apparent paradox must be fulfilled for us to awaken. Jack Kornfield

When we finally look at horror and joy, birth and death, gain and loss, things, with an equal heart and open mind, there arises a most beautiful and profound equanimity. Jack Kornfield

Take time to pray - it is the sweet oil that eases the hinge into the garden

So the doorway can swing open easily. You can always go there. Consider yourself blessed.

These stones that break your bones will build the altar of your love. Lynn Park

As far as Buddha Nature is concerned, there is no different between sinner and sage.

One enlightened thought and one is a Buddha. One foolish, selfish thought and one is an ordinary person. Zen Patriarch Hui Neng

The temple bell stops, but the sound keeps coming out of the flowers. Basho, Zen poet

My fiftieth year had come and gone, I sat a solitary man, In a crowded London shop, And open book, and empty cup. While on the shop and street I gazed, My body of a sudden blazed!

And twenty minutes more or less, It seemed so great, my happiness,

That I was blessed - and then could bless. Yeats, poet

What a splendid way to move through the world, to bring our blessings to all that we touch. To honor, to welcome with the heart is never done in grand or monumental ways. It is accomplished in *this* very moment, in the subtle and kindest of ways. Jack Kornfield

If you are depressed, you are living in the past. If you are anxious, you are living in the future.

If you are peaceful, you are living in the present. Lao Tsu, Chinese master

**TEACHINGS OF SOGYAL RINPOCHE**(Rinpoche is a title for reincarnated Buddhist teachers)

**Your Good Heart** The practice of mindfulness unveils and reveals your essential Good Heart, because it dissolves and

removes the unkindness or the harm in you. Only when you have removed the harm in yourself do you become truly useful to others. Through the practice of mindfulness, by slowly removing the unkindness and harm from yourself, you allow your true Good Heart, the fundamental goodness and kindness that are your real nature, to shine out. This is why I call meditation the true practice of peace, the true practice of nonaggression and nonviolence, and the real and greatest disarmament.

**Sit Like A Mountain:** Sit, then, as if you were a mountain, with all its unshakable, steadfast majesty. A mountain is completely relaxed and at ease with itself, however strong the winds that batter it, however thick the dark clouds swirl around its peak. Sitting like a mountain, become the mountain. And let your mind rise and fly and soar.

**The Nature of the Mind** What is the nature of the mind like? Imagine a sky, empty spacious and pure from the beginning. Its *essence* is like this. Imagine a sun, luminous, clear, unobstructed, and spontaneously present; its *nature* is like this. Imagine that sun shining out impartially on us and all things, penetrating all directions; its *energy*, which is the manifestation of compassion, is like this. Nothing can obstruct it, and it pervades all space.

**MEDITATIVE PRACTICES** : Remember progress happens in subtle moments - a lot more often than with fireworks. If you find you're feeling more centered, more peaceful, more kind, you know you're on the right track.

### **Meditate on the Space Between the Breaths**

Breathe in, notice the space between the inhale and the exhale, then breathe out.

Notice the space before you inhale. Be with the quiet in that space. Relax. Simple as that.

*This poem by Barry Taylor is about this meditation. Thank you Barry!*

### **Meditation**

In that space between inhale and exhale  
Worlds collide in the ether.

The moment arrives, quickly subsides making time for the next.

Such mysteries are revealed brief - but powerful, enlightening,  
There is no me in this suspended moment.  
Simply the multitudes, the "All".

Every spirit that ever lived wrapped up in the silent solitude of that space where time beings.

Ego ends, and the cosmos continues becoming.

### **Eating and Walking Meditation: Eating and Walking Mindfully**

Try eating and walking a little more slowly, being aware of as many of the movements as possible. If you have to eat quickly - that's ok! Be aware of that! Bringing your awareness fully into your body's actions is a powerful tool to bring us more fully into this moment, helping us to let go of future and past. It helps us to quiet the mind sometimes, much more easily than we can in sitting meditation. Try it for small amounts of time, and then do it longer and longer. Also noticing your breath while doing these actions can help you focus on right now. After a while, you will probably find yourself effortlessly become more mindful.

