THE PATH OF SOLIDARITY • DZOGCHEN EXPLAINED • HOW CAN NO-SELF BE REBORN?

Buddhadharma

THE PRACTITIONER'S QUARTERLY

SPRING 2017

Buddhist Ethics in the 21st Century

The relevance, social context, and blind spots in our practice of sila today

$7.99US $9.50CAN
0 56698 99898 3
71

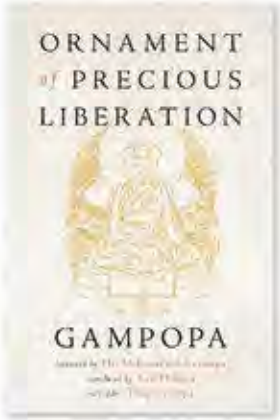
Wisdom

Connecting You with Buddhist Wisdom

A New Journal from Bhante Gunaratana

188 pages | $16.95

Nurture your insights, keep track of your emotional life, and begin to change the stories you tell about yourself.

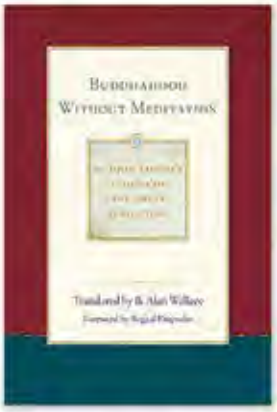


Hardcover | 376 pages
$29.95 | ebook $17.99

Discover the heart of the Buddha's teachings in this new and beautiful translation of Gampopa's classic guidebook.

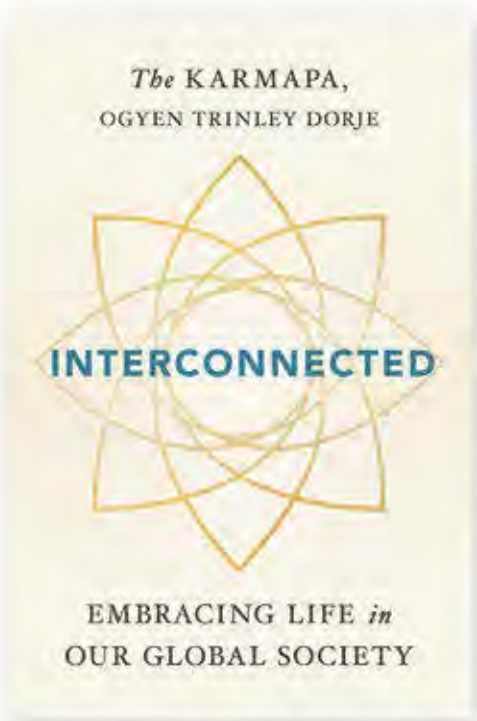
296 pages | $17.95 | ebook $11.99

Twenty contemporary writers unpack Dogen's words and open new pathways for connecting to and making use of his powerful teachings.



344 pages | $19.95 | ebook $11.99

Düdjom Lingpa and his disciple Sera Khandro illuminate the practice of Dzogchen and help us to discover our own primordial purity.



Hardcover | 264 pages | $24.95 | ebook $17.99

Save 20% off books and courses at wisdompubs.org. Use code **BDWP02** by April 30.

The Karmapa, Ogyen Trinley Dorje draws on timeless values to create an urgent ethic for today's global community. By first seeing, then feeling, and finally living our connections, we can become more effective agents of social and ethical change.

"If the generation who belongs to the twenty-first-century can learn from the past and shape a different future, later this century the world could be a happier, more peaceful, and more environmentally stable place. I am very happy to see in this book the Karmapa Rinpoche taking a lead and advising practical ways to reach this goal."

—His Holiness the Dalai Lama

Wisdom Academy

Learn how to deepen your practice and develop your understanding with leading Buddhist teachers.

Preview your first lesson for free and join over a thousand students who have connected with these powerful teachers and teachings.

Robert Thurman
AVAILABLE NOW
Sutra and Tantra: The Profound and Miraculous

B. Alan Wallace
AVAILABLE NOW
Introduction to Dzogchen

Thubten Chodron
AVAILABLE NOW
Buddhism: One Teacher, Many Traditions

Sign up now at wisdompubs.org/academy.

The Wisdom Podcast

Interviews with leading thinkers from the Buddhist and mindfulness world.

Available on iTunes, Android, RSS, and at wisdompubs.org/podcast.

Jay Garfield

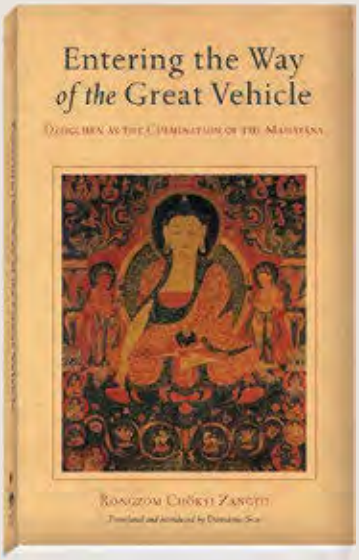
Guy Newland

Mingyur Rinpoche

wisdompubs.org | 1-800-272-4050

Wisdom is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization.

New from SHAMBHALA *Publications*



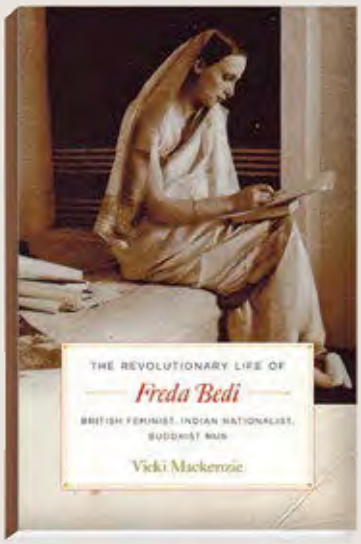
Entering the Way of the Great Vehicle

Dzogchen as the Culmination of the Mahāyāna

by Rongzom Chökyi Zangpo

Rongzom Chökyi Zangpo, one of the most important figures in the Nyingma tradition, wrote this eleventh-century masterpiece during Tibet's Buddhist renaissance, after a period of Buddhist decline. Rongzompa here, employing crystal clear logic, explains how Dzogchen is in fact the culmination of Mahāyāna Buddhism.

hardcover | $34.95



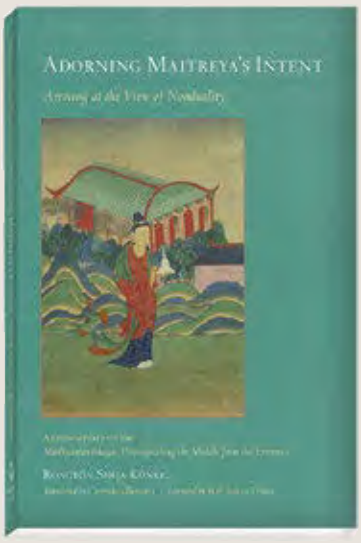
The Revolutionary Life of Freda Bedi

British Feminist, Indian Nationalist, Buddhist Nun

by Vicki Mackenzie

Vicki Mackenzie's lively biography captures what a trailblazer Bedi was in both the secular and spiritual realms. She was the first English woman to be accepted by Gandhi into his band of Satyagrahi working toward Indian independence. She was asked by Nehru to help resettle Tibetan refugees, and she aided the Dalai Lama in exile by setting up the famous Young Lamas Home School. She was the first woman to receive the full Bhikshuni ordination. Bedi also established a nunnery, which still exists, to provide nuns equal religious opportunities.

paperback | $16.95



Adorning Maitreya's Intent

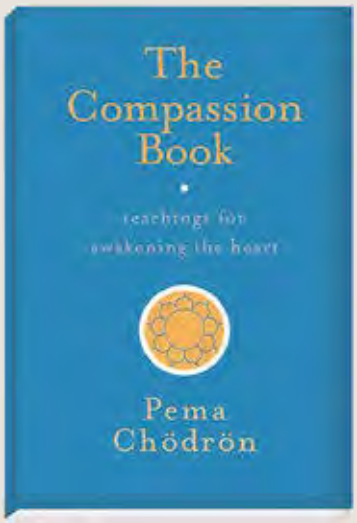
Arriving at the View of Nonduality

by Rongtön Sheja Künrig,
translated by Christian Bernert

The Five Maitreya Texts are the bedrock of Māhāyana understanding. This is the famous commentary by the great twelfth-century master Rongtönpa on *Distinguishing the Middle from the Extremes (Madhyántavibhága)*, explaining the difference between samsaric confusion and the liberating power of non-conceptual wisdom. He unpacks these concepts in a way that is accessible and profound, with meditative applications, easing us into this crucial text's goal of realization.

paperback | $24.95

Enlighten Your Inbox: shambhala.com/email
Shambhala Publications | 4720 Walnut St. | Boulder, CO 80301



The Compassion Book

Teachings for Awakening the Heart

by Pema Chödrön

One of Pema's favorite topics is *lojong*, practices that can transform the mind by turning away from self-centeredness and cultivating instead the mental habits that lead to awakening to who we really are. Here, Pema gives instructive commentaries for making the teachings a part of everyday life. This is a newly designed reissue of *Always Maintain a Joyful Mind*.

paperback | $14.95

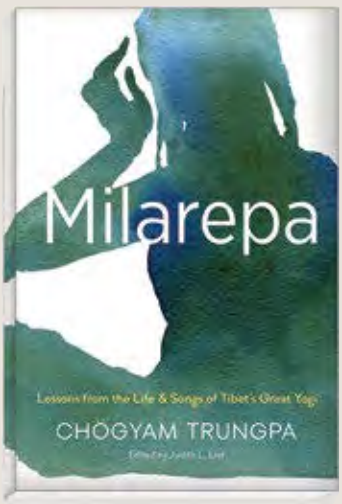
The Art of Awakening

A User's Guide to Tibetan Buddhist Art and Practice

by Konchog Lhadrepa, Charlotte Davis

Here, a master Tibetan artist presents a guide to the Tibetan Buddhist path, from the artist's perspective. This is the first book of its kind, giving all practitioners—not just artists—a deeper understanding of how art supports practice.

paperback | $29.95



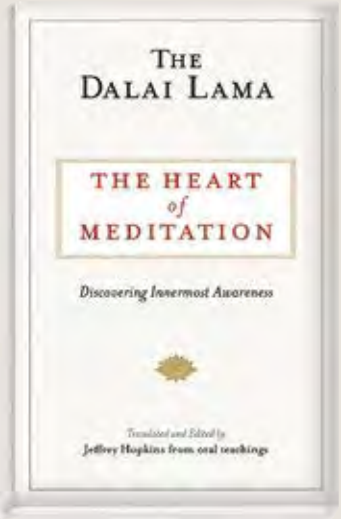
Milarepa

Lessons from the Life and Songs of Tibet's Great Yogi

by Chögyam Trungpa,
edited by Judith L. Lief

Chögyam Trungpa retells colorful stories of Milarepa's life, highlighting his struggles, his awakening, and his teachings. The author reveals the background for Milarepa's journey, including Mahamudra teachings from which the realization songs arose.

paperback | $19.95



The Heart of Meditation

Discovering Innermost Awareness

by H.H. the Fourteenth Dalai Lama,
translated and edited by Jeffrey Hopkins

"One of the greatest living teachers of Dzogchen, His Holiness the Dalai Lama, explains one of the most profound texts of this tradition (Patrul Rinpoche's *Three Keys*), and the teaching is translated by one of America's leading scholars, Jeffrey Hopkins. Does it get any better than this?"
—José I. Cabezón

paperback | $16.95

HUMLA

Medical Service Trip September 2017

Wisdom and Compassion in Action

Inviting practitioners and volunteers to trek through the sacred mountains of Northwestern Nepal to deliver no-cost, high-quality holistic health care to one of the poorest and most remote areas in the world

humlafund.org

Photo: Deborah Donenfeld

Buddhadharma

THE PRACTITIONER'S QUARTERLY | SPRING 2017

FEATURES

26 Going Beyond Buddha

If your practice is about achieving stages along the path, says **Taigen Dan Leighton**, then you're missing what's right in front of you—the vital, dynamic experience of suchness.

34 The Heart of This Moment

The practice of metta doesn't require an ambition to save the world, says **Christina Feldman**. It just requires us to bring forth kindness one moment at a time.

42 How Can No-Self Be Reborn?

Ajahn Buddhadasa challenged the Buddhist establishment with his unconventional interpretation of dependent co-arising. As his student **Santikaro** explains, he called into question the very notion of rebirth.

46 The Choice Is Yours

There are two ways to understand dependent origination, teaches **Ajahn Buddhadasa**. Only one leads to liberation.

COVER STORY

50 Forum: Buddhist Ethics in the 21st Century

Ajahn Amaro, Rev. angel Kyodo williams, Pema Khandro Rinpoche, and **Noah Levine** explore the relevance, social context, and blind spots in our practice of sila today. Introduction by **Koun Franz**.

60 The Path of Solidarity

Doshin Nathan Woods considers what it means to stand arm in arm as part of our Buddhist practice.

66 There Is No Author

When **Judy Roitman** learned her favorite dharma text was actually a patchwork of phrases and poems lifted from other sources, she started looking into the authorship of Buddhist texts. What she found surprised her.

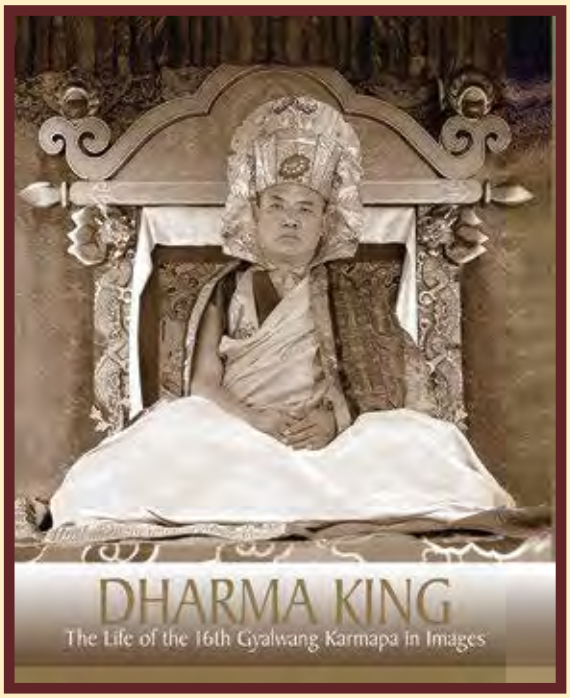
NOTRE DAME (DETAIL) © **MAURO PERUCCHETTI**

Gathering the Garlands of the Gurus' Precious Teachings

ktdpublications.com

DHARMA KING:

The Life of the 16th Gyalwang Karmapa in Images



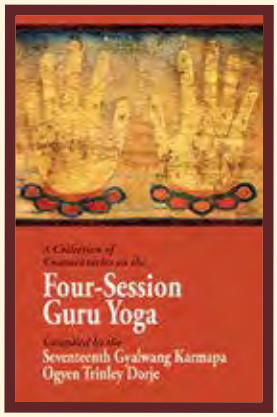
Produced under the guidance of The 17th Gyalwang Karmapa, Ogyen Trinley Dorje

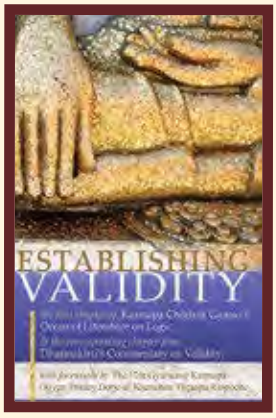
Text by Damchö Diana Finnegan
Photo Editing by Damchö Diana Finnegan and Tenzin Dapel
Design by Louise Light

Limited Edition
472 pages; full color
9 3/8 x 11 7/8 in
1000 + photos
Cover photo by Peter Mannox

A COLLECTION OF COMMENTARIES ON THE FOUR-SESSION GURU YOGA

Compiled by the 17th Karmapa Ogyen Trinley Dorje
Translated by Khenpo David Karma Choephel



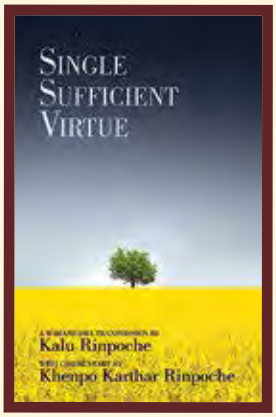


ESTABLISHING VALIDITY

The First Chapter of Karmapa Chödrak Gyatso's *Ocean of Literature on Logic* & the corresponding chapter from Dharmakīrti's *Commentary on Validity*
Translated by Khenpo David Karma Choephel

SINGLE SUFFICIENT VIRTUE

A Mahamudra Transmission by the First Kalu Rinpoche, Karma Rangjung Khunkyab
Commentary by Khenpo Karthar Rinpoche
Translated by Lama Yeshe Gyamtso



KTD Publications is committed to preserving ancient forests and natural resources; we print our books with sustainable green printers.

Available at www.NamseBangdzo.com

www.kagyu.org Karma Triyana Dharmachakra Woodstock, New York

DEPARTMENTS

9 Commentary
Bhikkhu Bodhi | Let's Stand Up Together

13 First Thoughts

21 Ask the Teachers
How do I reconcile parenting with nonattachment?

24 In Focus
Sam Littlefair | No Temple Required

Feature Review

73 *Heart of the Great Perfection*
by B. Alan Wallace | Review by **Roger Jackson**

79 Book Briefs

84 Buddhist Directory

88 Journeys
Casandra Luce | Get Off the Bus

On the cover: Stone head of Buddha
Gupta, India 5th c
HIP/Art Resource, NY

Volume 15, Number 3, *Buddhadharma: The Practitioner's Quarterly* (ISSN: 1499-9927, USPS 020-836) is published quarterly for $28/year US, $36 CDN Canada & $46 USD International, by Lion's Roar Foundation, 1790 30th St., Suite 280, Boulder, CO 80301. Periodical postage paid at Boulder, CO, and at additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Buddhadharma: The Practitioner's Quarterly, PO Box 469103, Escondido, CA 92046-9103. Printed in the United States of America.

Canada Post Publication Mail Agreement #40018157. Canadian Postmaster: Send undeliverable copies to: 1660 Hollis St., Suite 701, Halifax, NS, Canada, B3J 1V7.

TEXT WEAVING | **ELENA NUEZ**

Buddhadharma
THE PRACTITIONER'S QUARTERLY

Melvin McLeod EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
Tynette Deveaux EDITOR
Seth Levinson ART DIRECTOR
Koun Franz DEPUTY EDITOR
Rory Lindsay REVIEW EDITOR
Jane Doucet COPY EDITOR

Ben Moore PUBLISHER
Claudia Chender ASSOCIATE PUBLISHER, PARTNERSHIPS & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
Dan Scott ASSOCIATE PUBLISHER, CIRCULATION
Andy Karr FINANCE DIRECTOR
Cindy Littlefair OPERATIONS & HUMAN RESOURCES
Edward Boyce DIGITAL INITIATIVES CONSULTANT
Alan Brush CIRCULATION PLANNING DIRECTOR
Iain McGlashan MARKETING
Rebecca Pearson CIRCULATION ASSOCIATE
Kenneth Swick CONTROLLER
Connie Jones ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT
James Gimian CONSULTING PUBLISHER
Andrew Glencross PRODUCTION COORDINATOR

LIONSROAR.COM
Rod Meade Sperry EDITOR
Sam Littlefair ASSOCIATE EDITOR
Lilly Greenblatt ASSISTANT EDITOR
Ricardo Salcedo AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT MANAGER
Pam Pedersen DIGITAL DESIGNER

ADVERTISING INQUIRIES
Sharon Davis, Account Representative
855-431-8164, sharon.davis@lionsroar.com
Paul Laybolt, Account Representative
844-431-8060, paul.laybolt@lionsroar.com

EDITORIAL & CENTRAL BUSINESS OFFICE
1660 Hollis St., Suite 701, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada B3J 1V7
Tel.: (902) 422-8404; Fax: (902) 423-2701
Email: info@thebuddhadharma.com

U.S. OFFICE 1790 30th St., Suite 280, Boulder, CO 80301

SUBSCRIPTIONS
Toll-free customer service: 1-877-786-1950; Email: subscriptions@thebuddhadharma.com

RETAIL SALES
Ron Murray, National Publisher Services
Tel.: 732-946-0112; Email: ron@nps1.com

Subscribers may receive mailings from selected organizations.
If you wish to decline these mailings, please contact Subscription Services.
MOVING? Please notify us six weeks in advance of your address change.
We cannot be responsible for issues that the post office does not forward.

www.lionsroar.com

published by the
Lion's Roar Foundation

WE WOULD LIKE TO THANK
the following people and organizations for their assistance with this issue of *Buddhadharma: The Practitioner's Quarterly*

Sophia Aerts • Art Resource, NY • Carlos Barria • Milo Burn
Giovanna Maselli • Tashi Mannox • Andy Nash • Elena Nuez
Lorena and Mauro Perucchetti • Jim Rogers • Tenku Ruff
Shodo Spring • Alana Pryce Tojcic/October Gallery
Santikaro Upasaka • Samo Vidic • Marcus Yam
The Estate of Kenji Yoshida

COMMENTARY

Let's Stand Up Together

by Bhikkhu Bodhi

I recently came across a news report stating that 2,500 religious leaders had signed a petition urging Congress to reject Donald Trump's cabinet nominees as "a cabinet of bigotry." I looked over the list of signatories, designated by religion, and saw only one who identified as Buddhist. This observation reinforced my puzzlement as to why Buddhist teachers and leaders in the U.S. are not more outspoken in addressing issues of public concern. Considering that Buddhism is widely hailed as the preeminent religion of peace and compassion, why, I ask myself, aren't we more visible as advocates of peace, basic sanity, and social justice?

Granted, our numbers are small, but I don't think that is the only reason for our reticence to speak up. Several other factors may also be involved. One is the adoption of the dharma as a path to personal happiness to be pursued mainly in the silence of the meditation hall. A second is the fear that political activism will fire up our passions and shatter our fragile calm. A third is the belief that active engagement with worldly events is an entanglement in illusion. And still a fourth is the view, widespread among dharma teachers, that we must welcome everyone and not risk alienating potential students by expressing our political convictions.

Now, I believe that teachers whose primary job is to teach the techniques of meditation practice should not expound their personal political views from the cushion. It's also unfitting for heads of dharma centers to use their authority to endorse candidates for office or throw their community behind a political party. Nevertheless, I would draw a sharp line between political endorsement and advocating on public issues, and I would hold that to address such issues is well within a dharma teacher's domain. Politics today is not merely a battleground over power and position; it is also an arena where great ethical contests are being fought, contests that have a crucial impact on everyone in this country and on this planet. If, from fear of upsetting others, dharma teachers shy away from addressing these critical matters, their silence could even be considered an abdication of their responsibility as spiritual leaders.

There are certain convictions that we as Buddhists hold and consider inviolable. ➤

BHIKKHU BODHI is a senior Theravada monk and scholar who has translated and edited a number of important Pali texts. In 2008 he founded Buddhist Global Relief.

PHOTO SOURCE UNKNOWN

We believe, for instance, that every human being possesses intrinsic dignity, that everyone should be treated fairly, that those fallen into hardship should be protected and given the chance to flourish, and that the resources of the earth should be used judiciously, out of respect for the delicate web of nature. The inauguration of Donald Trump as America's new president is likely to strain each of these beliefs to new limits. We're entering a turbulent time when it won't be enough for us merely to adopt the dharma as a regimen of resilience, a means of maintaining inner balance against the shock waves rippling across the social landscape. We'll need a bolder agenda, a program of collective resistance inspired by a radically different vision of human interconnection, one that affirms our duty to respect and care for one another and to maintain a habitable planet for generations yet unborn.

If, as upholders of Buddhist faith, we're to make our distinctive mark on public policy, we may have to establish a Buddhist advocacy group, a pan-Buddhist alliance grounded in the recognition that hot political disputes are also burning ethical issues on which we should take a stand. Through such an alliance we can bring the power of Buddhist conscience out into the public arena. Since our numbers are relatively small, we won't be able to make much of an impact on our own. But we can join with progressive leaders of other faiths who share our convictions, advocating together on behalf of human decency and in defense of our embattled democracy. We can call, in unison, for a policy of global generosity in place of rash militarism, for programs that protect the poor and vulnerable, for the advancement of social and racial justice, and for the rapid transition to a clean-energy economy. To stand up and speak out in support of such ends is not necessarily to meddle in party politics. It is, rather, to bring the moral weight of the dharma to bear on matters that affect the lives of people everywhere—now, and long into the future. BD

The 22nd Annual

FESTIVAL of FAITHS

COMPASSION

shining like the sun

HIS HOLINESS THE 14TH

DALAI LAMA

Louisville, KY | April 19-24, 2017

"ONE OF AMERICA'S TOP 8 SPIRITUAL TRAVEL DESTINATIONS."

— Huffington Post

A NATIONALLY ACCLAIMED FIVE DAY CELEBRATION of music, poetry, film, art and dialogue with internationally renowned faith leaders, thinkers and practitioners. The 2017 Festival will explore crossing divisions in our world, in our communities, in ourselves and seeking wholeness in brokenness.

Previous Guests: Arjia Rinpoche, Elizabeth Mattis Namgyel, Anam Thubten, Sakyong Mipham, Joan Halifax and many more!

LIMITED TICKETS AVAILABLE

WWW.FESTIVALOFFAITHS.ORG

JOIN THE CONVERSATION

#COMPASSIONSHINING

Authentic Leadership Center

AT NAROPA UNIVERSITY

MINDFUL. CONNECTED. ENGAGED.

PHOTO: JESSICA RIEHL

Become the Leader the World Needs Now

Authentic Leadership Summer Program

naropa.edu/authentic

Ten weeks online
June 5–August 11, 2017
& two five-day seminars in Boulder, Colorado
June 12–16, 2017 & July 24–28, 2017

Activate your personal and professional transformation with this in-depth experiential course. Learn the power of mindfulness and authentic communication for leading collaborative change.

Engage the Differences that Divide Us

Authentic Leadership in Action (ALIA) 2017

naropa.edu/ALIA2017

Three-day leadership intensive in Tacoma, Washington
June 22–25, 2017

Strengthen your capacity to lead fearlessly in challenging situations. Participate in a powerful learning community and experience "deep dive" modules with world-class facilitators.

