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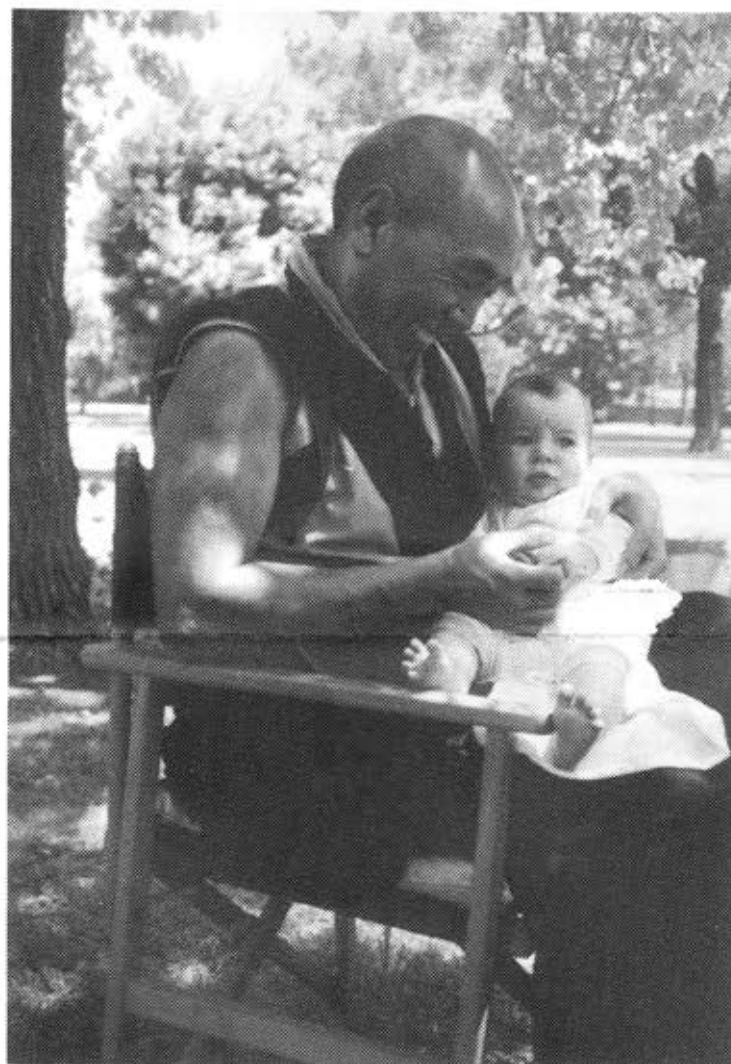
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Tara Institute News

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JANUARY 1992



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January 1993

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NEW PHONE NUMBER

for TARA INSTITUTE

596 8900

Family Day in November was a happy, spiritual occasion with lots of families turning up for a day of meditation, Geshela's inspirational talk, and a great picnic in the park opposite TI. Doesn't this picture say it all?

From the Assistant Director's Kitchen Table



I am pleased to have the opportunity to speak with the members and students of Tara Institute via the newsletter. As most of you will know, I came back to "Sunny" Melbourne, after living in Sydney for three years, to be Alison's assistant. I received the news of being 'chosen' by Lama Zopa Rinpoche to help in this way on my way back from a holiday in the Philippines. (I was actually in the transit lounge in Melbourne!) I remember my knees buckling. My life was fine in Sydney. The weather was consistent, I was getting quite a bit of acting work and I was involved with our sister centre, Vajrayana Institute. Fortunately, Rinpoche was in Sydney at the time and so I had the opportunity to talk to him about it all.

So . . . after tying up loose ends, I came back to Melbourne to the job and the prospect of sharing a room with my two year old nephew!! I must admit I was just a little unsure about starting all over again yet again. However, a cup of tea with our precious teacher Geshe Doga and the warm reception of old friends made me feel that I had definitely made the right decision. I was impressed by the evidence of growth at T.I. over the time I had been absent. So many new faces! And the program was so exciting thanks to the dedication of Sonam Jampa and his band of helpers. The Centre itself looked in good shape, evidence of the tireless efforts of the residents and other helpers, and there was a feeling of things really happening.