### **Walking Meditation to Cultivate Metta: Loving Kindness by Sharon Salzberg**

Walk at a normal pace and begin by sending metta phrases to yourself -ie, 'May I be happy', and/or 'May I be peaceful', 'May I be free safe'. As different beings come by, or you pass them, send them these thoughts 'May you be happy', 'May you be peaceful', 'May you be safe'. You can do this for people or animals, or insects. Alternate between thinking these kind thoughts to yourself and to others. This practice helps you cultivate metta, loving kindness. You may not feel anything at first, but with practice you may start to feel moments of kindness arising.

When we are caught in the web of depression or anxiety, we are caught in the story of ourselves. Metta helps us to transform the contraction into expansion, and as we access the depth of our well, we find compassion and kindness awakening. You can do this practice anywhere, anytime.

### **METTA SUTTA: The Buddha's words on Loving Kindness.**

Submitted by Jason Grant. Thanks Jason!

Reading this can be a wonderful daily practice. Think about how you can do more of these actions, which ones are easier, which ones are harder for you to do, or to let go of. Try not to be judgmental of what you may be stuck in. We've created deep habits and working on changing them also cultivates patience and compassion for ourselves. As we learn about ourselves, we become more mindful, more awake, kinder, and

wiser. It happens a moment at a time. And every moment of success and positive change, is precious.

This is what should be done by one who is skilled in Goodness, and who knows the Path of Peace:  
Let them be able and upright, straight-forward and gentle in speech.  
Humble and not conceited, contented and easily satisfied.  
Unburdened with duties and frugal in their ways.  
Peaceful and calm, and wise and skillful. Not proud and demanding in nature.  
Let them not do the slightest thing that the wise would later reprove.

Wishing: In gladness and in safety. May all beings be at ease,  
Whatever living beings there may be,  
Whether they are weak or strong, committing none, The great or the mighty, medium, short or small.  
The seen and the unseen, those living near and far away,  
Those born or to-be-born, may all beings be at ease!

Let none deceive another, or despise any being in any state.  
Let none through anger or ill will wish harm upon another.  
Even as a mother protects with her life her child, her only child,  
So with a boundless heart, should one cherish all living beings.

Radiating kindness over the entire world -  
spreading upwards to the skies, and downwards to the depths,  
Outwards and unbounded, free from hatred and ill will.  
Whether standing or walking, seated or lying down, free from drowsiness,  
One should sustain this recollection. This is said to be the Sublime Abiding.  
By not holding to fixed views, The pure-hearted one, having clarity of vision,  
Being freed from all sense desires, is not born again into this world.

**Words by Tara** *You can read this as a practice to help guide you to the emptiness of thoughts.*

These words are empty.  
they come, they go, like smoke in the wind.  
how real they seem when they speak with such certainty!  
oh words, you create tasks and roads, joys and sorrows,  
bridges and illusions with your schemes.  
or you offer comfort, and wisdom, portals into depths  
where even words cannot follow.

sounds born of silence and space.

sometimes you pull me in filled with promises but your promises are empty.  
thoughts are like that - empty bubbles that rise and pop  
and the smoke of words and their echoes dissolve in endless empty sky.

i hear through you, words. your sound is Divine song,  
a moving mantra, golden fires of smoke in ever-changing forms.

sounds born of silence and space.

i see you dance as you appear before my inner eyes  
then disappear, dissolving back into the Great Silence from where you were born..

i come home to this space beyond words again and again -  
as the winds of Grace carry my consciousness here.  
rest, my friends, in this peaceful presence until all that is left is the Golden Silence of Infinite Space.

### **Meditating on the Impermanence of Thoughts: by Garchen Rinpoche**

“How does a thought arise? When it arises and you meditate, you should investigate how it exists. What does this thought look like? Sound like? Where is it? Does it have a certain shape or color, and so on. So you look at that thought and just let it be. Don't follow (the story of) it. And you will, with experience, observe that if you practice this way, the thought will go away on its own, naturally, just like a wave on the ocean. And then again, we grasp, and again we let go of the thought.”