SAVE THE DATE • September 28–October 7, 2017

Leadership Pilgrimage to Bhutan

For more information, contact alc@naropa.edu

Naropa UNIVERSITY

Learn more & **register** at **naropa.edu/ALC**

FIRST THOUGHTS

TATTOO DESIGNS | TASHI MANNOX

How Will You Greet the Tiger?

*Whether your attackers are tigers or terrorists, says the **Seventeenth Karmapa**, you must be ready to meet them with a compassionate heart.*

Universal openheartedness and compassion exclude no one whatsoever. We can enlist our imagination as a supportive condition in cultivating this noble attitude. We could imagine a tiger coming to attack us and envision ways to stay connected with compassion for this being who is driven by hunger and rapidly losing its territory to human encroachment. We can be creative and think up any scenario that allows us to keep a connection of compassion alive in our heart and mind. Perhaps we imagine we are a villager feeling great compassion while we safely trap the tiger and call the authorities to take it to a better habitat. Perhaps we imagine ourselves as a Buddhist monk and try to feel what it would be like to meditate on compassion even as the tiger approaches to eat us. Or we might just imagine ourselves running for our lives and holding intense compassion in our hearts for the tiger while we narrowly escape its snapping jaws!

Who knows how we might actually respond if we were caught in the gaze of a hungry tiger, but the point is we prepare ourselves in advance to respond with compassion toward absolutely anyone we encounter.

To bring it closer to home, we might ask ourselves what we could feel if a lone wolf terrorist, or maybe an unacknowledged member of ISIS, suddenly arrived in our midst. How would we look at him? Would we be able to recollect that he feels pain and is trying somehow to find his way to happiness? It is important to ask ourselves this and prepare ourselves to keep in sight our shared existential condition, no matter how radically different our ways of dealing with our specific life condition may be.

FROM *INTERCONNECTED*, PUBLISHED BY WISDOM, FEBRUARY 2017

We Must Be the Ancestors

*We hold the future in our hands, says **Joan Sutherland**. It's time we start acting like it.*

Let's provisionally consider that we're in the midst of a disaster. Let's put a pause on fighting with life for being life, accepting instead Auden's notion of the disobedience of the daydream. Let's see if that frees up some energy for other things—like asking who we are now, in this new age.

HISTORIC FIRST INTERNATIONAL

CHÖD-ZHIJÉ CONFERENCE

The Lineage of Machig Labdrön and Padampa Sangye

July 12-16, 2017

Follow-up retreats July 18-23, 2017


Lama Tsering Wandgu Rinpoche


Lama Tsultrim Allione


Drüpon Lama Karma


Lama Sarah Harding


Dan Martin, Ph.D.


Sangye Khandro

This historic conference draws together leading scholars and practitioners researching and teaching this unique lineage in its various manifestations. Keynotes, panel discussions, and small group sessions will explore the teachings of 11th century Tibetan yogini Machig Labdrön and her teacher, the renowned Indian yogi Padampa Sangye; the role of women; as well as the application of these teachings to our modern world. Dharma teachings and performances of Chöd songs and dances will foster a rich and engaged experience. Follow-up retreats will offer the opportunity to learn some of the different Chöd practices.

Speakers include: Lama Tsering Wangdu Rinpoche, Lama Tsultrim Allione, Drüpon Lama Karma, Lama Sarah Harding, Sangye Khandro, Dan Martin PhD, Michael Sheehy PhD, Amelia Hall PhD, Kunze Chimed, Karma Lekshe Tsomo PhD, Michelle Sorensen PhD, Alejandro Chaoul PhD, Naksang Rinpoche, Chöying Khandro, Padma Tsho, Sarah Jacoby PhD, Tina Lang, Ācārya Malcolm Smith and others.

Tara Mandala is a Vajrayana Buddhist retreat center, nestled in the Southwest Colorado mountains near Durango in Pagosa Springs. There are many international flights to Denver and frequent daily flights to Durango.

Chöd Conference Follow-up retreats July 18-23, 2017

- **Chöd Retreat: The Ear-Whispered Lineage of Ganden** with Kunze Chimed and Chöying Khandro.
- **Tibetan Healing Chöd** with Drüpon Lama Karma.

DISCOUNTED EARLY BIRD PRICING*

~~**$592**~~ **$492**

Student rate: **$342**

*Price includes full conference access, camping/commuting, and three meals per day, from dinner on 7/12/17 to lunch on 7/16/17. *Early bird pricing ends March 31, 2017.*

Thank you to our sponsors: Shambhala Publications, Wisdom Publications & Tsadra Foundation.

Registration is online only. To register and for more information, please visit:

www.chodhealing.org

TARA MANDALA

Cuban writer Reinaldo Reynas, who was imprisoned for being gay and whose work was banned, said that it was crucial to remember that people like him weren't the counterculture; the regime was the counterculture, and people like him were the culture, which he described as everything that is diverse, luminous, mysterious, and festive.

We are the culture. Right now, that puts us in the interesting position of being the conservatives, in the sense of protecting traditions we hold dear—protecting our human gifts to each other, like civil rights and simple civility, and also protecting the most ancient traditions of all, those held in the waters and the land and the wide skies that connect us to interstellar space. There is such dignity in this role, sitting like Guanyin in royal ease posture, steadfastly attentive with very old eyes, one leg already raised so that rising to respond is graceful and immediate.

We are being given the embodiment of ancient protective dignity in the people of Standing Rock. We are being given a vision of generous conservatism in the vets who have gone to defend them, to put their training, as one of them said, at the service of the people's prayers. Whose heart is not pierced and humbled by these First Peoples' steadfastness in the face of everything this nation has forced upon them? Let us support them in all the ways we can, and let us, with pierced and humble hearts, learn from them about what it means to be the culture.

We could be a gathering of everyday bodhisattvas—diverse, luminous, mysterious, and festive. We could encourage each other and be fiercely loyal to holding the field for everyone, encircling the vulnerable, and acting as elders, whatever our age. The world that is swirling into existence will not wait for us. The future we hold dear is calling each of us right now to be its ancestor.

FROM FACEBOOK, DECEMBER 3, 2016

Keep This in Your Heart

Regarded as a fully enlightened being, the great fourteenth-century Dzogchen master ***Longchenpa*** *offered these final instructions to meditators who want to follow in his footsteps.*

Unless you mingle your mind with the dharma, it is pointless to merely sport a spiritual veneer. Keep to the bare necessities for sustaining your life and warding off the bitter cold; reflect on the fact that nothing else is really needed. Practice guru yoga and supplicate one-pointedly. Direct every spiritual practice you do to the welfare of all sentient beings, your own parents. Whatever good or evil, joy or sorrow befalls you, train in seeing it as your guru's kindness.

Within the vastness of spontaneous self-knowing, let be freely, uncontrived and free of fabrication. Whatever thoughts arise, be sure to recognize your nature so that they all dissolve as the play of *dharmata*. Even though you practice in such a way that there is not even as much as a hair tip

Many Buddhists, One *Buddhadharma*

Save 38% off the newsstand price and get *Buddhadharma* delivered to your door.

Each issue of *Buddhadharma* brings you the best in-depth teachings from a wide variety of traditions—Theravada, Zen, Vajrayana, and more. Deepen your practice. Expand your view.

SUBSCRIBE TODAY!

INTRODUCTORY PRICE $19.95

for one year (4 issues)

Mail the attached card today, or call toll-free **1-877-786-1950** or visit lionsroar.com

Buddhadharma
THE PRACTITIONER'S QUARTERLY

Prices for a one-year subscription: US $19.95; Canada add $10 postage and pay CDN funds; international add $20 (US) postage. Get a full refund of unmailed issues if you're not satisfied.

of a concrete reference point to cultivate by meditating, do not stray into ordinary deluded diffusion, even for a single moment. Instead, make sure that every aspect of your daily activities is embraced by an undistracted presence of mind. Whatever occurs and whatever you experience, strengthen your conviction that they are all insubstantial and magical illusions, so that you can experience this in the bardo as well.

In short, at all times and in every situation, make sure that whatever you do turns into the sacred dharma and dedicate every virtuous action toward enlightenment. By doing so, you will fulfill your guru's wishes and be of service to the Buddha's dharma; you will repay your parents' kindness and spontaneously accomplish the benefit of yourself and others. Please keep this in your heart. Even if you were to have met me in person, I would have had no superior advice to give you, so bring it into your practice in every moment and in every situation.

FROM A NEW TRANSLATION BY ERIK PEMA KUNSANG POSTED ON LEVEKUNST.COM

What Are You Doing Here?

***Rebecca Li** says that if you've lost sight of why you practice, it's time to ask yourself some hard questions.*

Ask yourself, do I really want to understand my mind?

The reason I bring this up is that I have worked with people who have been practicing for thirty years and they don't know why. They attend a seven- or ten-day retreat, two or three times a year, yet they

don't realize that deep down they don't believe in the importance of the present moment. They are just hoping that if they sit their butt on this cushion long enough, something will happen.

Ask yourself: what am I doing here? Do you know? Is it clear in your mind? It takes time, actual effort, and a willingness to ask ourselves challenging questions, especially for some of us who have been doing the practice for some time. We may not want to find out we don't know what we're doing. It's kind of embarrassing. But we need to ask.

FROM *CHAN MAGAZINE*, SUMMER 2016

Look at Your Resistance

***Sebene Selassie** explains how to go deeper into the dharma work of diversity and inclusivity.*

To really engage in this work, there has to be some level of genuine motivation. If you have no interest at all, you might want to look at what that resistance or lack of

interest is about—to see if it's because you have no interest in understanding one of the dominant forces of our culture, or if perhaps there's something else at play.

The resistance part is so important. What is that resistance about? Why is this not an important part of your dharma exploration? Because dharma is about everything, and this is a huge part of our lives. We're not just practicing in order to become good meditators.

When we first started the diversity committee on BCBS's board of directors, I half-jokingly said that we should really call it the Relevance Committee. Because it's not about diversity—it's about being relevant to society. This isn't some niche topic. This is the reality of the world. It's the reality of our existence.

Some people are extremely resistant to doing this work, and most frustrating for me is when that resistance is put in terms of a superior dharmic understanding. Well-meaning, white sangha members continue to say that this work is divisive and goes against the teachings—as if people of color have never thought about anatta or interdependence. Like it never dawned on us. That kind of dharma arrogance is more frustrating than the pace of change.

FROM *INSIGHT JOURNAL*, PUBLISHED BY BARRE CENTER FOR BUDDHIST STUDIES

Don't Stop at Samadhi

*No matter how far you've come in your practice, says **James Myoun Ford**, you can always take one more step.*

Among the mistakes along this Way is rejecting the world, which is just another shutting down. This is one aspect of the path of pernicious oneness, a rejecting of the reality of differentiation.

This, however, is the deal: there is no oneness separate from differentiation. It is just another differentiation—although a useful one, at least at providing a glimpse of something bigger. And that glimpse has an associated state: samadhi. And it feels good. It lures one into deeper and deeper states. Tasty, lovely, inviting, but all just states, and therefore subject to change. For those who cling to them, they're just one more dead end.

The koan about stepping away from the top of the hundred-foot pole isn't about stepping away from our sense of separation into emptiness; rather, it is about stepping away from our sense of emptiness. One more step. There is always one more step. It is the real invitation of Zen, the invitation to complete freedom. But that freedom is like a poem, haiku, or sonnet: it is found within a specific structure. That structure is you. It is me. You in all your glorious messiness, me clinging and crying and hating and fighting and loving and singing and dancing. All of it, from bedroom to kitchen to toilet. All of it.

So, proceed. Throw yourself on the pillow. Throw yourself into the moment. Pay attention. Love. But never squeeze the life out of any one thing. Never reject any one thing. This is always opening the hand of thought, always returning to the beginning.

Is this a call to reject samadhi states? No. This is a call to open ourselves up and to never stop.

FROM THE BLOG *MONKEY MIND*, DECEMBER 11, 2016 BD

ASK THE TEACHERS



Q I'm a longtime practitioner, but now that I have children, I'm struggling with the notion of nonattachment. How do I reconcile nonattachment with the deep connection I have with my kids—and with my concerns for their well-being and safety?

KONIN CARDENAS is the guiding teacher in residence at Empty Hand Zen Center in New Rochelle, New York

ARI GOLDFIELD is cofounder of Wisdom Sun in San Francisco and a longtime student and translator of Khenpo Tsultrim Rinpoche

SUMI LOUNDON KIM is a minister with Buddhist Families of Durham in North Carolina

(LEFT–RIGHT) VASCHELLE ANDRE, CLAUDINE GOSSETT, KIM WINTON

KONIN CARDENAS: Practicing with nonattachment means remembering that all things and all people are constantly changing. In the *Ariyapariyesana Sutta*, Shakyamuni Buddha recounted that he was concerned that it would be too hard to teach what he had discovered because "beings take delight in attachment. It is hard for beings to see this truth, namely, specific conditionality, dependent origination." Thus, nonattachment means living in accord with the fact that this body and mind momentarily arise dependent on myriad conditions. It doesn't mean lacking in human emotion; it means not clinging to any one way of seeing or responding to a conditioned, changing world.

Therefore, it is related to *upaya*, a skillful response to the way things truly are in this moment. For example, one way that nonattachment might show up in how you raise your children is that you give them lots of room to explore their own expression. You might recognize that they are not always going to behave one way or another, just as you, as a parent, are not always going to behave one way or another. Keeping that in mind, you might try not to label them "the studious kid" or "the lazy kid" but instead respond to the way they are actually behaving. This is offering a skillful response in the moment; this is supporting their well-being by showing them that their choices matter while allowing them room to grow.

Ultimately, these two aspects of your life—nonattachment and deep connection—are compatible. Since people and things do not arise independently or permanently, they must be connected, even as they are changing. In fact, even to say that they are connected may be misleading, because it might be taken to mean that there are two separate things. In Zen there is the saying, "Not one, not two." That is, you and your kids are all part of the great ocean of being. Yet each of you is also a unique event, like a single wave on the ocean. You are inseparable, even though you are individuals. Thus, your well-being and their well-being are completely intertwined, interrelated. Seen from that perspective, the heart connection that you feel is natural, and so is the wish to keep them safe. It is in accord with some of the most basic Buddhist teachings. In fact,

I would go so far as to say that you should be cautious about any teaching that discourages you from having feelings—those feelings can be an appropriate response to what is happening in your life.

Having experienced this wish for your kids' safety and well-being, you could begin extending that to other people in recognition that they are also connected to you. You could begin to think about ways that you benefit from others' well-being and consciously begin to include their well-being in your plans and activities. This is the bodhisattva path, turning your personal interests to work for the benefit of all.

ARI GOLDFIELD: I am very familiar with the feeling of struggle you describe. It is so easy for me to feel anxious about my three-year-old son Oliver's present and (especially) future well-being and safety. When I feel that kind of worry welling up within me, there is one simple meditation I do that invariably has a profound effect on me—I remind myself, "My child is going to die."

Recalling this most basic, clear, unavoidable truth immediately connects parents with what Chögyam Trungpa called "the genuine heart of sadness" in possibly a more powerful way than any other imaginable. Anxiety dissolves into groundedness and the sweetest mixture of sorrow, longing, and love. The unbearable painfulness of the thought of our children's death compels us to go much deeper into our psyche than the superficial appearances of our children's existence and nonexistence, of their presence or their absence. We drop down into the space of our ultimate connection with our children, which transcends the appearances of meeting and parting and is therefore invulnerable to whatever appearances may manifest.

In Buddhism, there are actually different kinds of nonattachment. Having children is a wonderful invitation to explore some of them—for example, nonattachment to freedom from intense emotional experiences. As my own teacher, Khenpo Tsultrim Gyamtso, often says, "Just as surfers prefer big waves, yogis and yoginis prefer big kleshas (disturbing emotions)!" As we know, having a child is a guarantee of emotional experiences the likes of which we have never had before. But as the *Prajnaparamita Sutras* teach, the kleshas are perfectly pure. How can we realize this truth if we resist the kleshas? If instead we practice opening to them and inviting them to be accepted within an expanse of loving awareness, we can actually experience our emotions' underlying purity.

We are also invited to abandon our attachment to what it means to be a meditator. When Oliver was an infant, I was often frustrated by my sleep deprivation and the frequent loss of my morning meditation time when I had to attend to him instead. A wise friend gave me excellent counsel: she suggested I meditate by simply feeling into the sensation of my feet touching the earth every time I had to go to Oliver's room when he cried. This taught me how important it was to savor the tiny moments of peace—the flashes of relaxing into simplicity in the shower, on the bus, wherever I could find them.

Finally, for us parents who are not the birth mother, during at least the first two years of a child's life, we are compelled to give up our attachment to having the attention and love of our spouse and even to feeling included within the family unit. The mother-child dyad is just that close, that strong. We love our spouse and child and long to participate in the amazing intimacy we see occurring before us, and yet we are so often excluded from it by both parties! This is unintentional on their part; it happens for completely normal and natural reasons. But even so, we are often left feeling so painfully on our own. I cannot imagine any practitioner in an isolated cave feeling more lonely. What a powerful call to us to meditate on self-love and self-acceptance and to seek out and connect with the unfindable, inexpressible, inconceivable true nature of our lonely mind—our most intimate partner of all.

When I feel worry about my son welling up within me, there is one simple meditation that I do—I remind myself, "My child is going to die."

—Ari Goldfield

SUMI LOUNDON KIM: The heart of this humdinger question is that the word "attachment" means one thing in the context of parenting and another in the context of Buddhist teachings. The association of the word "attachment" with parenting has its origins in the phrase "attachment parenting," a theory of child-rearing developed by pediatrician William Sears in the 1980s. In parenting, attachment is thought to provide a foundational sense of safety and security, giving a child the courage to explore and thus learn essential facts about their world. Your concern for your children's well-being and safety comes from a healthy, natural bonding derived from empathy, care, and love—none of which are against dharma.

In the Buddhist world, attachment is understood as a mental factor, a psychological pattern that is a mega-cause of suffering. However, the neutral sense of the English word "attachment" doesn't convey the potency and misery of what Buddhists mean by it. Buddhist texts use the Sanskrit word *trsna*, an English-language cognate of which is the word "thirst." "Thirst" accurately conveys the sense of need that characterizes this mental state. We are thirsty for sense gratification, thirsty for experiences. Other translations of this kind of attachment are "clinging," "craving," and "desire." Although it doesn't sound human to say, "Don't be attached to your children," it *does* sound right to say, "Don't cling to them." (We even disapprove of overly clingy parents.)

Nonetheless, the Buddhist notion of attachment, as *craving*, can teach us something about parenting pitfalls. Since we can crave just about anything, it's possible to develop a sticky clinginess to our own children. For example, we might crave their demonstrations of affection, respect, or loyalty. We can become attached to our children behaving or performing a particular way, believing that our child should be a good soccer player, academically successful, polite to others, and so on, because we are worried about our own public image, self-worth, unresolved issues, or value as a "good" parent. This kind of attachment is primarily self-centered, serving our own needs. As many of us know from experience, staking our happiness on a child fulfilling our expectations invariably results in suffering. (Although I'm quite certain that the moment my children stop leaving dirty socks around the house, my life will be perfect.) In the final analysis of this type of clingy attachment, it's not so much that we are directly attached to our children as we are attached to our misconception of what will bring us happiness.

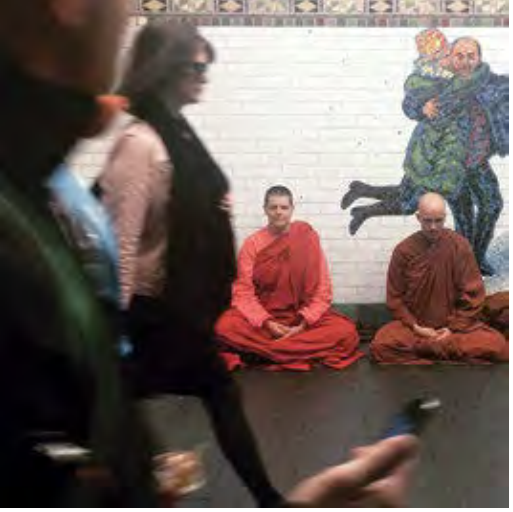
The parenting notion of attachment as *bonding* can also teach us something about parenting potential. In fact, the Buddha himself urges us to create the "bonds of fellowship," as taught in the *Sangaha Sutta*. Through generosity, kind words, beneficial help, and consistency in the face of changing conditions, he said, parents sustain a favorable, respectful relationship with their children. In other words, parenting *is* dharma practice. Far from trying to detach ourselves from our children, our relationship with our children is an amazing ground on which we can practice attunement, the gift of creating safety, generosity, aid, and unconditional love. This in turn develops our capacity to feel the same bonds of fellowship for the children of others—and for others as once-children. In the end, we are called to discover the bonds of fellowship we have with all beings. BD

Send your questions to
teachers@thebuddhadharma.com

IN FOCUS No Temple Required

by Sam Littlefair

PHOTOGRAPHS | **GIOVANNA MASELLI**



(Above) *Buddhist Insights connects laypeople with monastics in open spaces across New York City*

(Opposite) *Bhante Suddhaso (center) leads a street retreat in a New York subway, one of many free public programs put on by Buddhist Insights*

When Giovanna Maselli set out to find a monastic teacher in New York, she didn't think it would be so hard: "It was the first time in eight years living in New York that I couldn't find what I was looking for. I can find the cheese that is made in the little town in Italy that my grandmother comes from. But I could not find a monk who would teach me Buddhism on a regular basis."

Eventually, while visiting Western Virginia, Maselli met Bhante Suddhaso, a Thai monk in the Thai Forest Tradition, and together they started making plans—and stumbled on something unexpected. A year later, the result is Buddhist Insights, which connects New Yorkers to Buddhist monastics through what they call "street retreats."

"It all started because I tend to be late," says Maselli, who has a background in creative consulting. "Whenever we met, I would find him waiting for me in meditation, so I started taking pictures of him."

Maselli posted those photos to Instagram, where each one garnered hundreds of likes. After less than a year, the Buddhist Insights account has more than 20,000 followers. After promoting its first event on Instagram in January of last year, Buddhist Insights had fifty people show up, with another fifty on a waiting list.

In lieu of a dedicated space for their street retreats, Maselli and Suddhaso started hosting weekly meetings in the wilderness of New York City: churches, art galleries, beaches, sidewalks, subway stations, parks, and anywhere else they could freely sit.

"It's about establishing the attitude of meditating anywhere and making friends with your environment," explains Suddhaso. "Often, when we're meditating and there's noise outside, we think, 'Oh, I could meditate if not for that noise.' The problem isn't the noise. What's disturbing your meditation is your attitude toward the noise. The noise is just noise. So, we're establishing the attitude of focusing on the present moment and using it as your laboratory for investigating the mind. That's something you can do anywhere, with any conditions."

In June, Buddhist Insights hosted contemplation-of-death meditation in a cemetery. In September, they held a retreat in a chocolate factory. "When we talk about renunciation, it's abstract," says Maselli. "When you bring it to a place where you can taste the chocolate, it has a different impact." In October, they hosted a daylong retreat of loving-kindness meditation on the subway, encouraging attendees to practice loving-kindness for the commuters sitting around them.

The "street retreat" isn't an entirely new idea. Zen teacher Bernie Glassman and the Zen Peacemakers order have been hosting street retreats for decades, spending days and nights living on the streets of New York. Buddhist Insights' retreats are different in that they are short, and anyone—beginner or advanced—can attend. Classes and retreats at Buddhist Insights are led by Suddhaso or monastics visiting from other centers in the Theravada, Vajrayana, or Zen traditions. Programs are offered free of charge, with donations welcome.

Suddhaso and Maselli say they've discovered a significant appetite for Buddhist monastic teachings in New York. "It's useful to connect with people who have devoted their lives to these teachings, which is why we bring in monks and nuns who have often been practicing for decades," says Suddhaso. "They've committed their lives to embodying the Buddha's teachings. That's something people recognize as genuine and valuable." BD

PHOTO | **SOPHIA AERTS**

Going Beyond Buddha

If your practice is about achieving stages along the path, says **Taigen Dan Leighton**, then you're missing what's right in front of you—the vital, dynamic experience of suchness.

"Just experience the vital process on the path of going beyond Buddha"—this is a phrase from Dogen's *Shobogenzo* essay "The Awesome Presence of Active Buddhas," a phrase I have encouraged my students to memorize. I value the simple encouragement to *experience*, rather than seek some abstract philosophical formulation or explanation. It is the description of a path as a vital process, rather than the path as a schematized program of stages of accomplishment. Dogen is pointing to a meditative path that does not involve stages—a path that is lively and dynamic, even alchemical.

One traditional mode of Buddhist practice emphasizes attention to what is called the *suchness* of our immediate experience. Focus on suchness supports us to be fully present. Many of us first glimpse or even viscerally apprehend this suchness on our meditation cushions as we settle into deep, intimate awareness of physical presence, inhale and exhale, and experience inner calm and dignity in the midst of the natural swirl of thoughts and feelings. From this settled place, we can learn how to respond mindfully in our everyday encounters.

In Indian Buddhism, suchness was described as the ultimate truth of reality. Known as *tathata* in Sanskrit, suchness is the flip side of emptiness, or *shunyata*. Emptiness is a technical term, referring to the emptiness of inherent substantial existence of any person or entity; it is often mistaken by Westerners as a synonym for nothingness, the absence and opposite of things or of being. But as the *Heart Sutra* indicates, emptiness is exactly form, just as forms are empty. Emptiness is simply the way things exist. Suchness is a positive way of expressing this same deep reality.

We are all, through mutual interdependent causation, interconnected. Everything in the universe allows each of us to be present here just as we are. All the people you have known are part of how you exist right now, through the influence of parents, friends, teachers, loved ones, and even people you do not remember or have never met. Though all beings and entities have their particular phenomenal expression and qualities, we are not separate. Nothing exists as an entity unto itself. To describe our interconnected presence, I find invoking suchness more helpful and encouraging than emptiness, which even in Asian cultures had negative connotations.