So . . . Eight months have passed and although at times it feels things are moving slowly, we have in fact achieved a lot. It is easy to take the existence of the Centre and the availability of teachings for granted. We mustn't!! We are incredibly fortunate to have such a kind, accessible and learned teacher committed totally to our spiritual growth. We are also for-

tunate to have around us dedicated and hard working students. They are our Dharma buddies and a source of inspiration.

I have also been lucky to be able to give two Monday night talks in December and I thank the people who came and listened, for their warmth and encouragement. (I was a little nervous. It felt such a big responsibility sitting up there.)

I would like to thank all those people who have been so supportive and to also thank Alison for her trust and faith in me. I will attempt to continue to do the job of Assistant Director to the best of my ability. Helping to spread the Dharma by keeping T.I. running is really the most beneficial focus of my time and energy. Please know that I am committed to the success and continued growth of the Centre and am always available to assist in any way I can.

May our practice strengthen in the coming year and may we never flag in our determination to fulfill our teachers' wishes.

Julia Gardiner

P.S. Alison and I would like to thank those members who have contributed letters to the Members' News. Your points of view and opinions are valuable to us. We have realized that there is a need for guided meditation classes and are hoping to organise this next year. Keep those suggestions and letters coming.

Pilgrimage to India

We are planning another pilgrimage! When Geshe Doga first suggested that we do a pilgrimage of the Buddhist holy places, I felt that this was the perfect way to complete the trip to the Dharma celebrations in India. Stories of that pilgrimage appear in past Newsletters.

Fourteen people were able to travel the whole way to Lumbini in Nepal. Others were able to join the pilgrimage for various sections. During some conversations with Geshe Doga in Lumbini and afterwards, Geshela suggested it would be a very good idea to organise another pilgrimage. This time much bigger with

maybe two buses and to make the trip a little bit longer. Our trip in January was a whirlwind of a tour taking only eight days to get from Varanasi (Sarnath) to Pokhara via Bodhgaya, Rajgir, Nalanda, Kushinagar, Sravasti and Lumbini.

The tentative date for the next pilgrimage would be in January 1993, the pilgrimage part of the trip taking about three weeks (including the flights).

Geshe Doga had also suggested that the pilgrimage group travel to Dharmasala and request a teaching from His Holiness the Dalai Lama. This would add about six days to the length of the overall trip and

would occur prior to the pilgrimage.

The possibility of there being a group of people from Tara Institute receiving teachings from His Holiness on Christmas Day 1992 I find very inspiring.

One of the very strange highlights of last year's pilgrimage was spending Christmas Eve floating on a boat up and down the Ganges river in Varanasi singing Christmas carols, being entertained by Sumati's violin and politely refusing a cup of tea made from water hoisted from the holy river beneath us.

So how much would it all cost? Depending on accommodation, an estimated \$3000 plus spending money.

● *If you would like an information sheet, please contact me at TI on 596 8900.*

Damien Busby

MOTIVATION

Extract from Geshe Doga's Teaching to Study Group December 3, 1991

To make progress, the place where one has to put effort is in the mind, not in our external conduct and actions. For example, a lot of our daily actions in some way contribute to the welfare of others in society.

In performing those actions, however, the underlying motivation is usually self interest. The selfish mind perceives some self purpose. Hence, on the surface our actions appear to be done for others yet underneath there is the wrong motivation of self interest. Our actions are therefore not truly beneficial or a cause of happiness for other beings.

If we practise Bodhicitta in the heart, however, then although outwardly our conduct may be the same, there is a difference in terms of that action being a source of joy and benefit for others. So, Bodhicitta is something we generate in the mind which can transform all our actions into a service for other beings. If we can do this then we're making tremendous progress in living our life purely. In addition, our actions and the way of doing things will be admired by people.