Noticing the impermanence is a root teaching of the Buddha. As we see the impermanence of thoughts, we are seeing the true nature of the mind. This leads us into pure wisdom. Some thoughts are easy to see through and let go of, others are more charged- leading us into other thoughts, spinouts, feelings. Lost and found I call it. No problem. You're becoming aware of what your mind does. Just notice it all and try not to get entangled. If you get entangled, at some point you'll notice and come back to just watching. That's the dance. Try not to push thoughts away. This creates more attachment. Try to just notice them as sounds, or see them with curiosity, and let go. Do this in meditation for a minute or two for starters. Then after a while, do it longer. After a while, you'll effortlessly notice the impermanence of thoughts.

## **Meditation on Tara, Female Buddhas**

The 21 Praises of Tara are a pure, powerful practice. Tara, a female Buddha, is the female aspect of Chenrezik, the male Buddha of Compassion. It is said when the Buddha opened his eyes from meditating, and saw all the suffering of sentient beings, he freed them all, closed his eyes, and went back into meditation. When he later opened his eyes, he realized they had all taken back their suffering because of their habitual patterns. He shed tears of compassion, and within the tears, were 21 Taras, each a different color which represents a different enlightened energy and blessing. Green Tara, the most popular, is known for acting with lightning speed to help relieve the suffering of those calling to Her. She is a great Liberator and her Boundless Joy is her protective armor. Also often prayed to is White Tara, the Female Buddha of Long Life and Protection. If you pray to, or meditate on one Tara, you are connecting with the essence of all Taras. All the Buddhas, male or female, embody all the qualities of the Buddha consciousness - emptiness, love, compassion, wisdom, peace...and much more. A mantra is a phrase that came from the higher realms and helps us connect and open to the blessings of pure consciousness. They are powerful tools that help transform and heal our minds, guiding our minds to deeper consciousness. To think or recite the mantra blesses and purifies your being. You can do it whenever you want to. The essence mantra for Tara (phrase invoking her blessings, and opening your heart, mind and body to her blessings) is:

### **OM TARE TUTUARE TURE SOHA.**

Pronounced: Om tahray too tahray too ray so ha

Meanings:

OM: seed sound of the universe, bringing blessings into you

TARE: the Liberator

TUTUARE: mantra expressing boundless joy

TURE: Swift One (of lightning speed)

SOHA: I bow, surrendering and opening to your blessings

Some words found in the text:

TAM: Seed sound of Tara's energy. You can think to this sound, and it connects you to her.

You can imagine it in your heart, green or white, permeating all space, sending her blessings to all space. If you meditate like this with HUNG, see it as blue in your heart, radiating out.

HUNG: Essence sound of the heart. Deep blue color.

Chenrezik: Male Buddha of Compassion

Bodhisattva: a being able to reach nirvana but delays doing so out of compassion, to save suffering beings

Wheel of Dharma: Dharma is the Buddha's teachings.

Paramitas: The qualities of human character that require "perfecting", and are the qualities of Bodhisattvas: generosity, morality, tolerance, energy, meditation, and wisdom. These are called the transcendental virtues

The Three Jewels: 1-The Buddha (enlightened mind), 2-Dharma (teachings), and 3-Sangha (spiritual community)

PHAT: mantra that dissolves negativity. Pronounced PEH

HARA: seat of enlightenment, in the energy center in the abdomen (called CHI in other traditions, as in Tai Chi)

Small or Great Vehicles: Different levels teachings - simple or complex

The following practice is a beautiful translation of the Tibetan text which has been practiced by millions of beings, and many enlightened beings as an integral part of their path to enlightenment. You can read through it, or recite it softly. You can read through it quickly if you don't have much time, or you can pause and meditate on, deeply visualize different images that are presented, that you feel drawn to. You can gaze at the picture of 21 Taras - Green Tara is in the center and do the mantra. You can also do this mantra gazing at the picture of White Tara if you have one. They are the same essence, and the mantra is fine for both Green and White Taras. Remember Tara is the same essence of Buddha nature that you are. She is a pure manifestation of your own pure consciousness - so 'devotion' to, or praying to Tara is awakening the pure state within yourself. Buddha means The Awakened One. We are sleeping - and as we awaken we embody this pure qualities of all the Buddhas. (The practice starts here and ends with the Dedication.)