Suchness, in early Buddhist mindfulness practices of bare attention and clear perception of reality, is both the quality of reality and a matter of perceptual experience. According to the early Abhidharma psychological teachings, when any

discriminating consciousness is active, the faculty of attention is always present; our mind is always directed at some object of attention. In taking up the practice of suchness, however, we attend to the quality of awareness itself. Shunryu Suzuki Roshi, my teacher's teacher, often asked, "What is the most important thing?" I would add that perhaps each one of us cares about many important things; we don't need to find just one. What do you really care about? In our practice, we can offer attention to all of that; we attend to how we give our attention, to the quality of our attention right now.

What is it like to be present and intimate with this body–mind on your seat right now? How is it that we experience our breathing, our uprightness, the flow of perceptions and thought forms? As Bob Dylan asked, "How does it feel?" As a practice tool, this is not a question searching for a mere answer but, as in many Zen stories, a probing question that is itself a proclamation of wholeness and a guide to deepening attention.

If we designate suchness as an object, then practitioners might imagine they could acquire or hold on to it; from the point of view of ultimate reality, however, suchness is not a thing at all but a convenient description for a way of experiencing reality, just as emptiness is. Rather than seeing suchness as some abstract transcendence of this world and its troubling situations, many East Asian teachers emphasized the dynamic aspect of suchness expressed as the whole phenomenal world. As bodhisattvas, we aim not to achieve some exalted superhuman state of mind or being but to integrate our experience of absolute reality with our everyday experience and to express the ultimate right within our world and its problems. We can embrace the reality of impermanence and change; we can find our own ways of encouraging helpful kindness amid the changes.

We are conditioned by our consumerist culture to try to acquire things, whether material or spiritual. Not surprisingly, then, much of modern Western Buddhism and other Western spiritual approaches encourage a variety of systems involving stages of spiritual achievement. However, this mind-set can propel us back into the worldly samsaric trap of grasping after fame and gain. Other models of practice are available.

One model of stageless practice is clearly expressed in the teachings and stories of my own Soto Zen tradition, though this is certainly not the only tradition upholding suchness practice. The ninth-century Chinese master Dongshan (Jpn., Tozan) is considered the founder of the Caodong (Jpn., Soto) branch of Chan. Dongshan's long teaching poem, "The Jewel Mirror Samadhi," still chanted today, begins, "The teaching of suchness is intimately transmitted by buddhas and ancestors. Now you have it, preserve it well." The whole poem colorfully discusses aspects of engagement with suchness. "Turning away and touching are both wrong, for it is like a massive fire," for example, points to the suchness of reality as unavoidable. It is impossible to pin down; it is equally impossible to grasp.

The Japanese monk Dogen brought Caodong from China in the thirteenth century. He often cites the ninth-century successor of Dongshan, Yunju Daoying (Jpn., Ungo Doyo), who said, "If you want to realize suchness, you should just practice suchness immediately" and also asked, "If you want such a thing, you must be such a person; already being such a person, why trouble about such a thing?" When we practice suchness without delay, we can let go of all striving, without deliberating

MITSUE NAGASE

TAIGEN DAN LEIGHTON leads the Ancient Dragon Zen Gate in Chicago and teaches online at the Berkeley Graduate Theological Union. His most recent book is *Just This Is It: Dongshan and the Practice of Suchness.*

about how to proceed; we can respond immediately, with nothing to force or worry about.

The interest and aspiration to realize suchness is itself confirmation of the reality of suchness. Just the concern to live in accord with inner and outer reality, caring about the quality of our awareness, reflects the possibility of being such a person. Still, even while enacting suchness, we may wonder about this quality of natural response and function. Suchness teaching has sometimes been misunderstood to mean that simply realizing suchness—or emptiness—is itself sufficient, with no need for actual, active practice. Merely hearing about or even deeply understanding suchness is not enough. Suchness is dynamic and active, engaged with the shifting flow of the phenomenal world. Dismissal of ethical conduct or beneficial activity denies the purpose of Buddhist practice, which is to relieve suffering and help beings awaken.

We can engage the immediacy of suchness and still recognize and act from principles of Buddhist ethics, responding helpfully rather than causing harm, and with respect for all beings. We do have the ability to respond, the responsibility to support caring and kindness in the current situation of suchness. The bodhisattva takes on beneficial activity in the midst of the suffering of the world, not only as a responsibility but also as a joyful expression of awakening to suchness. This applies equally to how we face our personal problems. By facing and becoming intimate with our own recurring patterns of grasping, anger, or confusion, we can stop reacting based on our greed or resentment; while looking for ways to be helpful, we can stop causing harm to self or others.

According to conventional thinking, ordinary people cannot compare to buddhas. Yet as a person of suchness, you can simply stop and face your life as it is. It is okay to be the person you are, this body and mind right now, in this inhale and this exhale.

The very idea of a path implies separation, that some distance in space or time needs to be traversed to get to a particular destination.

This is how all buddhas are. Already being such a person, why worry about such a thing? Just be present and face the situation of this body and mind, the reality of right now. It may require sustained practice to be willing to fully face ourselves, the world, and this current situation. But by returning again and again to face this moment in all its complexity, we develop a sense of suchness.

The stageless practice of suchness has been called "sudden awakening." Sudden awakening is not necessarily a matter of some startling, dramatic, exalted experience that may finally occur after a long period of ardent practice. Such opening experiences certainly occur and can be transformative and helpful, but they are not the goal or purpose of practice. In stageless practice, people can simply allow the present flowering of awareness, without any concern with stages of achievement.

The eighth-century Chinese master Shitou (Jpn., Sekito), an important predecessor of Dongshan, was asked by a monk about the main point of Buddhism. Shitou replied that it is simply not to attain, not to know. For Shitou, Buddhist practice was precisely about not attaining anything or grasping at any particular knowledge. The monk then asked Shitou what goes beyond not attaining or knowing, and Shitou affirmed that "the wide sky does not obstruct the white clouds drifting." For Shitou, the background ultimate reality and the foreground particular phenomena are not separate

It is okay to be the person you are, this body and mind right now, in this inhale and this exhale. This is how all buddhas are.

and estranged but rather collegial; both clouds and wide sky have their places and can enjoy each other. Our sense of the ultimate and of phenomenal occurrences need not obstruct each other but can reflect each other and are integrated through our practice. How this works is not easily pinned down. Shitou said to one of his successors, "Suchness is ungraspable, and it cannot be grasped beyond suchness. As such or non-such, it cannot be grasped at all." Even without anything we can grasp, how can we just enjoy the dynamic play of awareness, without troubling about such a thing?

In our acquisitive, consumerist culture that encourages seeking after rewards, stageless practice is radical. Bob Dylan sings of people who do what they do "just to be nothing more than something they invest in." We spend most of our time trying to get more of this or less of that, trying to accomplish objectives and manipulate reality to get what we think we need or get rid of what we find unpleasant. Our conventional life in the world is about these manipulations, even when aimed at wholesome objectives such as becoming more highly developed spiritually. Yet beyond our personal ambitions, suchness is always present.

One day, when a monk arrived at Dongshan's temple, Dongshan asked where he had been. When the monk said he had been wandering in the mountains, Dongshan asked if he had reached the peak, and the monk said that he had. Dongshan asked if there was anyone on the peak. The monk replied, "No, there was not." Dongshan stated, "If so, then you did not reach the peak." If nobody was there, indicates Dongshan, then neither was the monk. If this peak experience was a true realization of emptiness in which not a single thing exists, then this monk could not exist there either.

But this astute monk replied clearly, "If I did not reach the peak, how could I have known there was no one there?" As a true person of suchness already, this monk was present to witness that nobody was there, least of all a deluded image of himself and an objectified view of suchness that he might grab as a trophy. Dongshan asked why this monk had not remained on the mountaintop, and the monk replied honestly that he would have liked to stay there, but that there was someone from the West, probably referring to the Buddha or Bodhidharma, who would not have approved. Dongshan was pleased. The monk's presence and response demonstrate the subtlety of Dongshan's teaching of suchness. He understood that the buddhas do not approve of settling in on some peaceful mountaintop, in an exalted bliss state. The bodhisattva path requires not remaining immersed in nirvana but taking personal responsibility and returning from the peak to somehow share the awareness from such an experience.

In a related story, Dongshan' disciple Yunju returned one day to the monastery and Dongshan asked him where he had been. Yunju replied that he had been walking in the mountains. When Dongshan asked if he had found a mountain to reside on, a place where he could settle and teach, Yunju said categorically that none were suitable. Dongshan asked if Yunju had visited all of the mountains throughout the country, but Yunju said he had not.

Dongshan commented that Yunju "must have found an entry path."

But Yunju completely rejected the traditional Buddhist view of stages in the practice. He proclaimed emphatically, "No, there is no path."

Dongshan said, "If there is no path, I wonder how you have come to lay eyes on this old monk."

Yunju replied, "If there were a path, then a mountain would stand between us."

The very idea of a path implies some separation, that some distance in space or time needs to be traversed to get to a particular destination. Yunju disdains any path and affirms his present communion with Dongshan, with no need to travel to some

PHOTO | **SAMO VIDIC**

PHOTO | **MARCUS YAM**

meeting place somewhere else. With any sequential path of progress, implying separation from some goal, one can never be fully present. Of course, practice does involve transformation. And becoming familiar with one's tendencies based on the three poisons, and thereby not being obstructed by them, is a necessary part of awakening practice. But for Yunju and Dongshan, some sequential, systematized scheme of attainment missed the point.

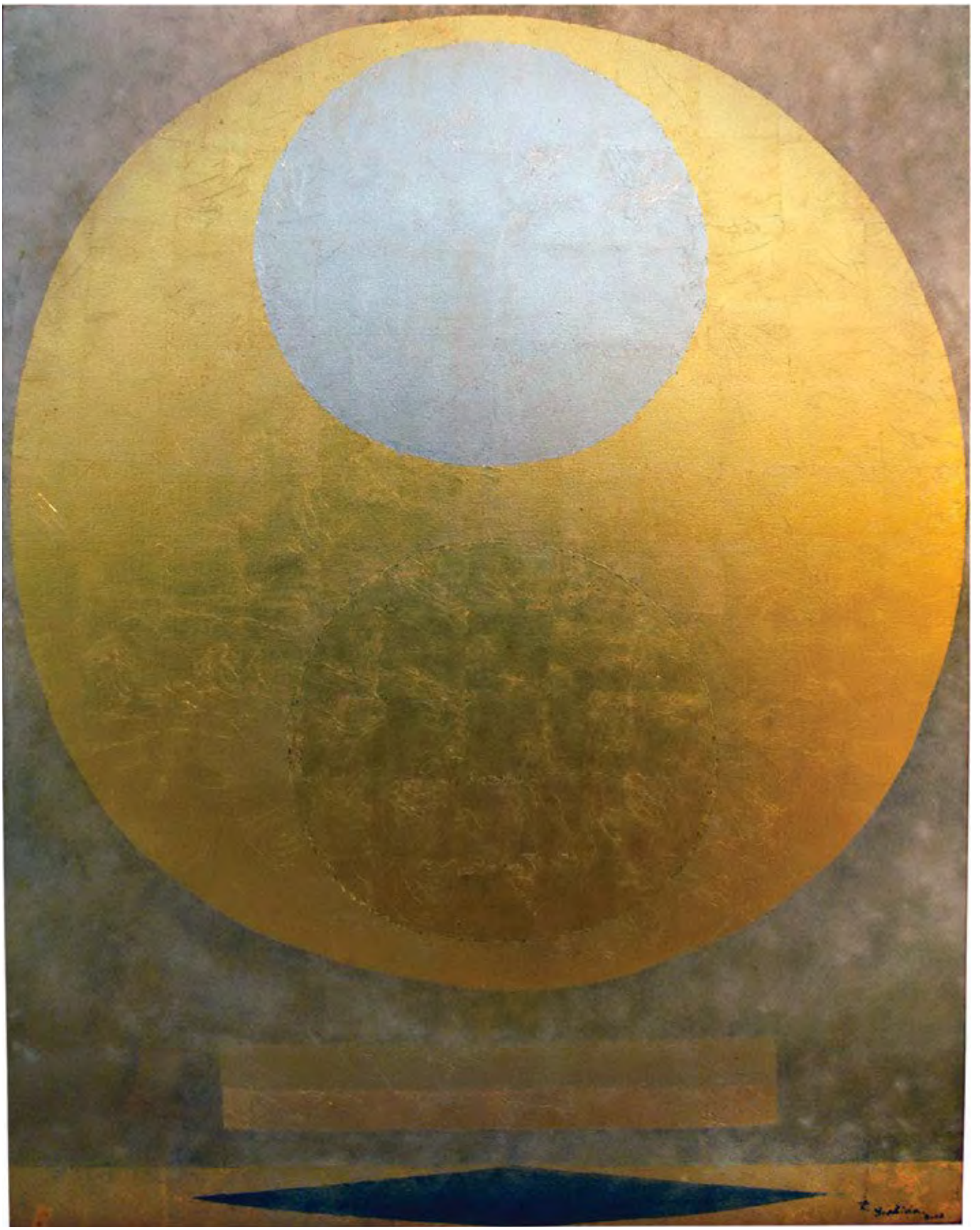
The meditation practice that expresses and enacts the awareness of the peak of suchness can be described as objectless meditation. In this kind of meditation, there is no limited objective or goal; enlightenment is not yet another object to desire. Dogen says that deluded people have delusions about enlightenment, and enlightened people are enlightened about their delusions. Objectless meditation, such as the "just sitting" of Soto Zen, opens up the whole field of awareness, not just particular meditation objects.

In the sudden awakening of suchness, practice starts from the mountaintop; practicing suchness without delay, everything is just as it is. The bodhisattva practitioner commits to helping everyone realize that for themselves and to responding helpfully to obstructions, both personal and in the world around us.

Even in the immediacy of suchness practice from the mountaintop, most practitioners eventually engage in practices that fill in the pathways from below to the peak of suchness. When the mind is groggy or drifting along amid thoughts and feelings, it is helpful to focus on particular objects for a while to assist the settling and calming that is part of meditative awareness. Practically speaking, meditation involving focus on objects, such as breathing, sound, mantras, or phrases from the teachings or koans, may be very useful for some students to approach suchness or return to it. In fact, from the perspective of objectless meditation and suchness, joining in more limited meditation on objects, including programs with stages of progress and attainment, may be useful, as long as one does not reify such programs as the point of practice. One need not become attached to a particular object or technique or be obsessed with attaining some partial goal or objective. One may even joyfully engage with such objects and stages as the awakened play and background adornments of the practice of suchness itself. Particular practices are the beneficial, practical expressions of the ultimate truth of suchness within the limited phenomenal world.

Even if you have some excellent, refined understanding of buddha, it is not enough to just enshrine that. The only real buddha is a buddha going beyond.

Ultimately, however, the true transformative function of sustained zazen practice seems to occur beyond any technique, beyond our opinions of whether our zazen is good, bad, boring, or exalted. It is "the vital process on the path of going beyond Buddha"; buddha might even be defined as "buddha always going beyond buddha." The historical Buddha did not stop practicing after his great awakening but continued meditating and awakening every day of his life. In each new situation, with each new fellow practitioner, fresh awakening may arise or may be required to meet the changes. Even if you have some excellent refined understanding of buddha, or a sublime image of buddha, or even a deep personal transcendent experience of buddha, it is not enough to just enshrine that and look back on it. The only real buddha is a buddha going beyond, an actual buddha actively responding to the world with the ongoing sustainable, renewable resource of buddha. BD



(Opposite) *La Vie*, 2003

The Heart of This Moment

The practice of metta doesn't require an ambition to save the world, says **Christina Feldman**. It just requires us to bring forth kindness one moment at a time.

PAINTINGS | **KENJI YOSHIDA**

Threaded through the entirety of the Buddha's pathway of awakening are the teachings on cultivating the boundless heart—immeasurable kindness, compassion, joy, and equanimity. These qualities are referred to as the *brahma viharas*. *Brahma* refers to the sublime or noble tenor of these qualities; *vihara* originally comes from the word for "monastery," or the place we abide and make our home. We are encouraged, whether standing or walking, sitting or lying down, whenever we are awake to make kindness, compassion, joy, and equanimity the home of our heart.

The brahma viharas are relational qualities. They are the foundation of all respectful, healthy, and dignified societies, communities, families, and relationships. Kindness, compassion, joy, and equanimity are virtues, wholesome qualities that are the foundation of all ethical thought, speech, and action. They are qualities to be cultivated in all moments, in the midst of all the conditions and events that touch our lives. They are pathways of awakening and liberation encouraging us to investigate anguish and its origins and to cultivate the path to the end of struggle and discontentment. These ennobling qualities are also the embodied expression of the awakened heart describing the deepest emotional and psychological freedom and maturity of a human being. When these qualities are brought to fruition, they are described as immeasurable, without conditions, and unshakeable. They are the landscape and embodiment of liberation.

The experiential taste of the brahma viharas is not a stranger to us. Each of us has encountered moments of unhesitating friendliness, compassion, joy, and equanimity. At times we have been the recipients of these qualities—offered to us by loved ones and by strangers. Equally, we have all known moments when we have responded to others with unreserved kindness and compassion. At times we unexpectedly encounter moments of profound appreciation and joy. In some of the most challenging moments of our lives, we surprise ourselves with our capacity to be balanced and steady. These moments make a powerful imprint on our minds, revealing to us an inner potentiality and way of being in the world that is responsive and liberated. Too often these moments feel accidental, windows that open to an ennobled way of living that too easily seem to close again. Once more we find ourselves self-absorbed, fearful, and forgetful, lost

COURTESY OCTOBER GALLERY, LONDON

in the preoccupations of our day. The moments of deepest distress and despair in our lives are the moments when kindness, compassion, joy, and equanimity are most prone to disappear, yet these are the moments when these qualities are our greatest allies and most needed.

Rather than being discouraged by these many moments of forgetfulness—the times of anger, fear, despair, and reactivity—we come to recognize that this is the classroom in which the immeasurable capacities of our hearts are nurtured and cultivated. This is a present-moment recollection, a quality of mindfulness where we learn to cultivate kindness in the midst of harshness, compassion in the face of the seemingly impossible, joy in the midst of sorrow and darkness, and equanimity in the midst of the events of our lives that feel designed to unbalance us. This is not a path of postponement that waits for the ideal conditions and moments to be kind, compassionate, joyful, and balanced within. This is the nature of the immeasurable—it embraces all moments, events, and conditions. Kindness, compassion, joy, and equanimity can only be cultivated in the present, in our willingness to meet our life with a responsive and wise heart.

IN ONE OF THE EARLIEST collections of the Buddha's teachings, the *Sutta Nipata*, lies the jewel of the teaching—the *Metta Sutta*, the discourse on immeasurable friendliness. The word *metta* draws on the Pali/Sanskrit word *mitta*, which translates as "friend." In turn, *mitta* draws on an earlier Sanskrit word *mit* that translates as "growing fat with kindness" or "spreading out"—spreading out in friendliness to the world.

CHRISTINA FELDMAN is cofounder of Gaia House in England and a guiding teacher of the Insight Meditation Society in Barre, Massachusetts. This teaching is adapted from *Boundless Heart*, published by Shambhala, 2017.

The four immeasurable qualities of kindness, compassion, joy, and equanimity should not be seen as linear or hierarchical, yet metta is the only one of these qualities that in the early collection of teachings merits its own dedicated discourse. It is seen to be the foundation of an ethical life, of words, thoughts, and acts of integrity. It is understood to be the necessary foundation of all ennobling qualities, including compassion, joy, and equanimity. It is said to be the necessary foundational attitude underlying all meditative development. Metta is not described as emotion or a transient state, but as an abiding—the home where our hearts and minds dwell. It is an attitudinal commitment brought to all moments of experience.

With this teaching, the Buddha describes a way of being in the world, in all moments, all circumstances, with a mind abiding in a boundless kindness in which greed, confusion, and ill will have come to an end. It is an all-inclusive befriending, a fearless kindness rooted in mindfulness and insight. *Metta* is also a verb: "befriending." We learn to befriend ourselves, all of the people who come into our lives—the difficult and the lovely. We learn to befriend all events and circumstances.

The Buddha recognized, as we recognize, the toxic power of ill will. Hatred, aversion, and fear fracture our communities, our societies, and our world. Historically and today, ill will creates wars and conflict, oppression, violence, and prejudice, and the suffering scars our lives and world. Ill will is not an abstract concept. Each one of us knows the pain of receiving ill will through the thoughts, words, or acts of another. Judgment, blame, harshness, rejection, condemnation, and suspicion leave a powerful imprint on our hearts and minds. We equally know the pain of being gripped by inwardly generated ill will when we judge, condemn, or are harsh to another. We know too the damage done through inwardly directed ill will—the all-too ➤

Metta Sutta

According to the *Sutta Nipata* commentary, the Buddha originally offered this teaching to calm the fears of monks who were frightened while meditating in the forest. It describes the qualities of a life informed by metta, or loving-kindness.

TO REACH the state of peace
One skilled in the good should be
Capable and upright,
Easy to speak to and straightforward,
Of gentle nature and not proud,
Contented and easily supported,
Living lightly and having few duties,
Wise and with senses calmed,
Not arrogant and without greed for supporters,
And should not do the least thing that the wise
Would reproach them for.
(One should reflect in this way:)
"May all beings be happy and secure;
May all beings be happy-minded.
Whatever living beings there may be,
whether weak or strong,
Tall, large, medium, or short, small or big,
Seen or unseen, near or distant,
Born or to be born,
May they, without exception, all be happy-minded.
Let no one despise another
Or deceive anyone anywhere,
Let no one through anger or hatred
Wish for another's suffering."
As a mother would risk her own life
To protect her child, her only child,
So for all beings one should
Guard one's boundless heart.
With boundless friendliness for the whole world
should one
Cultivate a boundless heart,
In all directions,
Without obstruction, without hate and without
ill will,
Standing or walking, sitting or lying down,
Whenever one is awake,
May one stay with this recollection.
This is called the best and most sublime way
of dwelling in this world.
One who is virtuous, endowed with insight,
Not clinging to wrong view,
And having overcome all passion for sensual
pleasure,
Will not come to lie in a womb again.

Translation by John Peacock, 2016

Metta asks us to be the guardian of all we encounter in this moment—the events, experiences, and people who come into our world, to care for them all.

➤ familiar sniping voice of the inner critic and judge that undermines our well-being and happiness.

From a Buddhist psychological perspective, ill will is rooted in fear—the fear of loss, the fear of harm. When our hearts are gripped by fear, we create the sense of "other" that we abandon, flee from, or attack. The "other" may be simply the person who annoys us with restlessness when we want calm, the unwanted person trying to sell us new windows, the person in front of us in line impeding our progress. The "other" may be whole groups of people we condemn, mistrust, or judge. The many forms of prejudice that scar our world cannot survive without this aversive mechanism that creates the "other," in turn fueling mistrust, separation, and fear.

At times the "others" that are created and solidified through aversion are aspects of our own being we disdain, judge, or fear: parts of our body, an illness, a chronic pain we fear and turn away from. We can be masters in the art of self-condemnation—disdaining ourselves and forming views of ourselves that are constructed on the foundations of self-hatred. We can have aversion for aversion, telling ourselves that a better or more spiritual person would not experience such ill will, which becomes a base for further self- judgment about our imperfections and inadequacies. We tell ourselves we should be a better person, yet we feel imprisoned by our own habit patterns and feel helpless in the face of them. We may have emotions of jealousy, contempt, or anxiety we feel ashamed of and turn them into the "other" we reject or endeavor to annihilate. The "other" is turned into an enemy within ourselves that we fear and condemn. The underlying narrative in aversion is about nonacceptance, the eternal story that I and the world need to be different from what they are if I am to be happy. In the light of understanding what it means to extend unconditional friendliness to all things, we understand that aversion too asks to be befriended; it also is suffering that can only end through our willingness to be intimate with the landscape of ill will, so it can be understood.

The Buddha put it simply: "Hatred does not cease by hatred. By kindness alone is hatred healed. This is an eternal law."

When we read the *Metta Sutta*, we may believe it is impossible for us to cultivate a boundless friendliness. Metta does not ask for the ambitious desire to save the entire world but simply to rescue the mind and heart of this moment from the compulsions of ill will. Metta asks us to be a guardian of all that we encounter in this moment—the events, experiences, and people who come into our world, to care for them all. Mindfulness and metta go hand in hand; both can only be cultivated in the moment we are present in; it is the only moment that can be transformed.

Metta is not primarily concerned with how we feel but with the attitudinal commitment and intention we bring to all moments of experience: to forsake the patterns of abandonment that aversion

La Vie, 1995

PHOTO JONATHAN GREET | COURTESY OCTOBER GALLERY, LONDON

provokes, to learn we can stand next to all events and people and befriend them. Metta swims against the tide of one of the prevailing ideologies of our time that tells us that how we feel about something is the ultimate authority that guides how we speak, act, and relate. The myth of authenticity asserts that if we feel good about something, like something, or are flattered by someone or something, it is worth pursuing, staying close to, investing in, and befriending. The myth that reifies feeling as an authentic guide in our moment-to-moment relationships equally asserts that if we don't feel good about something, dislike, or are threatened by someone or something, then it is only human and reasonable that we push it away, abandon, or ignore it and do our best to distance ourselves from it. Looking at our lives, we see how many of our choices, strategies, and actions are guided by this myth—at times it is referred to as "being true to ourselves." If we investigate this pattern without judgment, we may instead discover we are "being true" to emotional habits that do not serve us well.

Both mindfulness and metta invite us to question this mythology, to begin to understand that, rather than representing authenticity, it may be describing a life in which we agree to being governed by

We do not have to feel generous in order to live with generosity; we do not always have to feel compassion in order to respond with compassion.

the predominant reaction, emotion, and mental state of the moment. Looking at the world around us, we clearly see there is no shortage of beings who have equated emotional reactivity with freedom. Racist or abusive language becomes a right because it is part of our freedom. We can strike out at another in anger because we are free to do so. Neither metta nor mindfulness condemns the turbulence and power of our emotional and reactive inner world or suggests that we should suppress or ignore the impulses and emotional reactions that arise; the suggestion is to bring a gentle awareness into that world out of concern for the well-being of all beings. We learn to bring into the world of emotional turbulence a few simple questions: Does this lead to suffering or the end of suffering? Does this lead to a deeper sense of relatedness or to increasing alienation? Does this lead toward freedom or away from a liberated heart?