From the point of view of Dharma we have to live honestly in all parts of our life, whether at home or work. If one is an employee one has to be honest not only from the side of rules and regulations but more importantly from the view of Dharma. Since one has been getting some benefit from Dharma, one has the respon-

sibility to work to the best of one's ability. By doing this one contributes to the success of the business. If one practises Dharma, one's speech and actions with friends at work will also be good. In this way one can set an example which people can see, admire and learn from. We call such a person a "virtuous friend" for others. If you're running your own business, improve and make progress by putting some flavour of Dharma in one's manner and attitude towards others.

Geshe-la says that he's trying his best to practise these things himself because in a sense he's an employee of Tara Institute and he feels a responsibility that people come here from a long distance.

So, if we generate Bodhicitta, it is much better in the eyes of other people. Not so much outwardly but the thing that counts most is the pure motivation of helping others and not being self centred.

When we study Dharma and meditation we are, at the same time, also studying or learning a better way of worldly life if we want. For instance motivation is always emphasised in Dharma practice. If we don't generate the proper motivation sincerely then our practice can become aimless. The purpose of Dharma is to develop the positive state of mind and overcome the negative states of mind. How much we progress in this practice greatly depends on how we start. Remind yourself why you are doing this practice. If it is to overcome the negative state of mind and to develop the positive state of

mind, then one needs to put some sincere effort into producing the positive state of mind.

Because we have made some effort we can see already that we are making some progress to achieving that goal, the purpose of Dharma. In this way one can continue and see the development of it, practising stage by stage. This is also the same for business and work situations. It's important that one's attitude is not just the self interest of making a living but there should also be the motivation or wish to see the actual success of the place where one is working. Much of the effort one puts in depends on this motivation as does the progress of that place or business.

If there are six people who all have the same motivation then they will all work together very hard and achieve some result. In this way if the business flourishes then naturally they will get promotions and more benefit. Whereas if the attitude of one of them is total self interest, with no motivation to see the development of that business, no matter how much unique skill they may possess they won't use it or put in enough effort which will affect that business. That's what we call retrenchment because of the downturn of the whole business. If one doesn't wish to hear that kind of thing then one has to put an extra amount of effort into work. In this way the spiritual practice is also the same.

Missing Teachings



We are looking for either tapes, videos or notes of talks Lama Thubten Yeshe gave at Tara Institute in 1977 and 1981. We are also looking for records of Lama Zopa Rinpoche's 1983 Heart Sutra Commentary and talk on Refuge Precepts, also given at Tara Institute. If you can help in any way please contact Sönam Jampa on 596 8900.



JANUARY PROGRAM

WEEK THREE

MONDAY 13

8pm Introduction to
Buddhist Meditation

TUESDAY 14

8pm Tara Meditation Practice

WEDNESDAY 15

8pm Special Teachings
with Geshe Doga

WEEK FOUR

MONDAY 20

8pm Introduction to
Buddhist Meditation

TUESDAY 21

8pm Tara Meditation Practice

WEDNESDAY 22

8pm Special Teachings
with Geshe Doga

SATURDAY 25 - MONDAY 27

Lam Rim Meditation Retreat

WEEK FIVE

MONDAY 27

8pm Introduction to
Buddhist Meditation

TUESDAY 28

8pm Tara Meditation Practice

WEDNESDAY 29

8pm Special Teaching
with Geshe Doga

AUSPICIOUS DAYS IN JANUARY

SATURDAY 4

Tibetan 30th - New Moon
(Precepts)

MONDAY 13

Tibetan 8th - Tara Day
(Precepts)

WEDNESDAY 15

Tibetan 10th - Tsog Day

SUNDAY 19

Tibetan 15th - Full Moon
(Precepts)

WEDNESDAY 29

Tibetan 25th - Tsog Day

Introduction to Buddhist Meditation

Monday 13, 20, 27 at 8pm



This month Patrick Campisi will present three introductory talks explaining different meditation techniques which are used in Buddhist practice.

Meditation in its various forms is an essential element of all spiritual traditions and in Buddhism plays a particularly important role. There are, however, a number of different meditation techniques used which may lead to confusion amongst students. In these classes, Patrick will discuss the theory and practice of the three main techniques, ie; concentration, contemplation and visualization meditation.