## **THE 21 PRAISES OF TARA**

### **Invocation (Introduction)**

Praise to the Exalted Liberator! I bow down at the feet of the Powerful Chenrezik, (Buddha who is a) treasury of Compassion. From the supreme abode, born of the green syllable TAM, you liberate beings through the light radiating from this syllable TAM.

Tara, I pray that you come together with your retinue! The gods and jealous gods lower their crowns at your lotus feet, you who liberates beings from all destitution.



I make prostrations before you, the Mother, the Liberator. I offer respect completely and sincerely, to you Venerable and Esteemed Tara as well as to the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas who dwell in the ten directions and three times. I offer real and imagined flowers, incense, lights, scents, food, music and all other pleasing things; and I pray that the Assembly of the Exalted Deity accepts these offerings.

I openly admit the five actions of immediate consequence and all wrongs committed, since beginningless time, with the mind under the power of the negative emotions.

I rejoice in the merit and in all virtues whatever they may be, which ordinary beings and Bodhisattvas have accumulated in the three times. I urge you to turn the Wheel of Dharma in the form of the Ordinary, Great or Small Vehicles, according to the different ways of thinking and intellectual capacities of each being.

I entreat you not to go into Nirvana as long as the cycle of existence is not emptied, and through compassion, to look upon the beings drowning in the ocean of suffering. May all the merit which I have been able to accumulate become a cause for Enlightenment and through this, may I quickly acquire the qualities of the glorious guide of beings.

### **The Praises**

OM I praise the Venerable Exalted Tara! I praise you, TARE, the Liberator, swift and courage, who through TUTARE removes all fear, and through TURE bestows all benefits.  
PO TA LA NAY CHO NAY/ TAM Y JANG KU LAY TRUNG SHING/

I praise the Swift and Courageous Tara whose look is as instantaneous as lightning. Who appeared from the open water-born lotus on the face of Chenrezik.

I praise the One whose face is sublimely white like a stack of 100 full autumn moons, who blazes with the illuminating light of thousands of stars together.

I praise the One who has a turquoise and gold body and a hand perfectly adorned with the lotus; whose sphere of activity is generosity, diligence, austerity, peacefulness and meditation.

I praise the One, seated above the heads of the Buddhas, who enjoys complete and infinite victory (over the ego), who is

deeply honored by the Bodhisattvas who perfected the Transcendental Virtues, the paramitas (of virtuous activity).

I praise the One who fills the world of desire, the 10 directions and space with the mantra TUTARE, and the syllable HUNG, who trampling the 7 worlds with her feet, has the power to summon them all.

I praise the One to whom all the powerful Gods make offerings (Indra, Agni, Brahma, and Vayu)

Who is honored by demons and other harmful spirits who bow down before her.

I praise the One who completely destroys the plots of adversaries through TRAT and PAT. Who trampling them under her feet, right leg folded, left out-stretched, completely consumes them with the fire that burns and rages.

I praise the One who triumphs over the most resistant demons through TURE and her terrifying aspect; Whose lotus-face frowning angrily, slays all enemies (of spiritual realization: the negative emotions and obscurations of the mind) without exception.

I praise the One whose fingers perfectly adorn her heart in the mudra (hand position) of the Three Rare and Sublime Jewels; Whose own light rays, in the form of a wheel in her hand, radiate in all directions.

I praise the One who spreads the Supreme Joy and garlands of the light which shines from her diadem; Who bursts out laughing with the joyous exclamation TUTARA, placing the demon and the worldly gods under her power.

I praise the One who has the power to summon all the assemblies of the protectors of the world; Who liberates all beings from destitution through the letter HUNG agitated by her wrathful frowning.

I praise the One whose crescent-moon shaped diadem and ornaments blaze; Who shines with a flow of continual light streaming from Amitaba (Buddha of Boundless Light) who rests on top of her hair.