Immeasurable kindness is not so much concerned with how we feel but how we relate to all feelings, people, events, and experiences. Kindness is only meaningful if it is embodied, the ground of our speech, acts, and choices. It is returning again and again to the commitment and intention to abide in kindness and to befriend all moments of experience. It is learning to sustain that intention and to allow it to be the guide through the tangled and complex world of emotion, relationship, and action.

A parent with a newborn child gets up in the night to tend to its needs; it may be the very last thing he or she feels like doing, yet a parent is guided by the commitment to care and not how he or she feels in that moment. A friend in distress reaches out to us for help—we drop our busyness and respond. It may not be how we feel, but our response is guided by a deeper sense of compassion. A frail and elderly person stumbles on the road in front us—unhesitatingly we offer a supportive hand without that act being filtered through the lens of how we feel. People on a meditative pathway will find themselves in many moments finding their way to their meditation cushion or seat even though they might in that moment feel that it would be much easier to follow an avenue of distraction or avoidance. These are all acts of embodying a deeper commitment to aspirations and intentions rather than following the predominant mind state or feeling of the moment.

The pathway of metta has mindfulness woven into it. It is a path that asks us to remember the intentions that heal and liberate in all moments of forgetfulness. The path of liberation and transformation found in the brahma viharas is concerned with what we do and how we live as much as it is concerned with inner development. We do not have to feel generous in order to live with generosity;

➤ continued on page 82

La Vie, 1993

COURTESY OCTOBER GALLERY, LONDON

COURTESY OF **BUDDHADASA INDAPANYO ARCHIVES (BANGKOK)**

(Opposite) *Ajahn Buddhadasa at Wat Suan Mokkh, ca 1980s*

How Can No-Self Be Reborn?

Ajahn Buddhadasa challenged the Buddhist establishment with his unconventional interpretation of dependent co-arising. As his student **Santikaro** explains, he called into question the very notion of rebirth.

The work of Ajahn Buddhadasa (1906–1993) in Theravada Buddhism has been to recover the core perspectives that have been ignored, lost, or obscured as buddhadhamma was encumbered with the trappings of religious rituals, moralistic beliefs, afterlife speculations, donation-seeking rationalizations, and quick-fix meditation techniques. As a clerical caste emerged over the centuries following the Buddha's passing, Dhamma was segregated into Dhamma for those identified as renunciate wanderers (*bhikkhus*) and Dhamma for householders (*upasakas*). Further, a moralizing tone crept in, and emphasis began to shift from liberation in this life to earning a better life after death. While such developments may have their place, something crucial was muddled in the process. Ajahn Buddhadasa did not accept the segregation of practice and the bias underlying it, nor the superficial moralizing that overlooked the subtler perspectives found throughout the Pali suttas.

After intentionally flunking out of the Thai monastic education system—he never wanted a position in a big Bangkok monastery anyway—Ajahn Buddhadasa moved to an abandoned temple near his natal village, dug deep into the suttas, and refined his studies in the crucible of his own practice. Along the way, he discovered dependent co-arising (*paticcasamuppada* or "dependent origination," the conditioned process through which suffering arises from ignorance, craving, and clinging) as he thought the Buddha intended rather than how traditional, pedantic orthodoxy has interpreted it. This required exploring dependent co-arising in light of other core teachings: "only suffering (dukkha) and the quenching of suffering," "nothing is worth clinging to (as me or mine)," voidness, thusness, and the middle way. Most of all, he found, one's understanding must be practical rather than metaphysical, ontological, or cosmological; a matter of experience rather than merely accepting the assertions of authorities; and must lead to liberation in this life.

To aid his investigation, he compiled over eight hundred pages of passages translated from the Pali suttas that concern dependent co-arising in one way or another. These were published as

Paticcasamuppada from His Own Lips, a volume that allows one to read the wonderful variety of perspectives and details on dependent co-arising in its own terms, largely free of later interpretive assumptions and biases. In translating the Pali into Thai, Ajahn Buddhadasa left key terms in Pali rather than rendering them with an interpretative twist. For example, consciousness (*viññana*) remains just consciousness and is not twisted into "relinking consciousness," a term the Buddha himself never used. Also, birth is just birth (*jati*) and need not be assumed to mean "rebirth"; after all, there is no "re-" in *jati*. If a sutta passage was somewhat ambiguous, he left it to the reader to explore the ambiguity.

Choosing to put the orthodox Theravada commentaries back in their rightful place—secondary to the Pali suttas, yet potentially helpful in understanding the originals—left him open to constant sniping from those who had been raised on and never questioned the commentarial system. The commentaries had come to be accepted as the Buddha's word rather than remembered as derived from the original teachings. In response to those who felt threatened by his approach, Ajahn Buddhadasa insisted he was hewing to the Buddha's intent—liberation from dukkha.

Certain writers who adhere to the commentarial understanding of dependent co-arising, which spans at least three physical lives, often warn and scold those who do not follow their beliefs. While the better scholars among them have valid points that serious students of Buddhism should not ignore, there is a tendency among such scholars to over-simplify, if not flatly misunderstand, critiques of their beliefs. To imply, as has happened, that thoughtful teachers such as Ajahn Buddhadasa are amoral, irresponsible, or heretical smacks of the authoritarianism that often goes with scholarly hubris and patriarchal positions. Rather than dogmas and defenses of the faith, Ajahn Buddhadasa advocated reasoned debate and honest disagreement with a spirit that never forgets that we are aiming for the end of suffering as soon as possible. Perhaps none of us truly and fully understand dependent co-arising and can enjoy exploring it for the rest of our lives, as the Buddha appeared to have done. Careful, unbiased translations of the relevant suttas are crucial here.

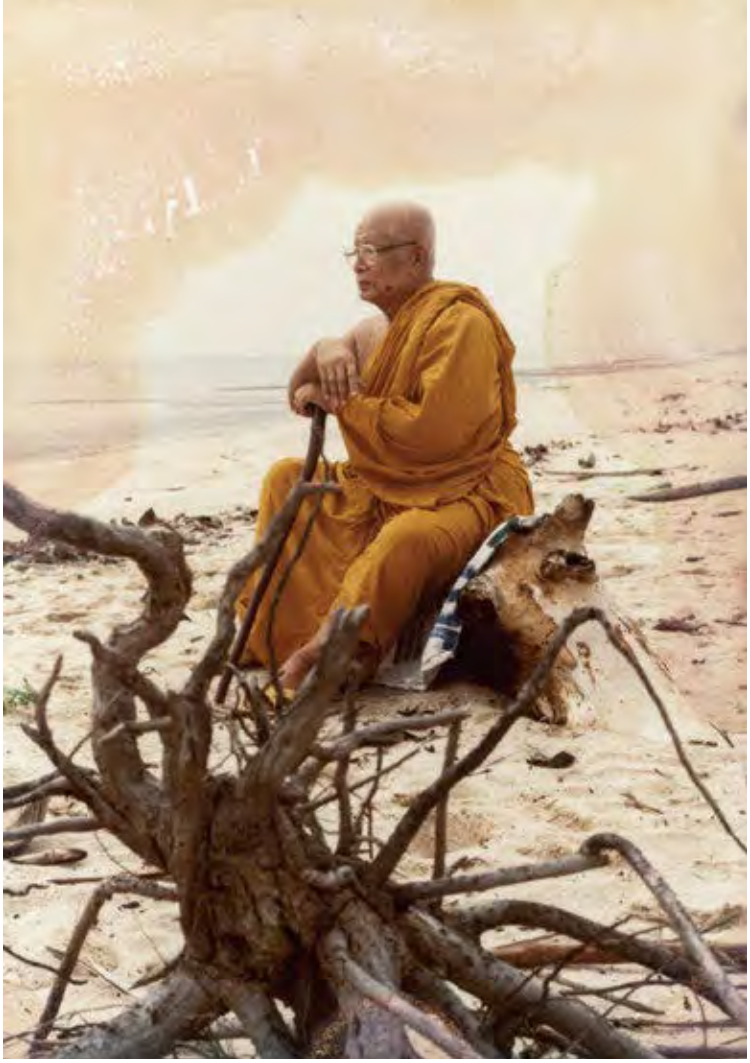
Exponents of the "the three lifetimes interpretation," which insists that dependent co-arising must be understood in terms of past, present, and future lives, assert that it is consistent with *anatta* or not-self. Ajahn Buddhadasa found their explanations unconvincing, as they have not escaped the implications of something that remains the same as it carries over from one life to the next. This vehicle for karmic results smells rather like a self (*atta*)—that is, an individual, separate, and lasting entity. Such presentations fail to explain, although they claim to, how karma works over lifetimes without implying such an entity. In Ajahn Buddhadasa's view, the karma and rebirth emphasizing approach sacrifices the liberating value of a not-self understanding of dependent co-arising for a moral version of dependent co-arising. It may conventionally be correct from an ethical perspective, and therefore may be of value, but it misses out from an ultimate perspective. Ajahn Buddhadasa found this unfortunate.

There is no doubt that passages that describe "rebirth" appear in the suttas. What are we to make of them? Do we take them to be literally, materially true? If so, how do we deal with the fact that they seem to contradict the notion of not-self? Do we fudge one to protect the other? Are the suttas any less contradictory when we read them less literally? Do suttas present ultimate truth or conventional truth? Might there be value in understanding dependent co-arising in a variety of ways, wherein no single way of understanding it, even Ajahn Buddhadasa's, is the sole and whole truth?

Ajahn Buddhadasa is not the only intelligent, thoughtful student of buddhadhamma to have

---

SANTIKARO was a student and translator of Ajahn Buddhadasa, living many years as a monk in Thailand. He now teaches at Liberation Park in Wisconsin.



Ajahn Buddhadasa on the beach at the Gulf of Siam, ca 1980s

Ajahn Buddhadasa consistently read the suttas from a not-self perspective and publicly questioned the "many lifetimes" view of dependent co-arising that has long dominated Theravada teaching.

questioned an apparent logical contradiction in the standard view, though he was the earliest and most prominent of Theravada teachers to do so. He had discussed such contradictions privately with a personal confidant of his who enjoyed a very high rank in the monastic hierarchy, but his confidant would not discuss it publicly. In recent decades, a growing number of scholars and Dhamma students, lay and monastic, Asian and Western, have raised the same questions in various ways as well. Fortunately, when those who raise such questions have studied the matter at least as much as traditional apologists have, dismissing such questions on the grounds that the questioners simply do not understand the matter is no longer accepted as an honest response.

The Buddha was not one to fall back on mysticism. Ajahn Buddhadasa recognized that religious teachings, including the Buddha's teaching, use ordinary language in ways that express perspectives and realities less obvious than the perspectives and realities that ordinary language is typically used to express. Fundamentalist minds seem unable or unwilling to consider this natural fact of language and instead seek to interpret all teachings literally. Ajahn Buddhadasa, being more creative and skillful, recognized two levels in the Buddha's language: an ordinary level of language that speaks of people and beings, and a Dhamma level of language that expresses not-self and dependent co-arising. Sensitivity to language and the meanings of key terms, which have changed over time, is central to understanding the vital teaching on dependent co-arising, in particular.

In short, Ajahn Buddhadasa consistently read the suttas from a not-self perspective and was consequently the first major figure in Thai Buddhism to publicly question the many lifetimes view of dependent co-arising that has long dominated Theravada teaching. One need not agree with him in order to appreciate the serious reflection he has given the matter. If seeing dependent co-arising is to see the Dhamma, Ajahn Buddhadasa's perspectives challenge us to examine whether we actually see Dhamma or not. BD

COURTESY OF BUDDHADASA INDAPANYO ARCHIVES (BANGKOK)

The Choice Is Yours

There are two ways to understand dependent origination, teaches **Ajahn Buddhadasa**. Only one leads to liberation.

In the Pali suttas there are two descriptions of what occurred under the Bodhi tree at the time of the Buddha's great awakening. In one version, appearing in various texts, the Buddha realized the three supreme knowledges. In the first true knowing, as it is generally understood, he recollected his former lives. In this account, as traditionally understood, he is able to recall his own previous births far into the distant past. These are invariably described as happening to the same person. In the second true knowing, he reviewed how beings carry on according to their actions (*cutupapatañana*), how beings pass away and reappear according to the karma they have done. Through the third true knowing, he realized the destruction of the impulses (*asavakkhyañana*). The out-flowing fermentations (*asavas*) are the deepest level of defilement; when they are completely ended, no further defilement, egoism, or suffering is possible. This is the more commonly recounted description of the night of the Buddha's awakening.

Elsewhere, the Pali texts state that the Buddha awakened to dependent co-arising. There also are accounts of the Buddha contemplating dependent co-arising immediately after his awakening, while he was still sitting under the Bodhi tree. Together, these give a second description of the Buddha's great awakening. In the immediate aftermath, during the first four-hour watch one night, the Buddha examined dependent co-arising in the forward order, starting with ignorance, then concoctings, and so on, one after the other. During the second watch of the night, he reviewed dependent co-arising in the reverse order, starting from suffering, then birth, becoming, clinging, and so on all the way back to ignorance. Then for the third watch, he examined dependent co-arising in both forward and reverse orders until dawn.

Between these two versions, the second is more reasonable and acceptable in light of the overall themes and threads of the Pali suttas. In the other account, the first knowledge concerning the recollection of past lives is in the language of eternalism, just as in the pre-Buddhist Upanishads, which speak of a self or an individual being born again and again over many lives. The belief that the same person is repeatedly reborn is eternalism, which Buddhism aims to eliminate. This idea has more in common with popular beliefs and the philosophy of the Upanishads than with the core of the Buddha's message.

The second knowledge is about beings passing away and reappearing according to karma. This is generally understood to mean that the same being disappears from one existence (*bhava*) and reappears in another according to karmic influences somehow carried over from one existence to the next. However, this is not directly or specifically a Buddhist teaching. At heart, Buddhism teaches the end of karma, living beyond karma, rather than carrying on according to karma. The noble path is for freedom from karma; living under the sway of karma is limiting, distressful, and burdensome. It is not good enough to merely surrender to karma, to die and be reborn according to the fruits of our actions. In Buddhism, liberating insight must go further than that.

Neither of these first two knowledges can be considered truly Buddhist principles. Why, then, are they included in the Pali scriptures? My own

Ajahn Buddhadasa teaching monks at the "stone classroom" at Wat Suan Mokkh, his monastery in southern Thailand

COURTESY OF BUDDHADASA INDAPANNO ARCHIVES

view is that perhaps the compilers of the discourses included these passages for the benefit of ordinary people. For those people unable to understand dependent co-arising and the end of karma, these passages were included for the sake of morality. Consequently, this is an account of the Buddha's awakening for the moral benefit of ordinary people.

The second account puts dependent co-arising at the center of the Buddha's awakening. Not only did he express his awakening in these terms but he also described how he pondered and contemplated dependent co-arising both before the awakening and immediately after. After experiencing the bliss of liberation for a week, he examined and investigated dependent co-arising throughout at least one night, the first watch of which focused on how dependent co-arising occurs. He repeatedly investigated this in the forward order from ignorance to concoctings on through suffering. He spent four full hours thoroughly penetrating this truth. In the next four hours, he investigated the causality of dukkha in careful detail all the way back to ignorance. In the final four hours, he examined dependent co-arising in both directions, forward and backward. This shows the central importance of dependent co-arising. The formula recorded is brief and succinct—the Buddha looked into it forward and backward for twelve hours without a break. He had the most profound spiritual experience of this through each of the watches: forward order, reverse order, and both forward and backward, each for four full hours. Please consider how profound, how difficult, how subtle, and how important this is. This ought to be of great interest to all serious meditators.

The words we have translated as "forward order" and "reverse order," or "forward" and "backward"—*anuloma* and *patiloma*—can be understood rather broadly. Thus, for clarity's sake, we can explain *anuloma*, "with the hairs," as the examining of the arising sequence, that is, dependent co-arising. The reverse, *patiloma*, "against the hairs," is the quenching of dependent co-arising, that is, dependent quenching. In the first watch, the Buddha investigated and reviewed how dependent

co-arising arises. In the second watch, he investigated and reviewed how it quenches. In the final watch, he investigated and reviewed both. This understanding is eminently reasonable and fully supported by the core themes of the discourses.

Please consider this important question: Have you ever practiced like this? Have you ever investigated dependent co-arising in the way that the Buddha did before, during, and after his awakening? We suggest that you examine and scrutinize dependent co-arising in the same great detail, with the same sincerity and intensity. Then, you might understand it like he did. You will find it worth your while to follow the Buddha's example.

Two Understandings of Karma

This is a good place to consider karma. After all, it parallels the dependent co-arising teaching, though with less precision and depth. In the first account of the Buddha's awakening, the second knowledge suggests that beings carry on after death according to their karma. The difficulty with this understanding is that we cannot take this as the understanding of karma in line with core Buddhist principles. Rather, this understanding is simply the standard version of karma that existed in India before the Buddha's time. Before the Buddha's awakening, the Upanishads already taught that beings are reborn after death according to the workings of karma. Even Christianity, at least mainstream forms, teaches pretty much the same. If that is not the true Buddhist teaching, then what is?

In Buddhism, the central teaching on karma is about the practice that makes karma meaningless, "the karma that ends karma." This karma transforms us beyond all the influences of karma, which is the unique, more profound aspect of the Buddha's karma teaching. The idea that doing good deeds leads to good results and doing bad deeds leads to bad results was a general teaching that existed before the Buddha's time. The Buddha did not deny or object to such karma doctrines, which were already common before he appeared and are found in some form in all religions. However, such teachings were not sufficient for his purpose: the end of suffering. Therefore, the Buddha went further. His real teaching is about not being trapped by karma, thus transcending karma and its consequences.

Allow me to reiterate that most of the books on Buddhism with chapters on "Karma and Rebirth" are not correct, not if they really intend to represent Buddhism. If we are to explain "Karma in Buddhism," it is not enough to teach that good actions bring good fruits, bad actions bring bad fruits, and we inevitably receive the fruits of our good and bad karma. Properly, a Buddhist explanation must focus on "the karma that ends all karma." The practice of the noble eightfold path is that karma that ends all karma. The Buddha's teaching on karma is to be free of karma, not trapped by it, so that karma has no more power over our lives.

The Buddha Perfected the Teaching of Karma

To be trapped forever in the prison of karma is not Buddhism. If everything constantly happens to us according to karma, there could never be any liberation. For a teaching and practice to be Buddhism, we must be liberated from the power and oppression of karma. A teaching that merely reiterates the old approach cannot be the true Buddhist teaching. It must be completed to the extent of liberation to be Buddhism. Thus, the Buddha needed to teach the karma that ends karma. He took the kind of karma that does not explain liberation and perfected it so that liberation from karma became the central point.

"Beyond karma" is a teaching above and beyond the world, or a *lokuttara* teaching. The ordinary karma teachings are part and parcel with the world (*lokiya*). *Lokiyadhamma* is for the mind still trapped in worldly conditions. *Lokuttaradhamma* is

for the mind free of and beyond worldly conditions. The Buddha accepted a number of the old teachings, perfecting them within his *lokuttaradhamma* system as he did so. The Buddhist teaching on karma—the noble eightfold path that ends karma—is a perfect example of how the Buddha completed the old teachings and traditions.

The Buddha accepted some teachings that existed in India before his awakening, such as non-vengeance (*avera*), non-harming or nonviolence (*avihimsa*), the five *sila*, various *samadhi* practices, and the form and formless *jhanas*. All of these are older teachings and practices that he did not reject. Instead, he further developed, completed, and perfected them. Please be aware that Buddhism contains a certain amount of older teachings and practices that the Buddha included, deepened, and completed for the sake of quenching dukkha. Understanding this fact is important so that we will not confuse the old versions of such teachings with the new, perfected versions.

The Buddha completed the Upanishadic teaching on karma and the like. To do so, he taught the end of karma.

Two Levels of Teaching

These examples clearly show that there are two levels of teaching, both of which are necessary. One is for the sake of morality, for those who still believe in and hold to self. The moral level of teaching is necessary for those who can only understand things in terms of me and mine, who require moral and therapeutic teachings that operate on a worldly level. It teaches people how to live in the world morally and peacefully, to be less selfish about the selves to which they cling, and thereby suffer less.

For those aiming higher, the Buddha's teaching focuses on letting go of self, that everything is not-self and nothing is worth clinging to as me or mine. This level does not ignore or reject the moral teachings; it simply goes beyond them. This is the more comprehensive transcendent level of ultimate truth that truly liberates from all suffering. If both levels are understood, there is no conflict between them. They can coexist for the sake of both those who want to live in and of the world (*lokiya*) and those aiming to live above and free of the world (*lokuttara*), in it but not of it.

To be trapped forever in the prison of karma is not Buddhism. If everything constantly happens to us according to karma, there could never be any liberation.

Each person decides their own preference and way. If you want to travel the paths of the world and have no wish to transcend the world, you can follow the worldly teachings and receive the moralistic explanation of dependent co-arising given by various commentators. You can continue rebirthing yourself in a worldly way, but with healthy morality, not harming others and living relatively peacefully. If you want to be free, to transcend the world and no longer be caught by all its trappings, you must study the transcendent teachings such as "the end of karma" that do not involve self. For this, we have the dependent co-arising of ultimate truth that enables us to see through all the concoctings of self. Dependent co-arising also has these two levels or two models. The choice of which to follow is yours. BD

Adapted from *Under the Bodhi Tree*, forthcoming from Wisdom in May

REV. ANGEL KYODO WILLIAMS • AJAHN AMARO • PEMA KHANDRO RINPOCHE • NOAH LEVINE

Buddhist Ethics in the 21st Century

INTRODUCTION BY KOUN FRANZ, DEPUTY EDITOR

SCULPTURES | MAURO PERUCCHETTI

WHEN I FIRST CAME to Buddhism as a teenager, I wanted to see the world through a particular lens, one that was clear and panoramic and, if I'm honest, a bit detached. I also wanted to be a certain kind of person, the type of spontaneous, uncompromising, powerful Zen person I'd read about. If you had asked me then how my future self would act, how I would actually behave in the world, I would have said that of course I would behave ethically—but I would do so as a natural, almost unconscious result of all those other qualities. I would know what to do and I would do it, effortlessly.

It didn't work out that way. Today, in every role I inhabit—priest, father, partner, citizen—I find myself grasping for guidance. I don't always know what to do. I don't think anyone does.

I used to believe that in my moments of decision, there would be a right answer and a wrong one. I would instinctively know the right one. As it turns out, when it comes to ethics, Buddhism doesn't offer a lot of absolutes; if anything, it raises questions. For example, I've been working with the precept "Do not take what is not given freely" for most of my life—it's straightforward on paper, but the more deeply I consider it, the more I doubt that I'm following it. *At all*. It can be paralyzing. But as in all aspects of the path, in the practice of ethics we are called upon to see through the ambiguities and the what-ifs, to find some clarity, and from there to act, to take some actual step forward.

I assume this was no easier in the Buddha's time; real-life choices are never simple. But it's also fair to say that the world has grown more complicated, and with it, our understanding of our own impact. We are all global citizens. When I put gas in my car or buy a cup of coffee, it's not just a simple transaction—I'm forced to ask myself, how did these things come to me, and at what unseen cost? Involved in those simple, mundane moments are countless beings, some of whom benefit from my actions and others who suffer as a result of them. Even if I can't see the whole intricate web, as a human being in today's world, I know that it's there. What I do matters. I can't pretend that it doesn't.

In the face of that complexity, that overwhelming responsibility, what are we to do? How should we behave? The answer is almost never simple, but the fundamental principles—do no evil, do only good, do good for the sake of others—couldn't be simpler. Buddhism continues to offer an ethical path forward, one that seems able to adapt to each new time and culture while technically not changing at all. In the dialogue that follows, four teachers from different traditions explore the foundations of Buddhist ethics, its place in our practice, and the relevance it holds for us today. BD

Buddha, 2006

BUDDHADHARMA: Let's begin by establishing what we mean by Buddhist ethics. How is ethics defined in your tradition?

AJAHN AMARO: The Theravada term that describes the aspects of the eightfold path related to speech, action, and livelihood is *sila*; it encompasses the morality of conduct, the way we speak and relate to other beings. The teaching encourages us to understand that if one behaves in a manner based on kindness, wisdom, compassion, and honesty, that's likely to have a beneficial effect on yourself and others, whereas behaving in a selfish, aggressive, destructive, or deceitful manner is likely to have a negative effect. So it's a pragmatic, causal teaching with a clear structure.

I think it's important to note that the word "ethics" is not exactly the same as morality. Soldiers have ethics according to their military laws, bank robbers have their own ethics, so an ethic doesn't necessarily mean refraining from killing or stealing. I would use the word "morality" as a translation for *sila*, but I realize people tend to be a bit allergic to the terms "morality" and "morals." For convenience we may use the word "ethics" in this conversation, but just because something is an ethic doesn't mean it is in accordance with sila.

ANGEL KYODO WILLIAMS: Zen practice tends to center around the ten bodhisattva precepts, which include the original five. There are an additional six precepts when one takes lay or priest ordination; together, they're referred to as the sixteen bodhisattva precepts. They're not so much rules to obey as the embodiment of the spirit of not causing harm to others and doing good.

PEMA KHANDRO: In the Vajrayana, there are fourteen main vows that govern morality and ethics. The bodhisattva mind-set is emphasized throughout—for example, in the vow to never give up on loving other beings, which means not wishing ill on other individuals or groups. Another vow is to never forsake bodhicitta, the enlightened intention of altruism. The fourteen vows also emphasize particular attention to one's immediate social context. Where Mahayana Buddhism broadly emphasizes loving and caring for all sentient beings, the Vajrayana vows hone in on the personal sphere too, focusing on harmony with one's teacher and with other practitioners who have taken vows with one's teacher.

Because of Tibetan Buddhism's diverse history, which encompasses many varied and sometimes contrasting ethical systems, a respect for diverse religious views is also incorporated. One of the vows is not to disparage people whose Buddhist views are different from one's own. So I would say the three defining qualities of the Vajrayana vows are the bodhisattva mind-set of caring for and loving others, an acknowledgment of being in a world with diverse views, and a focus on the microcosm, what it is to really live in harmony with the people immediately around us.

NOAH LEVINE: For householders in the Theravada tradition, the core of living an ethical life is the five precepts: to refrain from taking life or any form of violence; not taking what is not offered; being careful with our sexual energy (refraining from sexual relationships that cause intentional harm); a commitment to honesty and speaking in a careful manner; and, in support of our commitment to wakefulness, refraining from any recreational drug and alcohol use that would impair our ability to be fully present and accountable to our speech and actions. In the simplest terms, ethics, as a baseline, means refraining from causing harm to ourselves or others.

Then there is a higher level of ethics, which is using our speech to create harmony, bring about inspiration, and support others. We can use our life's energy to create positive change as part of our ethical commitment to ending greed, hatred, and delusion in this world. For householders in the Theravada, it's also extremely important to look at our relationship to money—to be careful, wise, and generous in how we earn and what we do with the finances that we generate.

All of these ethical conversations come back to what kind of karma we are creating for ourselves in every moment.

BUDDHADHARMA: We often speak of Buddhist practice as an investigation of mind, but does that investigation naturally point toward ethical action or do we have to take up ethics as its own practice?

REV. ANGEL KYODO WILLIAMS is the founder of the Center for Transformative Change in Berkeley, California, and co-author of *Radical Dharma*.

AJAHN AMARO is abbot of Amaravati Monastery in England. He was ordained by Ajahn Chah in 1979 as a monk in the Thai Forest Tradition.

PEMA KHANDRO RINPOCHE is the founder and spiritual director of Ngakpa International and MahaSiddha Center in Berkeley, California.

NOAH LEVINE is the founder of Against the Stream Buddhist Meditation Society and the author of *Dharma Punx* and *Refuge Recovery*.

(LEFT—RIGHT): CHRISTINE ALICINO, BELINDA BLUEBELL, NGAKPA INTERNATIONAL, SAM DIEPHUIS

PEMA KHANDRO: In the Dzogchen, or Great Perfection, teachings of Tibetan Buddhism, reality itself is innately ethical, so it would be impossible to investigate mind or practice without encountering the intrinsic ethics that Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche called "the basic goodness of existence." While we often talk about developing ethics or creating an ethical sensibility, the idea here is that ethics is actually a self-existent matter of reality. The Tibetan word *tukje*, which means "the ruler of the mind," is translated as compassion. It's believed that tukje is built into the fabric of reality, and so to understand reality, we must attune with this innate responsiveness and compassion. It is important to realize that the ideas of developing an ethical sensibility versus ethics being inherent to the fabric of reality are not necessarily contradictory, because as we develop compassion and practice it more conscientiously, the practice puts us in touch with the basic kindness that is actually our true nature, our buddhanature.

AJAHN AMARO: In the Theravada teachings, it is said that one who is enlightened doesn't have to make any effort whatsoever to live a virtuous life. There's an interesting comment by the Buddha that an arahant is incapable of taking life and cannot deliberately tell a lie. When in touch with the goodness of the pure heart, the tongue can't form a lie and the hand can't reach to take something that doesn't belong. The Pali equivalent for *tukje* is *gunadhamma*, the quality of goodness itself. When we talk about sila or ethics, we often think in terms of rules that people are keeping or not keeping, but the internal aspect is this quality of gunadhamma, or what I tend to call the love of the good. So attunement with your heart, which loves goodness, which delights in honesty and in harmonious, respectful relations between others, manifests as wholesome behavior because it's our inner nature to do so. Prior to that point, keeping the precepts or adopting them in a formal way is supporting a principle that's trying to awaken.

When my teacher Ajahn Chah came to the West in the seventies, the classical mode for teaching the path in Thailand was that precepts come first; ethics is the foundation that helps support the concentration of samadhi, which leads to wisdom. People noticed when Ajahn Chah was teaching in Britain and the United States that he focused mostly on meditation and wisdom and hardly ever mentioned the ethical side. When asked about it, he said, "Well, I can tell people here don't want to hear about rules." This was before many of the scandals and crises that happened on the Buddhist spiritual front.

> The practice should lead to a connection with morality, but we see sometimes that it doesn't. It makes me wonder if people are paying attention in the correct way.
>
> —Noah Levine

He was very impressed by the commitment of Western students to meditation practice. At a ten-day retreat at Insight Meditation Society in Massachusetts, he said, "I couldn't get my monks to sit this still. My nuns and monks could never be this quiet for ten days." He saw that these students really wanted to practice and awaken, and he believed that as they recalled past behavior that was harmful, selfish, dishonest, or cruel, they would realize that having such acts weighing on their heart was obstructing their samadhi. And so they would come to the development of ethics through their own experience and motivation rather than being told Thou Shalt Nots by the authority. I think that learning-for-yourself principle is very much at the heart of Buddhist training.

NOAH LEVINE: Because human beings are wired for greed, hatred, and delusion, putting a limit on our behaviors through an ethical framework is essential. That said, rather than taking on ethics as a religious practice, Siddhartha Gautama paid extremely close attention to the cause of suffering. And through a deep personal investigation of these causes, he found renunciation—giving up clinging, selfishness, and any form of violence or dishonesty—to be the solution.

I do feel that mindfulness, if deeply investigated and applied, will lead to a deep commitment to kindness, equality, and altruism. At the same time, I'm aware of how many Buddhist practitioners,

It's not just a violation of ethics to engage in gossip and divisive speech. It's also a violation of right speech to remain silent on pressing issues.

—Pema Khandro Rinpoche

teachers included, aren't coming around to a truly ethical and wise view. How is it that people who have been meditating for decades are still holding sexist, racist, or nationalist views, participating in addiction or abuse, or holding unethical relationships to money or power? I always wonder what practice is actually happening there. Are some people using Buddhist philosophy and practice as an avoidance technique, or spiritual bypass, to rationalize the ways in which they're being unethical, rather than undoing the cause of suffering in their life and in the lives of others? I know I'm taking both sides here. I do feel that renunciation is 100 percent necessary and that the practice should lead to a connection with morality, but we see sometimes that it doesn't. It makes me wonder if people are paying attention in the correct way.

BUDDHADHARMA: Rev. angel, does what we do on the cushion naturally translate to ethical behavior?

ANGEL KYODO WILLIAMS: I don't necessarily think so. I think the lived experience of Western-convert Buddhists is quite different from that in Asian cultures, which historically developed alongside Buddhist ethics and thus formed more of a symbiotic relationship, or conflation of practice and ethics. One of the central questions that arises for many of us around mindfulness is having this practice in some respects peeled away from the examination of ethics, which should be married with the practice. But behaving in ways that are consistent with Buddhist ethics involves not just that practice and examination but also has a lot to do with our greater field of context. If that context supports behavior that is inconsistent with Buddhist ethics, or with what we think of as Buddhist ethics, it won't necessarily produce a set of ethical behaviors. It's going to produce behaviors that are consistent with, for example, white nationalism, if that's the cultural framework that a person's practice sits inside of.

PEMA KHANDRO: We do have to be attentive to our particular social context, and that may require additional instructions on the moral rules that we live by. At many points in history, Buddhist leaders responded to their context and created additional rules. For example, in the 1990s, Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok Rinpoche initiated a new set of ten vows to address the situation in Eastern Tibet at that time. In addition to the traditional vows, these new ten virtues, or *gechu*, included not selling livestock for slaughter, not wearing fur, and not fighting with weapons.

So some contemporary issues are not explicitly covered by the vows. The Western Buddhist conference in the nineties developed a statement about ethics for teachers. Western Buddhist teachers have a potential for similar leadership now, especially in terms of race, gender equality, and LGBTQ rights.

BUDDHADHARMA: Are ethical teachings being given enough attention in the West, or are we skipping over them for teachings that seem "higher" or more personally rewarding?

ANGEL KYODO WILLIAMS: In the West, we tend to extract the information we want from other cultures and bypass how we are taking up these practices. We take what suits us and place it in our own context without understanding what might be lacking. For example, in the Zen tradition in Asia, practices were developed within a context of physical work. Without that same embodied path of engagement, there is a bypassing of the body–memory aspect of behaviors and ways of being. Doing physical work, having to move your body in concert with mental practices, supports the human activity of moving through what we might call karmic impulses. We're just at the tip of the iceberg in terms of our own practice in the West, borrowing from other cultures with very lengthy histories. The practice of ethics has yet to find solid footing here.

The Three Politicians, 2008

Sexual misconduct and other instances of misogyny that have occurred were committed *exactly* by the same people who have taken precepts and are teachers. This has unfolded in the context of a much larger field of both current and historical patriarchy, and with racism and discrimination against people in all the ways that we're currently seeing playing out in our society in Technicolor; there's a sense of superiority and caste replaying itself. So it's not enough to look at the practice and the teachings on ethics without examining our larger context. Siddhartha, as part of the Kshatriya caste, would have had a context of ethics already in place.

NOAH LEVINE: I love what angel is saying. Just one response is that although we don't know exactly what Siddhartha's internal moral compass was, looking at that time in history, he was clearly conditioned by a deeply racist and sexist culture. He was raised with servants; he saw women as less than. His awakening led him to realize his own cultural conditioning and the equality of people of all backgrounds. Twenty-six hundred years later, we are still in a very confused culture. Does the practice awaken us to our own cultural conditioning?

PEMA KHANDRO: The underlying question seems to be "Why aren't Buddhists who do serious practice more ethical?" Why, for example, is there still misogyny and so forth? These questions are not unique to our time or culture; they have been wrestled with throughout Buddhist history. There is a constant need for ethical and social reform. A contributing factor is that converts to Buddhism are often unaware of context; students learning Buddhism won't necessarily recognize when they are inheriting cultural scripts such as polemical, fundamentalist, or sexist views that don't belong in the heart of dharma. Offering deeper education and training is key to preventing that.

BUDDHADHARMA: How do we address those blind spots?

ANGEL KYODO WILLIAMS: It's important to frame ethics inside of its context. I know I'm beating this drum, but it feels important. It's easy to extract something and have it inside of your bubble. I think many people, teachers in particular, would consider themselves practicing and even enforcing ethics by, for instance, silencing people of color or women who bring up things that "sound divisive." If your interpretation of ethics is inside of a context of cultural or positional power dominance that replicates the larger societal dynamic, as Western Buddhism does with so many white men in positions of power, then who challenges those roles and says that our ethics should be looking at that as well? This has always been a challenge for Buddhism, in all traditions. The voices of the people who hold power reflect the mainstream voice of the culture. In patriarchal societies, then, the people interpreting what the dharma is recreate the patriarchy inside of the Buddhist context and practice community.

We see this now. But here in the West, we have the unique reality of multiculturalism, even to the level of people coming out of different religious contexts and bringing those predispositions into their take on Buddhism. It's like a language now. "I'm talking Buddhist! So let's forget that I learned Jewish first." But the Jewish accent, so to speak, is coming through that. The Christian accent, Southern Baptist accent, is coming through that, and it's being shared when people are in positional authority. If I say something, there's a quicker willingness to parse out what I say as not entirely Buddhist but as my perspective as a woman of color, whereas if a white man says it, it's much less examined as a white male perspective on Buddhism—it's just Buddhism.

AJAHN AMARO: The Buddha speaks of a kind of generosity called *abhayadana*, or giving freedom from fear. As Rev. angel is saying, as a white male, there's a kind of blindness—the way you speak or how you embody something includes this unconscious privilege, this unconscious voice of authority or power, and without being aware of it, you're causing other people harm. I was doing this, as an example. My accent is very much that of an English boarding school-educated person; some people in my community confessed to me that they couldn't really hear me giving dharma teachings because my voice was the voice of the officer class, which means I'm "one of them." I was completely unconscious of it.

We're using the practice to illuminate the context from which we are speaking, the context that informs our own situation and that of the people we are talking with. If we can become more aware of the assumptions we're making, if we're attuned to a greater picture, then we're not just functioning within the limits of our own habitual perceptions. Then we can grant freedom from fear or stress so that people say, "Oh! This person understands me. They appreciate me. They can put aside their own conditioning and receive me." It's a kind of giving: we give space for others to be who they are.

PEMA KHANDRO: One way for Buddhist teachers to promote ethics is to create environments that welcome expressions of doubt and critical thinking about Buddhist thought. In Tibetan Buddhism's own context, intellectual inquiry was valued for a reason. It matures us.

In an interview I read with Rev. angel, she mentioned that she'd had a tendency to keep her head down in the Buddhist world. As a woman of color, that's something I learned to do in life as a matter of survival, and it's easy for me to bring that into my Buddhist role as well. Perhaps one way that we could promote a greater morality and ethics in our community is to encourage Buddhists not to keep their heads down, to emphasize that it's not just a violation of ethics to engage in gossip and divisive speech but that it's also a violation of right speech to remain silent on pressing issues.

BUDDHADHARMA: It seems that the conversation around ethics has become less and less popular. Here at *Buddhadharma*, we receive many submissions for articles about meditation practices but rarely any about Buddhist ethics. There doesn't seem to be a great deal of interest.

AJAHN AMARO: Yes, most people are drawn to

Buddhist teachings out of a longing for freedom, and there's a sense of ethics being seen as a limitation or a boundary. People think, "I don't want another boundary. I don't want something to define or limit me." I feel there's a misunderstanding of how this element of structure at the heart of the Buddha's teachings actually supports the urge toward freedom.

PEMA KHANDRO: I think there are several things we could emphasize to make ethics a compelling topic. One we've already been talking about, which is ethics as a vehicle for social reform. We've seen unprecedented change in the participation of women at all levels across Buddhist traditions, and there is much more we can do. Whether we have been participating in that dialogue or not, there is a call for all of us to question Buddhist teachings around gender roles. The practice of ethics does offer the freedom from fear that Ajahn discussed; that shows up in the Vajrayana vows as well. We are called to give four types of generosity: material generosity, the generosity of giving the dharma, the generosity of giving love, and giving fearlessness. There is a lot of anxiety and uncertainty in our culture, between the individual and a pluralistic society. It leaves so many people asking, "What code do I live by?" Ethical conversations can offer psychological comfort and clarity—they can give way to the confidence that arises from knowing what we stand for and why.

I also think an unappreciated part of ethics in Buddhism is the diversity of its history. Indian Buddhist tantra in the sixth to eighth centuries is incredibly transgressive, and we see Tibetans dealing with the inheritance of that, debating the question of whether we are innately ethical or if there need to be stronger social rules in place to restrain practitioners of Buddhist tantra. When we can see these diverse perspectives in Buddhist history, it creates the basis for us to work out our own questions and doubts and come up with our own critical perspectives.

BUDDHADHARMA: We find ourselves at an interesting moment in history, with a lot of Buddhists expressing enthusiasm for political involvement or social activism, many for the first time. We began this conversation talking about the precepts and the noble eightfold path. How do those ethical teachings serve as a support for someone who wants to engage with the world and effect change?

> It's not enough to look at the practice and teachings on ethics without examining our larger context, which includes patriarchy, racism, and discrimination. —Rev. angel Kyodo williams

AJAHN AMARO: If, in your actions, you are in tune with respect for all beings, if there's a quality of honesty and commitment to nonviolence, then what cause you take part in or what party you support or how you support it are secondary issues. The particular skillful means will arise from that. I spend a lot of time disabusing people of the notion that being peaceful means being passive. Oftentimes people misinterpret being kind or practicing right speech as meaning not saying anything or keeping your head down. That's not the case—you can shout right speech. You can make noise, you can act up based on dhamma.

BUDDHADHARMA: Rev. angel, what do you say to that person who is looking to Buddhist ethics as a guide for how to make a difference?

ANGEL KYODO WILLIAMS: I'm for engaging, but I'm also for a willingness on the Buddhist—and I like to say the *buddhish*—community's part to cut through this obsession with asking how we do things "the Buddhist way." Some teachings are not incisive enough to cut through all of the challenges that we face. There are other means by which to address our societal problems, including training in antiracism and anti-patriarchy. Understanding the history of

(Opposite) *Notre dame*, 2003 (detail)

There's a sense of ethics being a limitation or boundary. I think there's a misunderstanding of how ethics actually supports the urge toward freedom.

—Ajahn Amaro

the country and context we're in addresses those particularities.

I've probably spent more time than anyone threading the teachings to address these particulars, but I think keeping only to that avenue is an enormous limitation. It's a function of privilege to say we're just going to look at the Buddhist teachings for solutions, because that continues to serve the dominant power position. People are dying! People are under real, grave bodily threat. We can't look at these issues and select the teachings at our leisure that we hope will work to address them.

So I say yes, engage. And yes, there are teachings, trainings, and practices within Buddhism that penetrate neuroses and ignorance. But can we loosen the fixation on having everything come from a Buddhist perspective, especially when we're not necessarily equipped inside of that perspective to see where the propensities of our culture will keep us from learning what we need to learn? We need to learn from people of color when we are in the position of power around race; we need to learn from women around sexism; we need to learn from queer folks around sexuality. We need to do something that upsets the positionality that we have, and that's not always available to us in Buddhist teachings. If we're not willing to engage on these issues, we can actually perpetuate harm, as we've seen happen many times.

PEMA KHANDRO: Traditionally, karma would be at the center of a conversation about ethics. We should consider this idea of karma in terms of a sense of vigilance about our actions. Our actions have consequences; so too does our nonaction. Our nonaction is also difficult to undo.

In Dzogchen, compassion is actually a profound responsiveness rather than passive empathy, as we see embodied in the image of Green Tara, with her foot extended forward to step into action. This is an important conversation for us to have. What is compassion, really?

I also think we must consider the way that unethical behavior and bigoted views constrain our perception. It's not possible to see reality or see mind, to truly know our authentic nature, while maintaining those views. So it's important for us to see how crucial ethics is in terms of addressing our disturbed mind states and behaviors. Behavior is a very powerful way to change mind. It's difficult to just think our way into a better moral state.

We need to pay attention to what causes suffering. Ultimately, Buddhist ethics comes from a heightened awareness about what kinds of psychological states and interpersonal environments are created by our actions. It's not sufficient to think only of our own suffering. The Buddhist path connects us with other people. My suffering and your suffering are not different, even if we have different views. We feel it with the same intensity, and it demands a response; this is really what Buddhism is all about.

NOAH LEVINE: Being involved is incredibly important. I'm always looking to what the Buddha did with his life and his awakening. I see him as someone who was politically and socially active against racism, sexism, and war. For us now, the environmental situation that threatens our planet is also a huge issue. We can't wait until we're free from all forms of greed, hatred, and delusion to become active. Trying to be part of the solution means being of service and speaking out, sometimes passionately and maybe even in an unpopular way. This can be a challenging part of breaking out of the selfishness and self-centeredness of our practice. There have been many times when I've been unethical by keeping my mouth shut rather than speaking up. I'm well aware of the white male privilege that I have, and I really do want to speak up and support diverse voices. My question is, how can I use that privilege to be an ally and to create the positive change that we all want to see take place, not

➤ continued on page 83

PHOTO I REUTERS / **CARLOS BARRIA**

Students protest the election of Donald Trump at the National Mall in Washington, D.C., November 15, 2016

The Path of Solidarity

Doshin Nathan Woods considers what it means to stand arm in arm as part of our Buddhist practice.

There is a meme I often see these days, at times attributed to Suzuki Roshi or to Aitken Roshi, that runs something like this: "Renunciation is not getting rid of the things of the world but accepting that they pass away." This points to a view of renunciation whereby things are understood to be empty, without self-definition, and hence without hindrance. In its cultural expression, it speaks, perhaps in a more sentimental way, to the fact that things change.

While the English word "renunciation" conveys a sense of rejection—perhaps a rejection of the world in favor of a divine alternative—in Buddhism, renunciation derives from the Pali word *nekkhamma*, which involves a letting go of grasping or rejecting. Renunciation in this sense is about living in freedom in the world, rather than rejecting worldly things. The eleventh-century ancestor Atisha points us in the right direction, observing, "The greatest generosity is nonattachment"; here, renunciation means relinquishing self-concept and notions of permanence so that we may embody generosity.

How might we express such generosity in these times of uncertainty and change? For many of us, this question lies at the heart of our practice. As we move into a new political horizon defined by

the election of President Trump and the prospect of continued war, environmental degradation, and growing hostility toward migrants and political minorities, the question is increasingly poignant.

Fortunately, Buddhism offers resources to address the growing inequality and political uncertainty of the present moment. What may be particularly helpful now in guiding us forward can be found in a further expression of the Buddhist view of renunciation—that of solidarity.

Typically defined as a sentiment or expression of mutual support, solidarity can be equally understood as an act of collective or shared responsibility. Solidarity in this sense is expressed in the Buddhist notion of *karuna*, or "active sympathy," the conduct of "bearing the pain of others." Often translated as compassion—suffering with others—karuna is central to all of the Buddhist traditions and involves aspiration, training, and perfection of conduct. While prajna, the wisdom of clear seeing, is a defining feature of the bodhisattva path, it is the embodiment of karuna that defines enlightened activity. Karuna opens one to relationships of collective responsibility and to meaningful expressions of solidarity.

In December 2015, Dr. Larycia Hawkins announced on Facebook her intention to wear a hijab for Advent in an act of "embodied solidarity" with Muslim women. "Muslims and Christians," she explained at the time, "share the same god." Although grounded in important theological reasoning, it was the concern over the uptick of anti-Muslim sentiment that led her, as a Christian, to wear the hijab. For this, Hawkins, the first African American woman to earn tenure at Wheaton College, was terminated from her position as professor. An outburst of protest followed, along with a spate of critical reflections on how to demonstrate solidarity with the oppressed—in this case, Muslims in a predominantly Christian, and increasingly Islamophobic, society.

Hawkins' choice of activity is instructive: by wearing the hijab she transformed separation. In so doing, she embodied solidarity, actively sharing in human dignity under conditions of oppression.

The looming sense of political uncertainty and division that haunts our current moment is a symptom of rising global inequality. Everywhere we see increasing deprivation and estrangement, loneliness and isolation, oppression and the amplification of old injustices. It is in this context that we also see the emergence of protests—such as Occupy Wall Street, Black Lives Matters, Standing Rock—that are concerned with enacting visions of human dignity. From across the political spectrum, these movements have been criticized in terms of moral standing and political acumen, but here I'm interested in their visions of collective solidarity. Where, for example, Occupy sought to embody participatory democracy—redistributing authority—in the context of rampant economic and political inequality, Black Lives Matter has attempted to enact, in the present, an aspirational future where the wholeness of Black lives is both embraced and shared. More recently at Standing Rock, we have learned to heed the wisdom of "water is life" and to participate in coalitions directed through indigenous leadership.

Occupy, Black Lives Matter, Standing Rock—all have provided opportunities for us to renew our commitment to the common good and, by sharing how the welfare of the many is defined, to renounce inherited notions of hierarchy and privilege. They have invited us to learn from others and transform suffering through collaboration.

Recently, while attending a symposium on diversity and mindfulness aimed at helping POC and low-income communities access mindfulness-based

KRISTEN GORENFLO

DOSHIN NATHAN WOODS is a novice Zen priest at Sweetwater Zen Center. He holds a PhD in cultural anthropology and teaches at the University of the West in Rosemead, California.

education, I noticed a marked disconnect in the room. Those representing the community groups weren't particularly concerned about matters of inclusion but rather wanted to talk about dealing with police and getting support for health care and education. By contrast, those representing the mindfulness organizations focused on inclusion, framed often as delivery of service or making mindfulness leadership training less expensive. What was troubling wasn't the goals themselves but the way the two groups talked past each other from different assumptions.

During the more informal discussions, this disconnect was further characterized by questions of ally-ship—how might individuals working in mindfulness organizations better serve the community as white allies, for example, or as LGBTQIA allies? This led me to reflect on a concept derived from Liberation Theology—that of "accompaniment," defined as a long-term "being with" oppressed others through a commitment to equality and resource sharing, often across perceived interests. This pragmatic solidarity, walking with others in their struggle for survival, points to an ethical horizon where, to reference the Zen Peacemaker liturgy, we find opportunity not merely to help but "to see ourselves as Other and Other as ourselves." In order to move beyond sentiment and express solidarity with others as an embodied relationship, we need to go beyond being allies and explore how we might accompany others in this way.

Accompaniment as a form of solidarity involves siding with the poor, oppressed, and marginalized and accompanying them on their journey, giving what we can and being willing to receive what is given in return in the way of education, training, and conviviality. Buddhists may recognize this as the interrelationship of karuna and dana. In order to embody the universal compassion of the bodhisattva, we train in the perfection of generosity, where karuna, as an embodied capacity to suffer with others, manifests as giving. In the Pali literature, dana is presented as an individual expression of compassion for a shared good. It is a practical manifestation of communal solidarity.

The first step toward solidarity is to see through our conventional limitations and stand against injustice by listening to the voice of the other crying out.

Compassion in Buddhism is also talked about as *anukampa*, which is sometimes translated literally as a "crying out at the crying out of another." It is a movement of the heart—often described as a trembling—to act on the behalf of others. Seen in this light, dana defines giving not simply as a contractual exchange but as a spiritual practice where the proper enjoyment and utilization of wealth embodies selflessness and embraces human dignity. It also supports *caga*, or a generous attitude, loosening one's grip on possessions and self-benefit.

Solidarity as dana involves sharing our ideas, labor, and time, as well as monetary contributions and creative endeavors. Like accompaniment, it reaches across perceived differences to define new ways of belonging.