I praise the one, abiding in the center of a garland, who blazes like the fire at the end of an eon;

Who, right leg out-stretched and left folded, completely subdues the enemies of those who rejoice in the turning of the Wheel of Dharma.

I praise the One who stamps with her foot and strikes the surface of the world's foundation with the palm of her hand. Whose frowning expression masters the seven levels of the underworld through the syllable HUNG.

I praise the One who is bliss, virtue, serenity; whose sphere of activity is the Peace-that-Transcends-Suffering (nirvana); Who overcomes the great negativities through reciting the mantra perfectly. (The mantra: ) **OM TARE TUTARE TURE SOHA**

I praise the One who destroys the bodies of the enemies of those who rejoice in the turning of the Wheel of Dharma (spiritual teachings); Who liberates through the light radiating from the arrangement of the ten syllables (of the mantra), the letter HUNG, and from the mantra of awareness.

I praise TURE, the Swift One, whose seed has the form HUNG; who shakes Mount Meru, Mandara, Kailasha and the three worlds by striking with the sole of her foot.

I praise the One who holds the moon in her hand, like a god's lake, marked with the symbol of the peaceful animal; Who completely removes poisons and venoms through the recitation of TARA two times and through saying PHAT. I praise the One who is served by the kings of gods, gods and spirits; Who dispels bad dreams and ends quarrels through her joyous armor.

I praise the One who is radiant with the light of her two eyes, full like the sun and moon; Who eliminates the fiercest epidemics by reciting HARA two times and TUTARA.

I praise the One who possesses completely the power to pacify through the arrangement of the three seed letters (OM, AH, HUNG). Sublime and excellent One who quickly (TURE) eliminates evil spirits and other harmful demons.\*\*\* \*\*

*(If you want to repeat the 21 Praises, you can now go back to The Praises and repeat 2,3,7, or as many times as you want to.)*

This is the praise of the root mantra and the twenty-one Taras. Whoever has pure devotion to the Deity and recites this with

deep confidence and mindfulness, and also remembers her upon rising at dawn and at dusk, is given excellent protection from all fears, complete pacification of all negativities and freedom from unfortunate rebirths. Through reciting this, the 70 million Buddhas bestow their empowerments, and we obtain better conditions and arrive at the ultimate state of Buddhahood. By remembering Tara we will obtain the complete elimination of violent and powerful poisons. It causes all sufferings inflicted by negative forces to disappear. Through clearly reciting these praises 2, 3, 7 or 21 times, desires may be fulfilled without obstacles, (obstacles being suppressed). *(You can now meditate on, or softly recite the mantra as many times as you want to, visualizing any aspect of the praises that you connect with. )*

**OM TARE TUTARE TURE SOHA**

**Dedication:**

By this virtue may I quickly realize the Exalted Tara, and re-establish all beings without a single exception, in this state.  
\*\*\*\*\*

**21 Praises of Tara meditation**

Venerable Compassionate One, subduer of all wrongs who possesses all qualities and the bliss of Nirvana (enlightenment),

I pray let all beings and myself remove the two obscurations of the mind, (ignorance and selfishness)

Achieve the two accumulations of wisdom and merit (from generosity and other good deeds) and attain perfect awakened Enlightenment.

In all lives, until we reach this attainment, I pray that you let us acquire all the joys of gods and men.

Every obstacle to our attainment of complete knowledge - such as demons, epidemics, sickness and all other obstacles - untimely death and all other incidents - bad dreams, evil omens, the eight fears and all other dangers - having been removed, may they be destroyed.

Let all the best auspicious signs of this world and beyond be gathered together;

May the increase and growth of all benefits which we should develop, be spontaneously and effortlessly achieved.

I pray that through the diligence of our practice, the Pure Dharma may spread and that through the regular recitation of your practice

we may see your most excellent Face.

Deity on whom I have been meditating during previous lives, who manifests the activity of all the Buddhas of the three times, green, one face and two arms, you are the Swift One, the Pacifier, the Mother holding the lotus-flower (utpala). May all your excellent auspicious signs be brought together!