Giving, and relationships defined by giving, are central to our received Buddhist traditions and their oral literatures. In Zen meal chants, for example, we find a Mahayana expression characterized, as Shohaku Okumura describes, as a "continuous circle of offerings"; in the act of offering, the distinctions between giver, receiver, and gift fall away. Here, both Buddhist practice and the embodiment

Oceti Sakowin Camp in North Dakota, where thousands of people from across North America came to support Standing Rock and protest the Dakota Access Pipeline, November 29, 2016

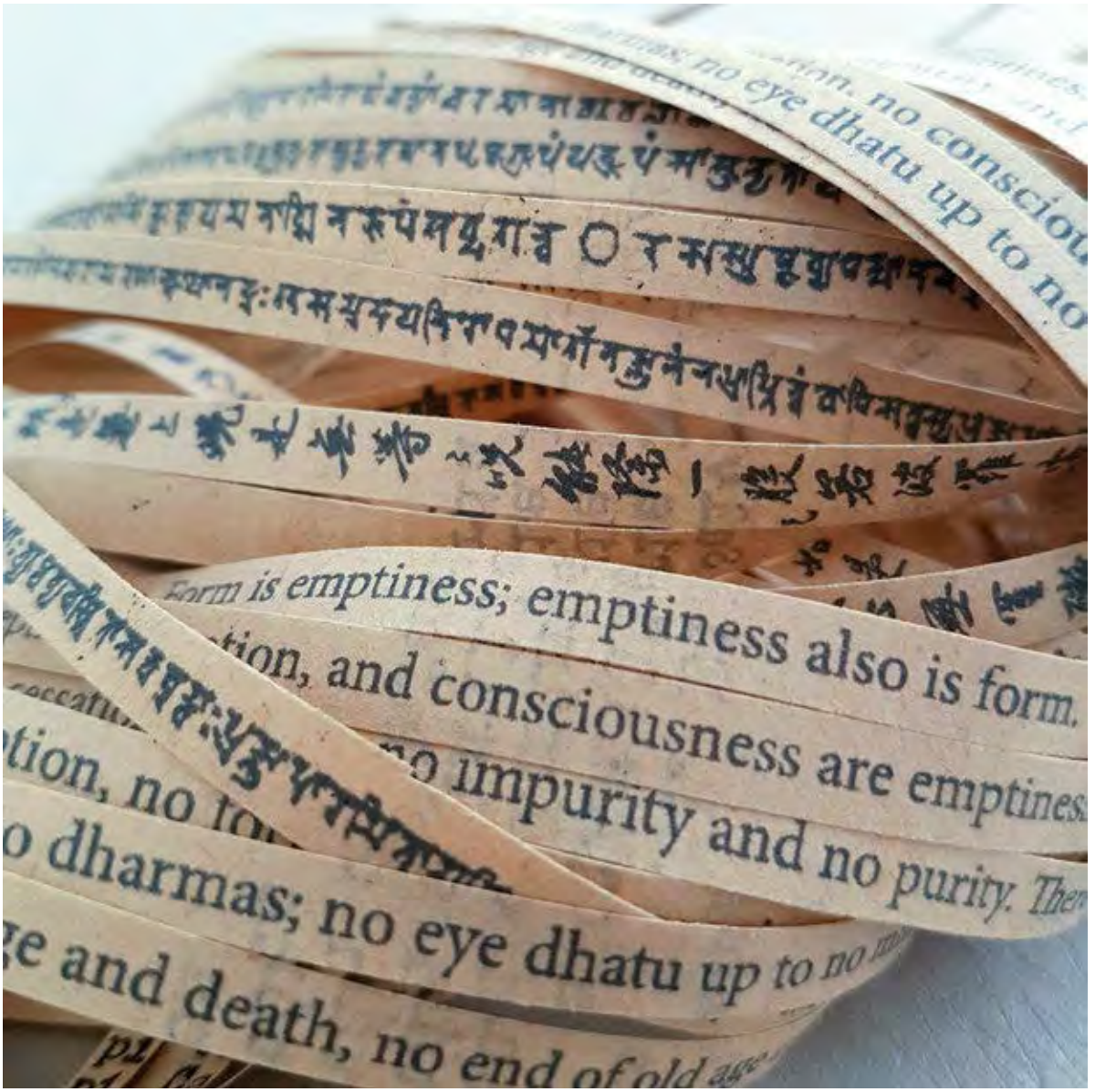
of the dharma in our everyday activity are concerned precisely with relationships and collective life shaped by the act of redistribution. Indeed, the *Large Sutra on Perfect Wisdom* extols: "Do give gifts! For poverty is a painful thing. One is unable, when poor, to accomplish one's own welfare, much less that of others!" Generosity not only makes the teachings relevant but also defines one's own spiritual well-being.

If the challenge of this moment is to embrace solidarity by learning new ways of belonging to one another—of suffering with each other—it is made manifest through our acts of sharing. Or, as Shantideva extols in the *Bodhisattvacharyavatara,* "Since I and other beings both, in wanting happiness, are equal and alike, what difference is there to distinguish us that I should strive to have my bliss alone?"

Today this question is often framed as a matter of justice, with many voices articulating visions for a more just and inclusive society. As Buddhists, we must respond both individually, as a matter of personal practice, and collectively. Together, we can explore ways of training sanghas to share power and resources and to embrace embodied solidarity.

In the months and years to come, we will have plenty of opportunity to participate in new movements of human dignity and redistribution as people step forward to describe their visions of solidarity in the face of injustice. The first step, of course, is to see through our conventional limitations and stand against injustice by listening to the voice of the other crying out. By letting go of who we imagine ourselves to be and cultivating a non-clinging heart, we can learn to accompany each other in an embodied way and live in community—and in dignity—with those with whom we suffer. BD

PHOTO | **JIM ROGERS**


Form is emptiness; emptiness also is form.
and consciousness are emptines
impurity and no purity. Ther
dharmas; no eye dhatu up to no
e and death, no end of old age

There Is No Author

When **Judy Roitman** learned her favorite dharma text was actually a patchwork of phrases and poems lifted from other sources, she started looking into the authorship of Buddhist texts. What she found surprised her.

TEXT WEAVINGS | **ELENA NUEZ**

A long time ago, I was sitting my first retreat at the Cambridge Zen Center, which was, in those early years, located in a small house in Allston, Massachusetts. The teacher was Zen Master Seung Sahn, early in his long career of spreading Korean Soen teaching throughout the world. In my first interview, he asked a question. I couldn't answer it. In my second interview, he asked the same question. I knew the answer he wanted, but it felt fake so I didn't give it. In the third interview, he asked the same question. I knew the answer he wanted, but I didn't give it, crying out, "That's your answer, not my answer!"

You'd think that, as a math professor (which I was at the time), I'd know better. Imagine a calculus student refusing to say that the derivative of sin(x) is cos(x) because "That's your answer, not my answer!" But, of course, Zen could not possibly be like calculus. Having read Hesse and Watts and Kerouac and Ginsberg, I was convinced that Zen was about extreme individualism, that Zen masters were extreme iconoclasts, that the inner journey was exactly that: inner, isolated, the lone heroine attaining a cosmic vision that would shatter her world and make it whole.

Now consider the following rather anti-iconoclastic statement that, in my youth, I would never have imagined to have anything to do with Zen: "Preaching of the dharma depends on the examination of the ancients. Words are the shoots of this mind, so how can you leave it up to your conjectures/judgment?"

This is not an anti-Zen statement by some stuffy anti-Zen cleric. It was written by the great sixteenth-century Korean master So Sahn Hyu Jong and is a self-referential commentary on the method of his manual of monastic training—still used today in Korean training temples—and known in this country under the titles *Mirror of Zen* (translated by the American monk Hyon Gak) and *Handbook of Zen Practice* (translated by John Jorgensen).

Mirror of Zen has been a spiritual lodestar for me. Ever since it appeared in 2006 I have taken it with me on long solo retreats, a reliable companion along with Chinul and Nagarjuna to shake me out of whatever self-absorbed delusion I'd fallen into. It's a slim book; I've easily read it over twenty times. But away from retreats, the semi-scholar in me was frustrated. *Mirror of Zen* is organized into very short chapters (many less than a page), each one supposedly beginning with a quote, followed by a usually brief commentary by So Sahn and sometimes even a short poem by him. But the quotes aren't identified. I was told that nobody knew where they came from. Then, in 2015, John Jorgensen's *Handbook of* Zen version came out, and it turned out that nearly every phrase and every sentence—even the poems—came from somewhere else. The entire book was a collage. In some places, even the sentences were a composite of phrases

ELENA NUEZ | BICOCACOLORS.COM

The tradition does not exactly change with time. Rather, it continually reinvents itself from earlier sources.

lifted from one source or another, glued together, and arranged. In other places, entire poems were simply slipped into the text.

It gets worse. It turns out that this is in fact a basic technique for writing Buddhist texts, even the most influential and beloved—such as, for example, the *Heart Sutra*, which Jan Nattier describes as a "mash-up," going on to say that this is, in fact, standard Buddhist practice. Does this invalidate such texts?

The sutras—reportedly 84,000 of them, but who's counting?—are, according to tradition, mostly a record of dialogues among Shakyamuni Buddha, his disciples, and other buddhas and bodhisattvas, unerringly remembered by his disciple Ananda, who dictated them to the assembly after the Buddha's death. Their traditional claim to authority rests on their claim to this historical circumstance. The *Heart Sutra* is supposed to be a record of words actually spoken in the presence of the Buddha by the bodhisattva Avalokitesvara to the Buddha's disciple Shariputra. That's the story we're told. It is not supposed to be cobbled together from scattered phrases centuries later. The compelling evidence that the *Heart Sutra* was compiled by a Chinese monk who aggregated key lines and phrases from existing Chinese texts that may or may not have been translations of Sanskrit texts, and that the Sanskrit version of the *Heart Sutra* was in fact a back translation from Chinese, calls the sutra's authenticity into doubt. Or does it?

The historical evidence indicates that, rather than being transcriptions of any buddha's or bodhisattva's words as dictated by Ananda, the sutras were written down centuries after the Buddha's death in either Sanskrit or Pali, neither of which is a language the Buddha spoke. But the people who put them together didn't make it all up. They did it, as So Sahn (or, perhaps, his sources) puts it, by "the examination of the ancients."

Why does this validate, rather than invalidate, the text? "Words are the shoots"; they die unless they are rooted. The texts are meant to embody a community's truths. They are not supposed to emanate from an individual mind. They would have no validity otherwise. To paraphrase So Sahn, you cannot depend on your conjectures or judgments (and not, let me add, your feelings and opinions either).

The tradition does not exactly change with time. Rather, it continually reinvents itself from earlier sources, like a really good sourdough starter passed down from generation to generation and added to over decades, the additions indistinguishable from their predecessors. Sources give rise to sources that cannot be pulled apart. It's not that this leads to that. This and that are not different. They echo, but it is simultaneous echo. You cannot really say first or second. To pull something like this off, you have to completely absorb the tradition you are in. It is not a matter of authorship. It is a matter of embodiment.

In 1967, the French literary critic Roland Barthes penned an influential essay called "The Death of the Author" in which he wrote, "The text is a tissue of quotations drawn from the innumerable centres of culture…the writer can only imitate a gesture that is always anterior, never original. His only power is to mix writings, to counter the ones with the others, in such a way as never to rest on any one of them." Although some of Barthes' writings were influenced by his readings of Buddhism, here the influence seems to be avant-garde writers such as Samuel Beckett and Alain Robbe-Grillet, working in a tradition that tried to erase the individual author. In search of this erasure, the most avant of the avant-garde used techniques such as collage, randomness, pastiche, and, decades after Barthes wrote, internet searches, iterative machine translations—and yes, in the mid-twentieth century, some of this was justified

TRACY RASMUSSEN

JUDY ROITMAN (Zen Master Bon Hae) is a guiding teacher in the Kwan Um School of Zen and a poet. She lives in Lawrence, Kansas.

on Buddhist principles, as in the case of John Cage. These techniques serve to ground the text in something much larger than the individual.

However, Barthes goes much further than writers using such techniques as creative tools. He is speaking of anything anyone has ever written, from memoir to cookbook to, yes, Buddhist sutras. He is saying that you don't have to *try* to erase control or erase the self; according to him, nothing an individual writes is in fact written by an individual. There is no author. Everything we write, everything we say, is drawn from innumerable sources. We don't own any of it. We only arrange it.

In many cultures, this is not exactly news. Consider traditional haiku, one constraint of which is seasonal words prescribed by tradition, listed in *saijiki* texts. There are thousands of these words, and they have to be used in particular ways. You'd better not use a spring word in your summer poem. The haiku masters didn't sit around scratching their heads looking at unfamiliar tables of words as they tried to figure out what to do next; they absorbed

the system completely so that what they wrote was as natural as adjusting your pillow while you sleep (to find this pillow, look in the thirteenth-century koan collection *The Book of Equanimity*).

And then there is the dharma combat ceremony used in Japanese Soto Zen temples to confirm a priest is past the novice rank. In the West, the ceremony is spontaneous dharma combat used to verify a priest's understanding. However, the Japanese Soto ceremony is completely scripted, using lines from ancient Chinese poetry. As the scholar William Bodiford says, "When Zen priests perform these words, they live the reality depicted in the Chinese poetry they study."

We don't have to go to Asia for examples. The classical Jewish prayer book is largely a repetitive pastiche of biblical quotations. For a contemporary and highly secular example, consider hip-hop. Here is Hilton Als describing Kanye West's "No More Parties in LA": "Featuring Kendrick Lamar, [it] samples work by Walter (Junie) Morrison, of the seventies funk band Ohio Players, as well as Ghostface Killah's 2000 track 'Mighty Health.' The intro is courtesy of Johnny (Guitar) Watson's 1977 tune 'Give Me My Love' and the bridge comes from Larry Graham's 1980 song 'Stand Up and Shout About Love.'" This reads like Jorgensen's footnotes to So Sahn.

We are embedded. Whether we recognize it or not, our practice is always embedded in something. For many—perhaps most—people reading this, your practice is embedded, or at least sourced, in some so-to-speak traditional tradition that came from Asia to the West within the last seventy years or so. American culture encourages us not to take that kind of tradition too seriously, to look instead for that inner voice, that inner self, to be ourselves at all costs. But, as all Buddhist teachers like to ask: *Who is this?* Nobody works in isolation. Even the forest hermit—perhaps especially the forest hermit—has a context much larger than her own life. To believe there is an inner voice, an inner self—this delusion is the curse of the author, an author far more invasive than the author Barthes is talking about, the author who writes not words on a page but the book of self. This inner voice continually telling us who and what and why we are, where we come from, where we are going, and what we should do about it, this author of our self-concept—guess what? There's no *there* there.

The notion of self as collage, as particles temporarily glued together and coming apart, is basic to Buddhism—this is what the five skandhas are about. The notion of innumerable beings reflecting and being reflected by each other—this is Indra's net. The notion of the very nature of being as mixed, fluid, without boundaries, not resting on any one thing—this is codependent origination. In the *Diamond Sutra*, the Buddha says, "However many beings there are… I shall liberate them all. And though I thus liberate countless beings, not a single being is liberated. And why not? … No one can be called a bodhisattva who creates the perception of a self, or who creates the perception of a being, a life, or a soul" (translation by Red Pine).

Easy to say. Hard to do. A friend of mine has a condition that might cause him to go blind. "If I go blind, I will kill myself," he says, with passion and great sincerity. When things go well, we think we are immune. When things go badly, we hit the limits of our self-concept and are overcome. Somebody says something and suddenly it is as if our head is in a vise, being squeezed from different directions at once. We cannot see what is in front of us. All we can see is our fear, our anger, our delusion. We think this is the normal human condition. We think there is an author. We think this author is us. And we believe everything the author writes.

The texts are meant to embody a community's truth. They are not supposed to emanate from an individual mind.

A long time ago, I was on a solo retreat when I suddenly felt possessed by a demon. The demon was inside me, looking out through my eyes. There was nothing flashy, no sensory hallucination, just a sudden realization: there is a demon inside me who has taken over and is looking out through my eyes. I was terrified. I promised myself that if I woke up the next morning with this demon inside me, I would check myself into a mental hospital. I kept up my practice—what else could I do? And then, suddenly, while doing walking meditation on my little porch, my view changing as I moved past one tree and then another, I realized: nobody looks out through my eyes. The world comes in through them. The demon vanished.

Ding dong, the witch is dead. Ding dong, the author is dead. Ding dong, there never was an author in the first place. And so in my fourth interview on my first retreat, I suddenly realized: this teacher is trying to teach me something. I should try to learn it. I gave the answer I knew he wanted, without worrying about whose answer it was. I stopped, if only for a moment, trying to write my own life. BD

Dudjom Lingpa (1835–1904)

SOURCE UNKNOWN

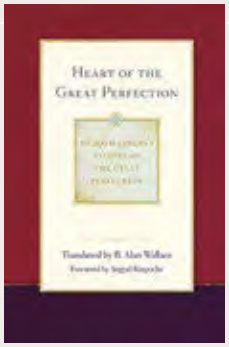
Dzogchen Explained

Review by Roger Jackson

The first Tibetan Buddhist retreat I attended, right out of college, was an intensive weekend at Tarthang Tulku's Nyingma Institute in Berkeley in the fall of 1972. The retreat concluded on a most auspicious note, with the arrival of none other than Dudjom Rinpoche, the head of the Nyingma lineage. As a friend visiting from upstate exclaimed afterward, "My first day in the Bay Area, and I get to meet the holiest man in the world!"

Dudjom Rinpoche (1904–87) was a towering figure in twentieth-century Tibetan Buddhism whose many activities included helping the Tibetan exile community through the transition to diaspora and writing his authoritative history of the Nyingma school. He himself was the "mind emanation"—an incarnation or tulku—of Dudjom Lingpa (1835–1904), an extraordinary lama from Tibet's northeastern nomad lands. Subject to visions of divine beings (especially

ROGER JACKSON is professor emeritus of Asian studies and religion at Carleton College and editor of *The Crystal Mirror of Philosophical Systems*.



HEART OF THE GREAT PERFECTION: Dudjom Lingpa's Visions of the Great Perfection, Vol. 1
by B. Alan Wallace
Wisdom Publications, 2016
344 pages; $19.95

Padmasambhava and Yeshe Tsogyel) from the age of three, Dudjom Lingpa became a charismatic teacher, treasure revealer (tertön), and celebrated author who was eventually recognized as an emanation of, among others, the Buddha's disciple Shariputra, the great adept Saraha, and Khyeuchung Lotsawa, one of Padmasambhava's twenty-five key pupils. He never became a monk and spent much of his life as a peripatetic yogi, traveling throughout Tibet and, it's reputed, beyond, to various buddha realms and pure lands. At the end of his life, he is said to have passed into the distinctively tantric "rainbow body" by which an enlightened being may exit the world. His many sons and disciples shaped early twentieth-century Nyingma. And his voluminous writings—including a famous autobiography (*A Clear Mirror*), various treasure texts in the so-called "New Terma" tradition, inspiring spiritual songs, and lucid meditation manuals—are as influential today as when they were composed.

Dudjom Lingpa's importance, even in the twenty-first century, is due in part to the eloquence and effectiveness of Dudjom Rinpoche, who explicitly preserved and extended his predecessor's work. It is also due in part to recent efforts by the revered Nyingma master Gyatrul Rinpoche and the accomplished American translator, writer, and teacher Alan Wallace to bring his teachings to a wider audience. Their collaboration has now culminated in the publication of *Heart of the Great Perfection,* Wallace's superb collection of English translations of Dudjom Lingpa's "Pure Vision" writings on Dzogchen, the central theory and practice of Nyingma. Unlike termas, which are long-hidden texts found in physical locales or the tertön's mind, Pure Vision texts are directly received by a master while in a visionary ecstasy or dream.

When issued in its entirety, *Heart of the Great Perfection* will comprise three volumes totaling almost a thousand pages, which any serious student of Dzogchen will want to own. Volume one, under review here, contains the seminal *Sharp Vajra of Conscious Awareness Tantra*; a commentary on it

entitled the *Essence of Clear Meaning* by Dudjom Lingpa's disciple Pema Tashi; a text exploring the same terrain from a different angle called *The Enlightened View of Samantabhadra*; and a fascinating work full of visionary reports and meditation advice entitled *The Foolish Dharma of an Idiot Clothed in Mud and Feathers*. Volume two will focus on Dudjom Lingpa's *Buddhahood Without Meditation* and two related texts by Sera Khandro, perhaps the most accomplished female lama of the twentieth century and consort of Dudjom Lingpa's son, Drime Özer. Volume three will be devoted to a translation of the *Vajra Essence,* a fully expanded version of the teachings first broached in the *Sharp Vajra*.

The set of practices around which every text in volume one pivots (except *The Foolish Dharma*) is an eight-step process, revealed to Dudjom Lingpa by the primordial buddha Samantabhadra. It takes the practitioner from devotion to a spiritual master, through calm abiding (shamatha) and insight (vipashyana) meditation, to such mystical practices as "cutting through" (*trekchö*) and "direct crossing over" (*tögel*), all the way to buddhahood and the rainbow body. The key to ascending through the eight phases is to appreciate and settle into the Dzogchen perspective on reality, according to which the fundamental nature of ourselves—and the cosmos—is our inner pristine awareness (*rikpa*), also described by terms such as buddha-nature, the dharma-body of a buddha, or pure, absolute space.

Because pristine awareness is what we are and always have been, the spectacle of deluded selves spinning endlessly through samsara is in certain ways quite misleading, since at the deepest level we always have been buddhas. Our hopes and fears, our joys and sufferings, and the world in which they play out are all simply emanations of this pristine awareness; they dazzle and deceive us so we do not see their true source and substance. Thus, the eight-phased path is simply a process of rediscovering an innate enlightenment that has never been lost. With its panoply of complex and sometimes unconventional tantric practices, it imaginatively explores the relationship of emptiness, mind, and things and plumbs the depths of contemplative experience. In doing so, it reclaims a purity from which we have never strayed and uncovers our own primordial great perfection—a perfection that will, in T.S. Eliot's words, "fructify in the lives of others."

In Wallace's view, Dudjom Lingpa's Pure Vision teachings can be boiled down to four essential practices: shamatha, vipashyana, cutting through,

and direct crossing over. "Accomplishing these four practices alone," he notes, "is in principle sufficient to achieve any one of the three levels of rainbow body that signify the culmination of the path of the Great Perfection." And because the teachings "transcend all limitations of specific historical eras and cultures," it may well be, Wallace writes, that prophecies Dudjom Lingpa received in China to the effect that his teaching would flourish among "westerners" referred not just to Tibetans but also to "those of us living today in the cities of the West."

These comments prompt some reflections on the increasing popularity of Dzogchen in the Euro-American world. Despite my own early exposure to Nyingma teachings in Berkeley, I have studied mainly with Gelukpa masters and typically frequented Gelukpa centers. It has been intriguing over the years to see many of my Gelukpa friends drawn to Nyingma, in some cases defecting completely, in other cases combining the two traditions. Alan Wallace himself is an example of this: he began serious Buddhist practice as a Geluk monk in India and Switzerland, but in time he began to study with Nyingma masters such as Gyatrul Rinpoche, and for at least two decades he has focused much of his writing and teaching on the Great Perfection. What is the appeal of Dzogchen, whether for an experienced practitioner like Wallace or a newcomer to Tibetan Buddhism? Of many possible explanations, three stand out.

It is optimistic. Dzogchen asserts, with other Mahayana traditions, not only that we all have within us the capacity to become fully enlightened buddhas but also that in some sense we already are buddhas, in that pristine awareness is the fundamental nature of ourselves and the world simply waiting to be rediscovered. This sort of "gospel of buddhanature," running counter to the "tragic sense of life" influential in traditional European culture, is more appealing to many Western seekers, accustomed as they are to the psychological lingo of self-improvement, than are accounts of Buddhism that dwell on our delusion and the sufferings they incite and emphasize that attaining enlightenment is a process requiring years, and perhaps lifetimes, of effort.

It is experiential. From the start, Buddhists have debated the relative importance of scholarship and meditation on the path to awakening. Dzogchen teachers and texts clearly place a premium on meditative experience, exploring it with great sensitivity and sophistication while tending to downplay the philosophical gymnastics emphasized by other schools, especially the Geluk. The Dzogchen approach is appealing because most Westerners are drawn to Buddhism by its contemplative traditions, with their

focus on inner experience. That may at best be transformative and at the very least provide structure and meaning for our complex, modern lives.

It is direct. Although nested within the rich, complex, tantric ethos of Tibetan Buddhism, Dzogchen discourse (especially that of cutting through) is marked by what Bernard Faure calls a "rhetoric of immediacy," which asserts that ultimate reality—our pristine awareness—is directly and easily accessible to us because it is what we are, beyond all our anxious striving and intellectual chatter. As with presentations of Vipassana, Zen, and Mahamudra, this rhetoric is appealing in the West because it seems to promise a way to happiness—or more—that does not require excessive ritual or the adoption of "alien" ideas and practices. We are invited simply to know our own mind, as it really is.

The appeal of the Great Perfection to Westerners is thus understandable. As anyone who studies Dzogchen learns quickly, however, it's not nearly so simple. We may already be buddhas, but the delusions that keep us from fully recognizing our true nature are deeply rooted and still require concerted effort to eliminate. Meditative experience may be front and center in Dzogchen, but Nyingma has a long and distinguished history of philosophical inquiry, and its masters and texts warn us constantly against the deceptions that may arise in meditation. They caution us, too, that meditation itself should not be an object of attachment. Our pristine awareness may in principle be immediately accessible because "it is what we are," but its simplicity is deceptive, and we are in fact far likelier to uncover it if we adopt attitudes and actions *not* natural to most Westerners, including guru devotion, the generation of imaginal worlds and beings, and (as in direct crossing over) spontaneous and unconventional yogic behavior of a sort not generally countenanced in "the cities of the West."

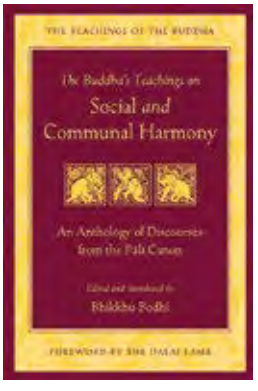
His commitment to spreading the tradition notwithstanding, Wallace clearly recognizes all this, and it is to his credit that *Heart of the Great Perfection* gives us not just a stripped-down Dzogchen aimed solely at Westerners looking for an easy path but also a fully rounded version of the Great Perfection practiced by Tibetan masters, with its rich metaphors, gnostic metaphysics, vertiginous paradoxes, complex meditation instructions, and, yes, challenging cultural idiosyncrasies. How Dudjom Lingpa's Pure Vision teachings will settle in the lives and imaginations of Western practitioners remains to be seen, but we are indebted to Wallace, and to those who inspired and assisted him, for providing us with such a rich and vital resource for coming to terms with the profundities and puzzles of the Great Perfection. BD

BOOK BRIEFS

by Rory Lindsay

One of the oldest examples of Buddhist writing is the *Book of Eights*, or *Atthakavagga*, a short collection of poems preserved in the Pali Canon. In **The Buddha Before Buddhism: Wisdom from the Early Teachings** (Shambhala 2016), Gil Fronsdal explores this ancient anthology, arguing that it is remarkable in that it presents "the Buddha's teachings pared down to their most essential elements, free of the more complex doctrines often associated with Buddhism." In it we find no numbered lists or complicated doctrines. There is no mention of the four noble truths, the eightfold path, the four foundations of mindfulness, or the five aggregates. The text even denies the role of ultimate truth in finding peace. Instead, it simply offers insight into human life that still resonates today.

Scholar-monk Bhikkhu Bodhi's **The Buddha's Teachings on Social and Communal Harmony** (Wisdom 2016) couldn't be more timely. This collection of short introductory essays and selections from the Pali Canon presents some of the earliest Buddhist discussions of friendship, community, conflict resolution, and the creation and protection of a just and equitable society. While many of the passages teach cooperation and the peaceful resolution of disagreement, the Buddha reminds us that in some cases a particularly toxic figure must be removed: "Though he is devious, a speaker of lies, you should know him as he truly is; then you should all meet in harmony and firmly drive him away." He also warns about the wider risks of having an unprincipled leader: "When kings are unrighteous, the royal vassals become unrighteous. When the royal vassals are unrighteous, brahmins and householders become unrighteous. When brahmins and householders are unrighteous, the people of the towns and countryside become unrighteous. When the people of the towns and countryside are unrighteous, the sun and moon proceed off course." This book is essential reading for the socially engaged individual, Buddhist or otherwise.



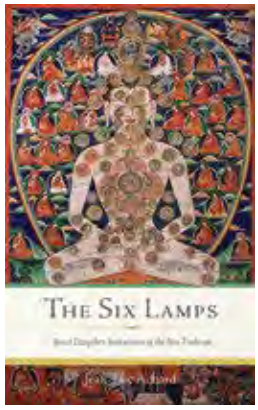
For Nirvana: 108 Zen Sijo Poems (Columbia 2016) contains the remarkable poetry of the Korean Zen lineage holder Cho Oh-Hyun (b. 1932), a monk and award-winning writer who has been in retreat since age seven. Translated by scholar Heinz Insu Fenkl, these poems are everything that great Zen writing is known for—perplexing, bizarre, moving, provocative—and also frequently morbid, as in the case of "At the Razor's Edge," which declares multiple deaths and the loss of fingernails, toenails, and eyebrows as prerequisites for monastic life. Rich in possible meaning, this book is an ideal source of inspiration for Zen practitioners and lovers of great poetry alike.

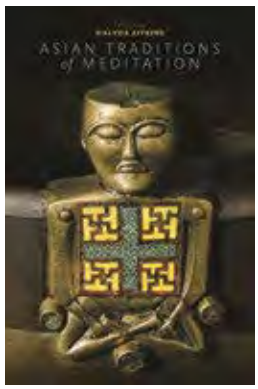
Jetsun Milarepa, 2008
by Otgonbayar Ershuu

Milarepa is one of the most revered figures in Tibetan history, and his story has inspired seekers all over the world. **Milarepa: Lessons from the Life and Songs of Tibet's Great Yogi** (Shambhala 2017), edited by Judith Lief, presents Chögyam Trungpa's seminars on Milarepa's life and songs of realization. Conducted in the U.S. between 1970 and 1976, these lectures cover a range of topics, including the teacher-student relationship, materialism, and Mahamudra nonmeditation, revealing again Trungpa's extraordinary gifts as a teacher and making Milarepa's example immediately relevant to our life and practice.

Jean-Luc Achard's **The Six Lamps: Secret Dzogchen Instructions of the Bön Tradition** (Wisdom 2017) guides us into the world of Dzogchen according to Tibet's Bön religion, offering translations of essential texts, including *Instructions on the Six Lamps*, a central work of the inner cycle of Bön Dzogchen teachings. With poetic beauty, *Instructions on the Six Lamps* points to our natural state and the meditative contemplation of its dynamic manifestations, urging us to find awakening through the recognition of our mind's essence as the union of emptiness and clarity. A major contribution to the study and practice of Dzogchen, this book offers a glimpse of Bön's highest teachings.

Prominent women Soto Zen priests come together to offer commentary on one of the Buddha's first teachings in **The Eightfold Path** (Temple Ground 2016), edited by Jikyo Cheryl Wolfer. Each chapter is written by a different Soto Zen author, covering the eightfold path sequentially in its entirety. One of the strengths of this volume is the tremendous skill with which these teachers draw from Soto tradition in confronting the challenges facing contemporary practitioners. Teijo Munnich's chapter on right effort, for example, stays close to the writings of Dogen when insisting that just getting yourself to the meditation cushion is right effort and that doing so helps us step into life rather than out of it. Consistently illuminating, this book is a testament to the brilliant women leading Soto Zen communities today.





Asian Traditions of Meditation (Hawai'i 2016), edited by Halvor Eifring, examines some of the myriad meditative practices that have developed across Asia, highlighting the major parallels—and the major differences—between Buddhist, Hindu, Jain, Sikh, Daoist, and Confucian forms of meditation. Reading the chapters on Hindu meditative traditions in this book, a Buddhist practitioner may be struck by just how "Buddhist" so much of it seems, which of course is due to the shared origins of Hinduism and Buddhism. Yet not all commonalities between Asian meditative traditions are the result of historical connection, as in the case of Classical Taoist forms of meditation, which appear to have emerged independently of Indian traditions yet still share much with Buddhist meditation in their focus on posture, breathing, and tranquility. BD

➤ *The Heart of This Moment*
continued from page 40

we do not always have to feel compassionate in order to respond with compassion. Liking or loving something is not a prerequisite to befriending all things and to having kindness be the abiding place we commit to. Just as our minds have an impact uponour actions, so too do our actions have an impact on the shape of our mind and heart.

A student recounted how she committed herself for a year to have her speech rooted in metta, to use words of kindness and gentleness rooted in empathy and respect. She said there were many moments she was tempted to fall into harsh speech, condemning or judging or just engaging in social gossip. She said each morning she renewed the commitment. It did not mean that the aversive, harsh thoughts didn't arise, but in their arising they were met with mindfulness and kindness and rarely made their way into her speech. She said it was a practice that changed her life. She found that people trusted her, turned to her in their most difficult moments without the fear of being judged, that her friendships deepened and her difficult relationships began to ease.

We set our feet and our lives upon a path that draws on the enduring and transforming aspirations and intentions that have the power to heal and liberate our hearts and our world. In every moment of our lives, whether silent or speaking, still or moving, we are always practicing and enacting something. It may be habitual and unconscious; it may be responsive and intentional. This path of awakening invites us to know this, and awareness teaches us that in every moment there is a choice about where we make our home. Where we make our home—whether in the world of fear and aversion or the home of kindness, mindfulness, and befriending—will inevitably shape our thoughts, words, and acts, and how we perceive the world.

In her poem "Kindness," Naomi Shihab Nye writes that it is only in seeing the size of the cloth of sorrow that we come to understand that it is only kindness that makes sense anymore. Hand in hand, mindfulness and metta ask us to open our eyes and hearts to the sorrow of our world, to be touched by the struggle, fear, and violence that damage and scar the lives of so many. We are asked to truly sense the helplessness of those trapped in poverty, neglect, and deprivation, to open our eyes and hearts to the threads of despair, loneliness, and pain that leave too many people in our world forgotten and invisible. Then it is true that only kindness—to commit ourselves to kindness in our thoughts, words, and acts and to be a conscious participant in healing the world we are part of—makes sense anymore. Metta brings us out of the shell of self-absorption, allowing us to be touched by the world and to touch the world with kindness. With friendliness and kindness, we take our place in the family of all beings. BD

➤ *Buddhist Ethics in the 21st Century* continued from page 58

only in this culture but on the planet? Engagement is key and is part of our ethics, part of our awakening.

AJAHN AMARO: To make a difference, I feel we have to be an example ourselves. If I want people to listen to me, I need to listen to them too. Often, especially when we feel strongly about an issue, we can find ourselves talking at each other rather than with each other. Sometimes we need to set the example by being prepared to genuinely listen; then the other is likely to be more inclined to hear us too.

This applies not just to speech but to other aspects of ethical standards too: from the classical Buddhist perspective, it's equally true with respect to nonviolence, respect for ownership of property, sexual behavior, and the nonuse of alcohol and drugs that lead to destructive effects. Naturally, as this conversation has highlighted, this principle of invoking change by embodiment—if you can call it that—should involve embodying skillful behaviors with respect to race, gender roles, sexual identity, and other areas of societal disparity.

ANGEL KYODO WILLIAMS: There is a strong orientation toward personal practice in our society, which unintentionally serves to disengage us from the ethical consideration of how our personal experience plays out on a collective level. There's a necessity to include, perhaps for the first time in an explicit way, the collective as part of our understanding of practice, and to recognize the danger of solely focusing on one's individual experience in our hyper-individualist society. The view that is often held about individual anger does not necessarily translate collectively. Our loop of neuroses can be amplified by staying in containers that do not look to the collective, that do not choose to actively learn and engage the so-called "other" because we've become self-reinforcing. That's something we've seen play out in certain American Buddhist communities. As a young man said at one Buddhist conference, "We create country clubs" rather than places of practice meant to challenge us toward liberation and awakening. If we are recreating environments in which the thinking is the same and we're unchallenged, particularly at the level of the teachers, then we are reinforcing our neuroses and congratulating ourselves for it while waving our flag of wisdom and compassion.

I think being unchallenged by the greater collective experience is part of why we have the current political situation in the U.S. today. Too many of us who are good people let a bad thing happen because we stayed in our bubbles. We didn't show up to say that we're going to think not only about who we are as good people but also about what happens collectively, the impact. We have to show up for people—it's not enough for us to just behave ourselves. BD

BUDDHIST DIRECTORY

A DIRECTORY OF MEDITATION, RETREAT, AND YOGA CENTERS

CALIFORNIA

AGAINST THE STREAM BUDDHIST MEDITATION SOCIETY
4300 Melrose Ave, Los Angeles, CA 90029. (323) 665-4300, Fax: (323) 665-4404, service@againstthestream.org, www.againstthestream.org • Founded by Noah Levine, author of Dharma Punx, Against The Stream has two centers in Los Angeles and Santa Monica offering weekly classes, daylong retreats, and special class series.

AGAINST THE STREAM BUDDHIST MEDITATION SOCIETY
2701 Folsom St, San Francisco, CA 94110. bayarea@againstthestream.org, www.againstthestream.org • Meditation center in the Mission offers weekly classes, daylongs, class series and residential retreats.

CHAGDUD GONPA RIGDZIN LING
PO Box 279, Junction City, CA 96048. (530) 623-2714, FAX: (530) 623-6709, sangha@chagdudgonpa.org, www.chagdudgonpa.org • Nyingma Buddhist center in serene Northern California Alps. Founded by Chagdud Tulku Rinpoche. Daily meditation; teaching and retreat programs; individual retreat facilities.

DHARMA ZEN CENTER
1025 S Cloverdale Ave, Los Angeles, CA 90019. (323) 934-0330, info@dharmazen.com, www.dharmazen.com • Clear teaching, clear mind. Please join us for regularly scheduled practice and retreats. A Kwan Um School Zen Center.

EMPTY GATE ZEN CENTER
2200 Parker St, Berkeley, CA 94704. (510) 845-8565, info@emptygatezen.com, www.emptygatezen.com • Clear teaching, clear mind. Please join us for regularly scheduled practice and retreats. A Kwan Um School Zen Center.

INSIGHTLA
1430 Olympic Blvd, Santa Monica, CA 90404. (310) 450-1821, www.insightla.org • InsightLA offers classes, sitting groups, retreats and special events dedicated to opening minds and hearts. Buddhist wisdom inspires all our programs in Vipassana meditation and secular-mindfulness education in Los Angeles.

SHASTA ABBEY
3724 Summit Dr, Mt. Shasta, CA 96067. (530) 926-4208, Fax: (530) 926-0428, guestmaster@shastaabbey.org, www.shastaabbey.org • A Soto Zen monastery in Northern California. Retreats, residential training, meditation, religious services, teaching, spiritual counseling. Around 25 male and female monks.

SIXTH ANCESTOR ZEN CENTER
PO Box 11006, Oakland, CA 94611. (510) 844-4164, jsunim@sixthancestorzen.org, www.sixthancestorzen.org • Weekly zen sittings and Dharma talk. Korean energy and dietary practices also offered, establishing a healthy mind/body foundation for this Path of awakening.

NORTHWEST

BIG BEAR CAMP RETREAT CENTER
89480 Nelson Mountain Rd, Walton, OR 97490. (541) 228-5372, bigbearcamporegon@gmail.com, bigbearcamp.org • We welcome small group retreats. Exquisite facilities in a beautiful Oregon coast range forest setting. Lodge, yurts, indoor/outdoor kitchens, hiking trails. All traditions welcome.

CANYON MOUNTAIN CENTER
Meditation & Well Being 767 E. Main St. John Day, OR 97845. (541) 932-2798, jim@canyonmountaincenter.net, www.canyonmountaincenter.net • Jim and Sandy Bay. Zazen Mon., Wed. & Sat., ongoing Yoga, Tai Chi, Energy Work, Massage, Labyrinth Walk, Rock Garden / River Walk, Lodging rentals.

MOUNT ADAMS ZEN BUDDHIST TEMPLE TUYET SON THIEN TU
46 Stoller Road, Trout Lake, WA 98650. (509) 395-2030, www.mtadamszen.org • We are a small farm temple in the Vietnamese Thien tradition. Metta, Loving Kindness & meditation are our primary practices. We call ourselves practicing "laughing farmer Zen". We can provide space for 1 week – 3 month personal retreats. Located at Trout Lake Abbey.

MOUNTAIN LAMP COMMUNITY
PO Box 512, Deming, WA 98244. (360) 592-0600, ml-info@mountainlamp.org, www.mountainlamp.org • Two tradition practice center: Plum Village Dharma Teacher Eileen Keira and Diamond Sangha Zen Roshi Jack Duffy.

NITARTHA INSTITUTE
3902 Woodland Park Ave N, Seattle, WA 98103. (562) 774-3372, Fax: (604) 398-2605, info@nitarthainstitute.org, www.nitarthainstitute.org • Offering a complete Shedra education: combining study of key texts and commentaries with training in analytical meditation and formal debate.

OCEAN LIGHT ZEN CENTER
c/o Michael Schutzler 9131 California Ave SW, Seattle, WA 98136. info@oceanlightzen.org, www. oceanlightzen.org • Clear teaching, clear mind. Please join us for regularly scheduled practice and retreats. A Kwan Um School Zen Center.

SRAVASTI ABBEY
692 Country Lane, Newport, WA 99156. (509) 447 5549, office.sravasti@gmail.com, www.sravasti.org • A Buddhist monastery in the Tibetan tradition, guided by Bhikshuni Thubten Chodron, offering retreats, courses, on-line teachings, and monastic training.

ZEN COMMUNITY OF OREGON
PO Box 188, Clatskanie, OR 97016. (503) 728-0654, info@zendust.org, www.zendust.org • Meditation in Portland at Heart of Wisdom Zen Temple. Sesshin, residential training, and weekend retreats at Great Vow Zen Monastery. Chozen Bays Roshi, and Zen Teacher Hogen Bays.

SOUTHWEST

AWAM TIBETAN BUDDHIST INSTITUTE
301 N Longfellow, Tucson, AZ 85711. (520) 622-8460, Info@AwamInstitute.org, www.AwamInstitute.org • Online video courses. History, Individual Liberation, Altruism, Tantra, & Great Perfection. Rime. Resident teacher Khenpo Drimed Dawa (Dr. Dean Pielstick).

DEMING ZEN CENTER
Deming, NM 88030. (575) 545-7613, nogate@gmail.com, www.facebook.com/demingzen • Clear teaching, clear mind. Please join us for regularly scheduled practice and retreats. A Kwan Um School Zen Center.

DHARMA OCEAN RETREAT CENTER CRESTONE
PO Box 159 Crestone, CO 81131. 1-877-DHARMA-9, Fax: (303) 265-9793, info@dharmaocean.org, www.dharmaocean.org. • Retreats led by founder Reggie Ray and other teachers; Vajrayana/body-based meditation. Solitary retreat cabin. Center available for rent to contemplative groups.

DORJE KHYUNG DZONG RETREAT CENTER
PO Box 131, Gardner, CO 81040. (719) 746-2264, dkd@shambhala.org, www.shambhala.org/centers/dkd • Solitary cabin meditation retreats in rural mountain setting. Retreat caretakers on site 24/7. Open all year. See web site for retreat guidelines and cabin tour.

HERMAN REDNICK RETREAT CENTER, KAGYU MILA GURU SANGHA
40 Lorien Rd, Questa, N.M.87556; mail: HC 81 Box 6017, Questa, NM 87556 (575) 586-1454, gabrielle.herbertson@gmail.com, earthjourney.org • Tibetan Buddhist stupa, campsites, bathhouse, retreat houses, meditation building, labyrinth, weekly practices, frequently visiting teachers, individual and group retreats welcome.

MOUNTAIN CLOUD ZEN CENTER
7241 Old Santa Fe Trail, Santa Fe, NM 87505. (505) 988-4396, mtncloudzen@gmail.com, www.mountaincloud.org • Retreats, weekly zazen, teisho and dokusan, and traditional koan study, with our primary teacher, Associate Zen Master Henry Shukman.

THE MOUNTAIN HERMITAGE
PO Box 807, Ranchos de Taos, NM 87557. (575) 758-0633, hermitage@mountainhermitage.org, www.mountainhermitage.org • Grounded in the Theravada lineage. Vipassana, concentration, Brahma Vihara, creative process, and personal retreat for up to one month for experienced students. Special scholarship rates for those who could not otherwise attend. Marcia Rose, Guiding Teacher, with various visiting teachers.

MYUNG WOL ZEN CENTER
PO Box 11084, Scottsdale, AZ 85271-1084. (480) 947-6101 • Clear teaching, clear mind. Please join us for regularly scheduled practice and retreats. A Kwan Um School Zen Center.

PADMASAMBHAVA MEDITATION CENTER
1900 South Cook St, Denver, CO 80210. (720) 353-4419, Fax: (877) 799-2941, info@pmctr.org, www.pmctr.org • Tibetan Buddhist meditation center under the direction of Chhoje Tulku Rinpoche. Grand Opening March 16th. Weekly evening meditations.

SHAMBHALA MOUNTAIN CENTER
151 Shambhala Way, Red Feather Lakes, CO 80545-9505. (888) 788-7221, (970) 881-2184, info@shambhalamountain.org, www.shambhalamountain.org • The Great Stupa. Programs in Shambhala Buddhism, wisdom traditions, body awareness practices/yoga, contemplative arts, mindful living and personal transformation. Group rental facilities.

TARA MANDALA RETREAT CENTER
PO Box 3040, Pagosa Springs, CO 81147. (970) 731-3711, info@taramandala.org, www.taramandala.org • A vibrant international Tibetan Buddhist Community with groups around the world founded by Lama Tsultrim Allione. The hub of the community is the 700-acre retreat center in

Pagosa Springs, Colorado, offering group and private long term solitary retreats.

UPAYA ZEN CENTER
1404 Cerro Gordo Rd, Santa Fe, NM 87501. (505) 986-8518, upaya@upaya.org, www.upaya.org • A Zen Buddhist practice center, offering Chaplaincy and Resident programs, meditation retreats, End-of-Life Care and other trainings for socially engaged Buddhism.

URGYEN SAMTEN LING GONPA
740 S 300 W, Salt Lake City, UT 84101. (801) 328-4629, info@urgyensamtenling.org, www.urgyensamtenling.org • Offering a traditional environment for the study, contemplation, and practice of Tibetan Buddhism in the Longchen Nyingthig and Chokling Tersar lineages.

VALLECITOS MOUNTAIN RANCH
PO Box 4433, Santa Fe, NM 87502. (505) 989-8303, refuge@vallecitos.org, www.vallecitos.org • Meditation retreats in a gorgeous natural setting in the mountains of Northern New Mexico. May to October. Hermitage. Events. Rentals.

ZEN CENTER OF LAS VEGAS
Location: Chaiya Meditation Monastery, 7925 Virtue Court Las Vegas, NV. 89113. (702) 293-4222,zencenteroflasvegas@gmail.com, www.zenlasvegas.com • Tues. and Thurs. 6:30 pm, Sunday mornings 8:30 am. Beginners orientation on the first Monday of each month. A Kwan Um School Zen Center.

MIDWEST

ANCIENT DRAGON ZEN GATE
1922 W Irving Park Rd, Chicago IL 60613. info@ancientdragon.org, www.ancientdragon.org • Soto Zen meditation practice with Taigen Dan Leighton: Author, scholar, and Dharma teacher in the lineage of Shunryu Suzuki.

CHICAGO SHAMBHALA MEDITATION CENTER
37 N Carpenter St, Chicago, IL 60607. (773) 743-8147, smcchicago@yahoo.com, www.chicagoshambhala.org • Meditation and instruction, Shambhala Buddhist classes, contemplative arts.

DHARMA FLOWER ZEN CENTER
861 Clay St, Woodstock, IL 60098. (815) 236-2511, dharmaflowerzen@gmail.com, www.facebook.com/dharmaflowerzen • Clear teaching, clear mind. Please join us for regularly scheduled practice and retreats. A Kwan Um School Zen Center.

GREAT LAKE ZEN CENTER
1721 South 81st St., West Allis, WI 53214. info@glzc.org, www.glzc.org • Clear teaching, clear mind. Please join us for regularly scheduled practice and retreats. A Kwan Um School Zen Center.

GREAT PLAINS ZEN CENTER
W7762 Falk Rd., Monroe, WI 53566 (608) 325-6248. gpzc@greatplainszen.org www.greatplainszen.org • Sunday evening zazen in Palatine, IL. Daily schedule, monthly sesshin in Monroe, WI. Classes for adults and children. White Plum Asanga. Zen Peacemaker Order. Teacher: Susan Myoyu Andersen, Roshi.

HOKYOJI ZEN PRACTICE COMMUNITY
2649 County 5, Eitzen, MN 55937. (507) 542-4968, hokyoji@hokyoji.org, www.hokyoji.org • Soto-style Zen and mindfulness practice on 105 wooded acres; offering daily zazen and services, retreats, practice periods, and personal retreats.

INDIANAPOLIS ZEN CENTER
3703 Washington Blvd, Indianapolis, IN 46205. (317) 921-9902, director@indyzen.org, www.indyzen.org • Clear teaching, clear mind. Please join us for regularly scheduled practice and retreats. A Kwan Um School Zen Center.

ISTHMUS ZEN COMMUNITY
1715 Hill St., Room 170, Madison, WI 53705. (608) 221-3379, info@isthmuszencommunity.org, isthmuszencommunity.org • Offering evening Zen practice and instruction and regularly scheduled retreats in a warm, welcoming, and compassionate community. A Kwan Um School Zen Center.

KANSAS ZEN CENTER
1423 New York St, Lawrence, KS 66044. kansaszencenter@gmail.com, www.kansaszencenter.org • Zen Master Bon Hae (Judy Roitman), Zen Master Hae Kwang (Stan Lombardo). Regularly scheduled practice, retreats, and classes in Lawrence. Affiliated group meets Tuesday evenings in Kansas City. A Kwan Um School Zen Center.

MILWAUKEE SHAMBHALA MEDITATION CENTER
2344 N Oakland Ave, Milwaukee, WI 53211-4322. (414) 277-8020, shambhalamke@gmail.com, www.milwaukee.shambhala.org • Explore our diverse programs designed to help people of all traditions discover their inherent goodness, gentleness and humor.

PRAIRYERTH ZEN CENTER
www.prairyerthzen.org • Clear teaching, clear mind. Please join us for regularly scheduled practice and retreats. Visit our website for a schedule. A Kwan Um School Zen Center.

TALLGRASS ZEN CENTER
PO Box 304, Alma, KS 66401. tallgrasszen@yahoo.com, www.tallgrasszen.blogspot.com • Clear teaching, clear mind. Please join us for regularly scheduled practice and retreats. A Kwan Um School Zen Center.

TEN DIRECTIONS ZEN COMMUNITY
c/o director@tendirectionszen.org ,www.tendirectionszen.org • Meditation practice Wednesday evenings at 6:30 pm at the Theosophical Society building,1926 North Main Street Wheaton, IL 60187

TERGAR INTERNATIONAL
706 N 1st St, Ste 112, Minneapolis, MN 55401. (612) 460-8837, minneapolis@tergar.org, www.tergar.org • Tuesday meditation 7 pm; check website for other centers and program dates. Summer retreats in NE, NW and MN.

UDUMBARA ZEN CENTER—EVANSTON
1330 Ridge Ave, Evanston IL 60201, (847)475-3264 udumbara@udumbarazen.org, www.udumbarazen.org • Regular zazen practice and study schedule; Bodhisattva, chaplaincy, priest training/ordination; Head Teacher Sensei Tricia Teater.

ZEN LIFE & MEDITATION CENTER, CHICAGO
38 Lake St, Oak Park, IL 60302. (708) 689-1220, www.ZLMC.org • Offering a comprehensive core curriculum for living a Zen-inspired life of openness, empathy and clarity. Teachers: Roshi Robert Joshin Althouse, Sensei June Ryushin Tanoue.

SOUTH

CHAPEL HILL ZEN CENTER
PO Box 16302, Chapel Hill, NC 27516. (919) 967-0861, info@chzc.org, www.chzg.org • A Soto Zen temple with daily meditation in the lineage of Shunryu Suzuki Roshi. Teacher: Josho Pat Phelan.

CYPRESS TREE ZEN CENTER
647 McDonnell Dr, Tallahassee, FL 32310. ctzg@webdharma.com, www.webdharma.com/ctzg • Clear teaching, clear mind. Please join us for regularly scheduled practice and retreats. A Kwan Um School Zen Center.

DAWN MOUNTAIN CENTER FOR TIBETAN BUDDHISM
2010 Naomi St Ste. A, Houston, TX 77054. (713) 630-0354, info@dawnmountain.org, dawnmountain.org • Free Sunday morning meditations, Tuesday night teachings, family programs, retreats. Basic Tibetan Buddhism through Longchen Nyingthig, live or online.

ECUMENICAL BUDDHIST SOCIETY OF LITTLE ROCK
1516 W. 3rd St, Little Rock, AR 72201, PO Box 561, Little Rock, AR 72203. (501) 376-7056 (VM) www.ebslr.org; ebs@aristotle.net. • Welcome. Your seat awaits. Weekly Vipassana, Zen and Vajryana practices. Daily silent sittings. Classes, retreats, events. Full information at ebslr.org

FESTIVAL OF FAITHS
415 W. Muhammad Ali Blvd, Louisville, KY 40202. (502) 583-3100, info@interfaithrelations.org, www.festivaloffaiths.org • FIVE-DAY exploration of spiritual practice, human transformation and conversations on meaning with internationally renowned spiritual leaders - Anam Thubten - Karen Armstrong - Pico Iyer - more!