Female aspect of all the Buddhas, Tara, may all beings and myself have a consciousness like yours, be surrounded by great ones like you are, have the same longevity as you and the same field of activity. May we obtain all your sublime characteristics.

Through the power of these praises and our prayers to you, for all beings wherever they may be, may all quarrels and wars be ended. May poverty, destitution and sickness be suppressed. May all negative forces be destroyed. May the Dharma and all that is auspicious increase! May all beings be happy under the blessings of the One who blazes with glory!!!

#### **Prayer for HH the Karmapa, (Tibetan and English)**

*Reading this prayer silently or aloud connects you to the heart of the Karmapa, awakens your compassion, helps to awaken wisdom, helps purify your karma, and gives you great merit. The more sincerely you feel this prayer, the greater the benefit. You can read it with hands folded in the prayer position at your heart.*

*Some of you may love reading the Tibetan. Like other indigenous languages, it's considered a sacred language. So reading it blesses your mind. His Holiness the 17th Karmapa is considered, like the Dalai Lama, to be a reincarnation of Chenrezik, the Buddha of Compassion. I have meditated with him several times. It's like being the presence of a being of pure, golden love.*

Jang chog kang gyi ra way kor way jyu ~ Bo yul choden shing gi gyal kham su  
In the northern pure land of Tibet, a land of Dharma, Encircled by a ring of snow mountain,

Kye gui pen dang de wa ma lu pa ~ Jung way yon ne dam pa thug key ted  
You are a treasure of compassion, the source of all that benefits all beings and brings them happiness.

Pag chog chenrezik wang mi zug chen ~ Thub ten ddzin pa gya tso ta bu yi

The great Noble Chenrezik in human form ~ You, Tenzin Gyatso, are the crown jewel

tsug go gyen guy la may zhab key pe ~ Si tay bar du gyo me ten guyr chig  
of the ocean of those who uphold the sage's teachings ~  
May you live unwaveringly until the end of existence.

#### **Resource List**

Aryaloka Buddhist Center  
14Heartwood Circle  
New Market, NJ 03878 , free books, pen pals

Buddhist Association of the US (BAUS)  
Buddhist Correspondence Course  
c/o Rev. Richard Baksa  
2020 Rte. 301  
Carmel, New York 10512 Books, correspondence course, newsletter

Dharmaseed Prison Project offers free CD's and tapes of Western Buddhist teachers regarding meditation and Buddhism for prisoners, chaplains, teachers and recently released prisoners. To start the process, the individual needs to request a beginners, intermediate or advanced catalog which will be sent to them. Then, they can select which CD's they want on the form and return the form to Dharmaseed and we will send them . We look forward to hearing from you with your requests. Dharmaseed Prison Project is part of Dharmaseed.org. an online repository of over 13,000 talks by Western Buddhist teachers.

Attn: Molly Chambers  
Box 1494  
Greenfield, MA 01302  
( molly@dharmaseed.org)

Human Kindness Foundation \* \* \*  
PO Box 61619  
Durham, NC 22715  
Free Books (We're All Doing Time and others-highly recommended), newsletter

Inside Dharma  
PO Box 220721  
Kirkwood, MO 63122

-Newsletter, books, pen pals. You can submit pieces for their newsletter.

for 25 cents you can receive a guidebook about Buddhism

Insight Meditation Society  
1230 Pleasant Street  
Barre, MA 01005 Newsletter

SYDA Foundation: - Prison Project  
PO Box 99140  
Emeryville, CA 94662 (Beautiful Hindu Spiritual Teachings)

Wishing you all auspicious progress...ever awakening deep peace, contentment. And compassion and loving kindness - for your self and others. May we all touch the pure radiance of being, and know that wherever we are, whatever we are going through, Grace can always find us. And all our precious pure qualities are within us. All we need to do is start looking within.

Thank you my friends, for your efforts, your courage, and your journey to yourself. We are all blessed as you awaken. It's an honor and a privilege to share this journey with you.

With peaceful prayers, Tara



16. The Buddhist deity White Tara



*Green Tara*

Images to be colored. Go slow and let your mind empty as you color the pictures

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## Buddhist Meditation

A Prisoner Express program to open your mind and heart