GATELESS GATE ZEN CENTER
PO Box 12114, Gainesville, FL 32604. gateless.gate.zen.center@gmail.com, gatelessgate.org • Sitting every Monday 6:30-8pm (instruction at 6) at Gainsesville Retreat Center, 1551 SE 51 St.. A Kwan Um School Zen Center.

HOUSTON ZEN CENTER
1605 Heights Blvd, Houston, TX 77008. (713) 869-1952, www.houstonzen.org • Zen meditation—daily zazen, weekly classes and lectures, sesshin and retreats. Soto Zen. Abbot Gaelyn Godwin and assistant teachers.

KARMA THEGSUM CHOLING DALLAS
1000 Armeda Avenue, Irving, TX 75061. director@ktcdallas.org, www.ktcdallas.org • An affiliate study center of Karma Triyana Dharmachakra in New York. Resident teacher, Lama Dudjom Dorjee Rinpoche. Weekly dharma teaching on Sundays, periodic Vajrayana retreats, meditation instruction offereed. Schedule and information on web site.

LIGMINCHA INTERNATIONAL & SERENITY RIDGE RETREAT CENTER
554 Drumheller Ln, Shipman, VA 22971. (434) 263-6304, sr.operations@ligmincha.org, www.ligmincha.org, www.serenityridge.ligmincha.org, www.ligminchastore.org. • Teachings from the Bön Buddhist tradition of Tibet, Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche, Spiritual Director: retreats, meditation and practices including dzogchen, Tibetan yoga, dream yoga, and more.

LITTLE ROCK ZEN CENTER
1516 W 3rd St, Little Rock, AR 72201. (501) 661-1669, lusauer@aristotle.net, www.ebslr.org/kwan-um-zen • Meditation practice every Tuesday nights from 6:00-7:00 in the large meditation room at EBS - Please join us! A Kwan Um School Zen Center.

MEDITATION CENTER OF TEXAS
1011 Thannisch Dr, Arlington TX 76011. (817) 275-7700, meditationtexas@gmail.com, www.dhammakayatexas.us/ www.dmc.tv/en • Home of Dhammakaya Meditation in Texas. Weekend Meditation classes and retreats. Sunday Buddhist ceremonies. Please contact us for details.

MORNING STAR ZEN CENTER
1599 Halsell Rd, Fayetteville, AR 72701-3902. (479) 530-1098, btaylor@uark.edu, www.morningstarzencenter.org • Clear teaching, clear mind. Please join us for regularly scheduled practice and retreats. A Kwan Um School Zen Center.

ORLANDO ZEN CENTER
c/o Claudia Schippert, 515 S Crystal Lake Dr, Orlando, FL 32803. (407) 897-3685, orlandozencenter@gmail.com, www. orlandozen.com • Clear teaching, clear mind. Please join us for regularly scheduled practice and retreats. A Kwan Um School Zen Center.

SOUTH FLORIDA ZEN CENTER
7110 SW 182nd Way, Southwest Ranches, FL 33331. (954) 263-4653, southfloridazengroup@gmail.com, www.south-

floridazen.org • Clear teaching, clear mind. Please join us for regularly scheduled practice and retreats. A Kwan Um School Zen Center.

SOUTHERN DHARMA RETREAT CENTER
1661 West Rd, Hot Springs, NC 28743. (828) 622-7112, southerndharma@earthlink.net, www.shoutherndharma.org • Affordable, teacher-led, silent retreats for all levels of experience in various Buddhist traditions. Spectacular Blue Ridge Mountain setting. Schedule and registration online.

NORTHEAST

AMERICAN BUDDHIST SHIM GUM DO ASSOC.
203 Chestnut Hil Ave, Brighton, MA 02135. (617) 787-1506, Fax: (617) 787-2708, info@shimgumdo.org, www.shimgumdo.org • Shim Gum Do - Mind Sword Path; Zen meditation and martial art training. Ongoing classes and residential programs available.

BARRE CENTER FOR BUDDHIST STUDIES
149 Lockwood Rd, Barre, MA 01005. (978) 355-2347, bcbs@dharma.org, www.bcbsdharma.org • Residential and online courses combining study, discussion, and meditation for strengthening sangha, supporting curiosity, and expanding and deepening personal practice.

BLUE MOUNTAIN LOTUS SOCIETY
6496 Jonestown Rd, Harrisburg, PA 17112. (717) 671-5057; houseofmeditation@gmail.com; www.bmls.org • The Blue Mountain Lotus Society is devoted to sharing the universal teachings of the Buddha in the 21st century. Director, Sensei Anthony Stultz.

BOUNDLESS WAY ZEN
1030 Pleasant St, Worcester, MA 01602. (508) 792-5189, info@boundlesswayzen.org, www.boundlesswayzen.org • Throughout New England. Shikantaza, koan practice, sesshins, dokusan, family and introductory workshops. Teachers: James Ford, Melissa Blacker, David Rynick, and Josh Bartok.

BUDDHIST FAITH FELLOWSHIP OF CONNECTICUT
College of East Asian Studies, Wesleyan University, Middletown, CT. amida@bffct.org, www.bffct.org • Founded in 2001; offers Sunday morning practice, retreats, meditation instruction, courses, family program, 12 Step Group & prison ministry.

CAMBRIDGE INSIGHT MEDITATION CENTER
331 Broadway, Cambridge, MA 02139. (617) 441-9038, www.cambridgeinsight.org • Vipassana. Guiding Teachers: Larry Rosenberg and Narayan Liebenson. Urban center dedicated to integrating meditation practice and wisdom into daily life. Workshops, retreats, practice groups. Daily sittings, weekly drop-ins , Dharma talks.

CAMBRIDGE ZEN CENTER
199 Auburn St, Cambridge, MA 02139. (617) 576-3229, info@cambridgezen.org, www.cambridgezen.org • Guiding teacher Jane Dobisz. Daily meditation, weekly talks, monthly retreats. Residential and guest stays, community dinners. A Kwan Um School Zen Center.

CAPE COD ZEN CENTER
169 N Main St, South Yarmouth, MA 02664. (508) 760-1814, capecodzencenter@yahoo.com, www.capecodzen.com • Clear teaching, clear mind. Please join us for regularly scheduled practice and retreats. A Kwan Um School Zen Center.

CHOGYE INTERNATIONAL ZEN CENTER OF NY
400 E 14th St, Apt 2E, New York, NY 10009. (212) 353-0461, info@chogyezencenter.org, www.chogyezencenter.org • Daily practice, regularly scheduled retreats, talks, interviews, introduction classes. A Kwan Um School Zen Center.

COPPER BEECH INSTITUTE
303 Tunxis Rd, West Hartford, CT 06107. (860) 790-9750, info@copperbeechinstitute.org, copperbeechinstitute.org • Connecticut's premier retreat center for mindfulness and contemplative practice offering 40+ retreat programs. Beautiful monastery campus with 48 wooded acres 90 minutes north of NYC. Farm-to-table meals, comfortable accommodations. Day and evening meditation groups. Stone labyrinth open daily. All are welcome.

DAI BOSATSU ZENDO
Kongo-ji 223 Beecher Lake Rd, Livingston Manor, NY 12758. (845) 439-4566, office@daibosatsu.org, www.zenstudies.org • Beautiful mountain setting. Residential practice: two training periods per year, shorter interim stays. Sesshin, introductory weekends. Shinge Sherry Chayat Roshi, Abbot.

DELAWARE VALLEY ZEN CENTER
PO Box 240, Newark, DE 19715-0240. (302) 533-8819, dvzcinfo@gmail.com, www.dvzc.org • Clear teaching, clear mind. Please join us for regularly scheduled practice and retreats. A Kwan Um School Zen Center.

DHARMA DRUM RETREAT CENTER
184 Quannacut Rd, Pine Bush, NY 12566. (845) 744-8114, Fax (845) 744-8483, ddrc@dharmadrumretreat.org, www.dharmadrumretreat.org • A center for Chan Buddhist practice and study in the Lineage of Master Sheng Yen. Meditation retreats & activities suitable for beginners to advanced practitioners. Weekly activities. Volunteer opportunities.

GARRISON INSTITUTE
14 Mary's Way, Route 9D, Garrison, New York 10524. (845) 424-4800, info@garrisoninstitute.org, www.garrisoninstitute.org • Retreats at Garrison host inspiring teachers from diverse wisdom traditions in a renovated monastery an hour from Manhattan, applying the power of contemplation as a force for social change.

HEART CIRCLE SANGHA
451 Hillcrest Rd, Ridgewood, NJ 07450. (877) 442-7936, information@heartcirclesangha.org, www.heartcirclesangha.org • Zen meditation, beginning instruction, koan and precepts study, retreats. Rev. Joan Hogetsu Hoeberichts, Sensei. White Plum Asangha Soto-Rinzai Lineage.

INSIGHT MEDITATION SOCIETY
THE FOREST REFUGE
1230 Pleasant St, Barre, MA 01005. (978) 355-2063, fr@dharma.org, www.dharma.org • IMS's Forest Refuge offers experienced insight meditators a tranquil environment for longer-term personal retreat with guidance from senior teachers.

INSIGHT MEDITATION SOCIETY
THE RETREAT CENTER
1230 Pleasant St, Barre, MA 01005. (978) 355-4378, rc@dharma.org, www.dharma.org • IMS's Retreat Center courses offer guidance and practice in insight and lovingkindness meditations from leading vipassana teachers. All welcome.

KARMA TRIYANA DHARMACHAKRA
335 Meads Mountain Rd, Woodstock, NY 12498. (845) 679-5906, office@kagyu.org, www.kagyu.org • The North American seat of His Holiness the Gyalwang Karmapa, beautifully situated in the Catskill Mountains, offers traditional Karma Kagyu Tibetan Buddhist teachings, practice retreats, contemporary programs, meditation instruction and personal retreats. Magnificent shrine hall, resident Tibetan lamas, accommodations with three vegetarian meals daily.

MENLA MOUNTAIN—RETREAT, RESORT, SPA
375 Pantherkill Rd, Phoenicia, NY 12464. (845) 688-6897, Fax: (845) 688-6895, office@menla.org, www.menlamountain.org • 325 acres in the heart of the Catskills, R&R Getaway Weekends, comfortable, modern accommodations, meditation sanctuary, yoga studio, conference center, nature hikes, pool, organic garden, WiFi, local, whole-food, vegetarian cuisine. Featuring our 4,000 square foot Tibetan-style spa.

MILAREPA CENTER
1344 US Route 5 South, Barnet, VT 05821. (802) 633-4136, milarepa@milarepacenter.org, www.milarepacenter.org • Cultivate wisdom, compassion and a good heart. Tibetan Buddhist master teachings, group retreats, special events, personal retreat cabins, family camp—within 276 acres of serene, Vermont beauty.

NEW HAVEN ZEN CENTER
193 Mansfield St, New Haven CT 06511. (203) 787-0912, info@newhavenzen.org, newhavenzen.org • Clear teaching, clear mind. Please join us for regularly scheduled practice and retreats. A Kwan Um School Zen Center.

THE NEW YORK BUDDHIST CHURCH
(JODOSHINSHU HONGANJI-HA)
331-332 Riverside Dr, New York, NY 10025. (212) 678-0305, www.newyorkbuddhistchurch.org • All inclusive Pure Land community. Weekly Sunday services (Japanese, English), Wednesday evening meditation; Buddhist classes, book discussion, Japanese cultural offerings.

NEW YORK INSIGHT MEDITATION CENTER
28 West 27th Street, New York, NY 10001. (212) 213-4802, nyimc.org • Peaceful urban refuge for all people. Vipassana Theravadan tradition. Daily programs and sittings. Drop-ins and talks. Practice groups.

NEW YORK ZEN CENTER
FOR CONTEMPLATIVE CARE
119 W 23rd St, Ste 401, New York, NY 10011. (212) 677-1087, info@zencare.org, www.zencare.org • Daily meditation, monthly retreats, Zen training; accredited trainings in chaplaincy and contemplative care; accredited Masters in Buddhist Studies; one-to-one spiritual support, bereavement and community programs. CE's available for nurses and social workers.

NEW YORK ZENDO SHOBO-JI
223 East 67th St, New York, NY 10065. (212) 861-3333, office@newyorkzendo.org, www.zenstudies.org • Daily zazen, Zen intro, zazenkai, sesshin, Dharma talks and interviews. Shinge Sherry Chayat Roshi, Abbot.

NORTHERN LIGHT ZEN CENTER
202 Meadow Rd, Topsham, ME 04086. (207) 729-6013, nlzc@gwi.net, nlzc.info • Clear teaching clear mind. Please join us for regularly scheduled practice and retreats. A Kwan Um School Zen Center.

OPEN-HEARTED AWARENESS INSTITUTE
41 Union Square West, Suite 835, New York, NY 10003. contact@lochkelly.org, www.effortlessmindfulness.org • Effortless mindfulness, Heart mindfulness, and Sutra Mahamudra for path of awakening. Workshops, retreats, and online courses. Teacher, Loch Kelly.

OPEN MEADOW ZEN CENTER
212 Marrett Rd, Lexington, MA 02421. (781) 652-8303, openmeadowzen@yahoo.com, www.openmeadowzen.com • Clear teaching clear mind. Please join us for regularly scheduled practice and retreats. A Kwan Um School Zen Center.

ORYOKI ZENDO
2133 Market St, Ste. 220, Camp Hill, PA 17011. (717) 514-3082, oryokizendo@gmail.com, www.oryokizendo.com • Dynamic and growing Sangha. We offer: weekly meditation sessions, private Zen study, Zen priest training, individual counseling, forest therapy classes and more. Andrea Rudolph Executive Director.

PROVIDENCE ZEN CENTER
99 Pound Rd, Cumberland, RI 02864. (401) 658-1464, (401) 658-1188, director@providencezen.org, www.provi-

dencezen.org • Clear teaching, clear mind. Please join us for regularly scheduled practice and retreats. A Kwan Um School Zen Center.

RED PATH ZEN SANGHA
Zen Garland Member, Upton/Grafton/Mendon, MA. (508) 529-6034, www.RedPathZen.org • Duncan Sings-Alone, Roshi, Spiritual Director. We are a new Zen Sangha enriched by Native American Teaching

ROCHESTER ZEN CENTER
7 Arnold Park, Rochester, NY 14607. (585) 473-9180, Fax: (585) 473-6846, receptionist@rzc.org, www.rzc.org • Bodhin Kjolhede-roshi, Abbot and Dharma successor of Philip Kapleau-roshi. Daily zazen, residential training, retreats.

SOJI ZEN CENTER
2325 W Marshall Rd, Philadelphia, PA 19050. (917) 856-5659, info@sojizencenter.com, www.sojizencenter.com • Meditation, Workshops, Retreats, Yoga, Iaido.

THEKCHEN CHOLING (USA) SYRACUSE TEMPLE
128 N. Warren Street, Syracuse, NY 13202. (315) 682-0702, menla108@yahoo.com, www.thekchencholing.us/syr • Non-sectarian, Tibetan Vajrayana and Chinese Mahayana practice. Meditation, chanting, pujas, workshops and retreats. Shakyamuni Buddha relics located on site.

THE THREE JEWELS BINGHAMPTON ZEN GROUP
c/o Michael O'Sullivan, 14 Wayman Dr, Otego, NY 13825. www.binghamtonzencenter.org • Clear teaching, clear mind. Please join us for regularly scheduled practice and retreats. A Kwan Um School Zen Center.

THREE TREASURES ZEN CENTER
c/o Michael O'Sullivan, 14 Wayman Dr, Otego, NY 13825. (607) 988-7966, abbot@thethreetreasures.org, www.thethreetreasures.org/8501.html • Clear teaching, clear mind. Please join us for regularly scheduled practice and retreats. A Kwan Um School Zen Center.

TSEGYALGAR / DZOGCHEN COMMUNITY IN AMERICA
PO Box 479, Conway, MA 01341. (413) 369-4153; secretary@tsegyalgar.org; www.tsegyalgar.org • North American seat of the Dzogchen Community, founded by Chogyal Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche. Please contact us for information.

VILLAGE ZENDO
(Dotoku-ji True Expression Temple) 588 Broadway, Ste 1108, New York, NY 10012. info@villagezendo.org, www.villagezendo.org • Daily Zen meditation, retreats, workshops in the heart of the city. Roshi Pat Enkyo O'Hara, Abbot.

WONDERWELL MOUNTAIN REFUGE
253 Philbrick Hill Rd, Springfield, NH 03284. (603) 763-0204, info@wonderwellrefuge.org, www.wonderwellrefuge.org • Group retreats and solo retreats. Sangha rentals. A refuge in the White Mountains. Lama Willa Miller, spiritual director.

ZEN CENTER OF NEW YORK CITY, FIRE LOTUS TEMPLE
500 State St, Brooklyn, NY 11217. (718) 875-8229, zcnyc@mro.org, zcnyc.mro.org • Geoffrey Shugen Arnold, Abbot. A residential lay training center offering daily zazen, a regular Sunday program, weekly retreats, and meditation intensives.

ZEN CENTER OF SYRACUSE HOEN-JI
266 West Seneca Turnpike, Syracuse, NY 13207. (315) 492-9773, admin@hoenji.org, www.zencenterofsyracuse.org • Shinge Sherry Chayat, Abbot. Daily zazen, sesshin, teisho, dokusan, Dharma study, residency, visiting scholars & artists.

ZEN MOUNTAIN MONASTERY
PO Box 197, 871 Plank Rd, Mt. Tremper, NY 12457. (845) 688-2228, registrar@mro.org, zmm.mro.org • Geoffrey Shugen Arnold Sensei , Abbot; Jody Hojin Kimmel, Resident Priest. Residential training programs, monthly sesshin, and weekend retreats in the Catskill Mountains.

ALASKA

COLD MOUNTAIN ZEN CENTER
c/o Cary de Wit, PO Box 82109, Fairbanks, AK 99708. (907) 378-6657, dewit@fastmail.net, www.coldmountainzencenter.org • Weekly meditation & instruction, monthly, half-day retreats, bi-annual intensive 3-day retreats. A Kwan Um School Zen Center.

HAWAII

OM ORCHARD SANCTUARY
PO Box 1190, Kilauea, HI 96754. (808) 822-9300, Fax: (808) 822-9322, admin@jewelofthelotus.com, www.facebook.com/omorchard • A Buddhist vacation retreat center on the beautiful island paradise of Kauai is waiting to enlighten you.

CANADA

KUNZANG DECHEN OSEL LING RETREAT CENTRE
268 Mount Tuam Rd, Salt Spring Island, BC V8K 2W9. (250) 380-8610, kdol268@gmail.com, www.kkc-kdol.org • KDOL accommodates both group programs and personal retreats for people practicing Tibetan Buddhism. And we welcome inquiries for individual and group retreats from other spiritual traditions.

TORONTO ZEN CENTRE
33 High Park Gardens, Toronto, ON M6R 1S8. (416) 766-3400, info@torontozen.org, www.torontozen.org • Lay zen training. Daily zazen, sesshin, dokusan, mettabhavana courses. Roshi Taigen Henderson, Dharma Heir of Sunyana Graef, Roshi: Roshi Kapleau lineage.

TRUE NORTH INSIGHT MEDITATION CENTRE
(613) 422-4880, info@truenorthinsight.org, www.truenorthinsight.org. • Insight meditation weekly sittings, residential/non-residential retreats (Montreal, Ottawa, Kingston & Toronto). Diversity of background and experience welcome. French & English.

ZEN CENTRE OF OTTAWA
240 Daly Ave, Ottawa, ON K1N 6G2. (613) 562-1568, info@wwzc.org, www.wwzc.org • Main monastery (Dainen-ji) of the White Wind Zen Community. Subscribe to our free weekly email illustrated newsletter—www.wwzc.org/emirror.

INTERNATIONAL

BUENOS AIRES KWAN UM GROUP
Av. Caseros 490 4H C115 2AAN Capital Federal, Buenos Aires, Argentina. +54 11 43 07 26 80, www.kwanumzen.org/buenos-aires/, kwanumzenbsas@gmail.com • Clear teaching, clear mind. Please join us for regularly scheduled practice and retreats. A Kwan Um School Zen Center.

METTA CONSCIOUS HEALING CENTER
San Miguel de San Jose de la Montana, Barva, Heredia, Costa Rica. 011+(506)2266-1635, wendy@me.com, http://mettavibrationalhealing.com • Personal Healing Retreats, Couples Retreats, Family Healing Retreats

MEXICO CITY ZEN CENTER
Monte Albán #126, piso 3, Office 403, Col. Narvarte, Mexico D.F. Z.c. 03020 tel. 55193969.kwanumzendf@gmail.com. kwanumzendf.blogspot.mx • Enseñanza clara, mente clara. Por favor únete a nosotros en las prácticas de miércoles a las 19 hrs y domingo a las 10 am. A Kwan Um School Zen Center.

JOURNEYS Get Off the Bus

by Casandra Luce

In my early twenties, I went on a trip to Europe. This was before cell phones or the internet—each new country meant a new language, new money, new phone systems, and a hope for the best. One evening, it wasn't working out. I had just arrived in Austria and made arrangements to meet a friend. I was exhausted, hungry, low on money, and stressed. And I didn't speak German.

Getting on the bus to go meet my friend, I pointed to the stop in my guidebook to show the driver where I wanted to disembark. I was sure the bus driver would tell me when we were there. In retrospect, I don't know why it felt like such a big deal, but I felt desperate to meet my friend and couldn't stop picturing her waiting for me, only for it to look like I'd stood her up.

The ride was interminable. I was so, so late, but I knew we had to be getting close. Finally, I looked out the window and realized we were back where we'd started. The bus had done a full loop—I had completely missed the stop. I couldn't believe the bus driver hadn't told me when to get off. So I went up to the front of the bus and I screamed at him. In English. At the top of my lungs. My stress, frustration, exhaustion, humiliation—everything came to a head.

To this day, just thinking about it leaves me mortified. And at that moment—while screaming my lungs out to a very nice bus driver who probably couldn't understand a word I said—something snapped in me. It is hard to describe except to say that I broke. I gave up. I realized in a deep and profound way that I couldn't speak the language. I might not have a place to stay or be able to keep my commitment to my friend. I might go hungry. I might end up sleeping on the floor of the train station, or I might go in circles on the bus. And I couldn't stop it. I realized that I didn't have control. My desperation to try and maintain it had brought me to the brink: hurling insults at the top of my lungs at a completely innocent person.

For several weeks, that change—that giving up—stayed with me. I continued to live and make plans, but the fear and the desire to impose my will had left. And the strangest thing came in its wake: I opened up to the world around me. It was as if the colors were brighter, the sounds sharper, the conversations more meaningful. It's hard to describe, but the next few months were magical; to this day, I can still clearly remember the vivid blue of the Italian ocean, the soulful voice of "Big Bill Broonzey" in my headphones, the crispness of the air on a motorcycle ride.

I came home to a mountain of credit card debt and a dead-end restaurant job, but the feeling helped me through those problems before eventually fading away. What remained was an interest in Buddhism, which seemed to be the only thing that explained that moment of awareness on the bus. I call it my "mini-enlightenment." It feels far away now, but I can still see—even if I don't always feel—the calm clarity of that time and remember that there is a different way to live and experience the world. BD

CASANDRA LUCE is a freelance writer based in Seattle. She has practiced meditation for over ten years.

PHOTO I ANDREW NASH

Rangjung Yeshe Institute
Boudhanath, Nepal

Rangjung Yeshe Institute's Centre for Buddhist Studies offers Undergraduate and Graduate Programs on campus in Boudhanath, Nepal, in partnership with Kathmandu University.

BACHELOR OF ARTS
BA in Buddhist Studies with Himalayan Language

Study within a living tradition on campus in historic Boudhanath, Nepal. The courses in the BA program fall within two main areas of study: Buddhist Philosophy, History, and Culture, and Himalayan Language.

NEW!

CERTIFICATE COURSE
in Buddhist Studies

MASTER OF ARTS
MA in Buddhist Studies

MASTER OF ARTS
MA in Translation, Textual Interpretation, & Philology

SUMMER PROGRAMS
June 6 - August 4, 2017

AVAILABLE PROGRAMS:

- Colloquial Tibetan
  Beginners - Intermediate - Advanced
- Classical Tibetan
  Beginners - Intermediate
- Sanskrit
  Beginners - Intermediate
- Nepali
  Beginners - Intermediate
- Buddhist Studies
  All levels

All summer programs are fully accredited by Kathmandu University.

TRANSLATOR TRAINING
June 2017 - June 2018

DO YOU ASPIRE TO BE AN INTERPRETER FOR A TIBETAN BUDDHIST TEACHER IN YOUR DHARMA COMMUNITY?

RYI's Translator Training Program is carefully designed to fill a need for oral interpreters in Tibetan Buddhist communities around the world. Becoming an interpreter lets you learn about Tibetan Dharma, language, and culture and share that understanding with others. Immerse yourself in a vibrant, living Tibetan tradition through language learning.

Need to develop the prerequisite skills to join the course? Ask about our Prep year!
Contact us for more information:
translator.training@ryi.org

www.ryi.org/translator-training

www.ryi.org *Apply Now!*

Noah Levine, MA, is a Buddhist teacher, author, counselor, and creator of the Refuge Recovery Model who has been using Buddhist practices in his own addiction recovery since 1988. He is the author of Dharma Punx, Against The Stream, The Heart of the Revolution, and Refuge Recovery.

A BUDDHIST-BASED PATH TO ADDICTION RECOVERY

NOAH LEVINE'S
REFUGE RECOVERY CENTERS
FULL SERVICE SUBSTANCE ABUSE TREATMENT CENTER

Refuge Recovery Centers is unique substance abuse treatment program that provides detoxification, residential, intensive outpatient services as well as and sober living. Located in East Hollywood, our curriculum combines Buddhist philosophy with clinically driven psychotherapy modules. Framed within the ideology of the Refuge Recovery model, our entire course of treatment has been developed to help engage the addicted person on multiple psychodynamic levels.

INSURANCE ACCEPTED
CALL OR TEXT US ANYTIME: 323.207.0276
www.refugerecoverycenters.com
info@refugerecoverycenters.com