● *These classes are ideal for those wishing to explore Buddhism and its meditation techniques. A facilities fee of \$5 per class is asked to help cover administrative expenses (Members free). Just turn up around 7.50 or contact TI on 596 8900 for more details.*

Meditation Nights

Tuesday 14, 21, 28 8pm

For three Tuesday nights in January, Sönam Jampa will lead Tara meditation practice. Tara is the embodiment of the enlightened activity of all the Buddhas and meditation upon her is a powerful method to develop our own Tara-nature. All are welcome to attend and experience the joy and beauty of this practice.

Advanced notice: On February 4 and 11, Sönam Jampa will be leading two sessions of Vajrasattva purification meditation practice.

● *Contact TI on 596 8900 for more details*

Special Teachings by Geshe Doga

35 Buddhas Confession Prayer
Wednesday 15, 22, 29, February 5 at 8pm

Geshe Doga has very kindly offered to break his holiday to teach on the purification practice, the 35 Buddhas Confession. This powerful purification practice is included in the Nyung Nā fasting retreat and is considered to be a very important preliminary practice.

● *For this very special teaching, Geshela has requested that students who are interested make a firm commitment to attend all of the four nights. Contact TI on 595 8900 for more details.*

Lam Rim Meditation Retreat

Australia Day Long Weekend
January 25 - 27, 1992

(See insert for details)

Healing Meditation Course

Plans are well advanced for the next Healing Meditation Course to be held February 29 - March 1.

People with a serious illness who are interested in learning methods and meditations to help heal mind and body are welcome to enrol for the course, which will cost \$120 (members \$100) and will be led by Ken Hawter and Bob Sharples.

More details in the next Newsletter.

TARA INSTITUTE



A branch of the FPMT -
Foundation for the Preservation of
the Mahayana Tradition - a network of
Buddhist Centres in Australia and around the world.

Lam Rim Meditation Retreat

Australia Day Long Weekend JANUARY 25 – 27, 1992

Damien Busby will lead this meditation retreat focusing upon the contemplation topics of the Lam Rim or Graduated Path to Enlightenment.

The Lam Rim was first formulated by the Indian Master Atisha to provide clear and practical instructions on how to apply the Buddhist teachings along every step of the spiritual path.

The emphasis in the retreat will be on reflective meditation and contemplation of the Lam Rim topics through which we can deepen our understanding of the teachings and develop a clear sense of spiritual direction in our lives.

The retreat will be suitable for beginners and for those with some experience of the Lam Rim. There will be plenty of opportunity to discuss any questions about the relevance and application of Lam Rim in our lives and to share any benefit or insight.

Damien Busby

During discussions some years ago with a house-mate who was a TI student about the meaning of life and how to deal with the difficulties of relationships, Damien Busby came to see that Buddhism 'made sense'. Ever since then he has been a very keen student of Tibetan Buddhism, always looking to make more sense out of this world we live in.



He has been a member of Geshe Doga's Study Group since 1985 and has been a teacher of TI's introductory Monday nights since 1986. When talking about Buddhism he strives to emphasize how to apply Buddhist ideas in one's own daily situations, always remembering his own introduction to Buddhism.

Venue

TARA INSTITUTE

Cost

MEMBERS:

Residential \$100
Non-residential \$80

NON-MEMBERS:

Residential \$150
Non-residential \$125

Time

8.45am – 9pm Saturday
9am – 9pm Sunday
9am – 5pm Monday

Meals

Lunch and a light supper is included in the course fee.

Accommodation

Overnight accommodation with breakfast is available for course attendees.

● Please contact Jenny on 596 8900 for further details regarding accommodation.

Please tick

YES, I would like to register for the

Lam Rim Meditation Retreat

Name _____

Address _____

Phone (home) _____

(work) _____

I am a Member:

Residential \$100
 Non-residential \$80

I am not a Member:

Residential \$150
 Non-residential \$125

TOTAL\$ _____

Herewith my cheque/ money order to
Tara Institute

OR

Please charge the total to my

Bankcard
 Visa
 Mastercard

No. _____

Exp date _____

Signed _____

I heard about these teachings

- by Tara House News
 The Age Saturday Extra
 The Age EG
 directly from Centre
 friend
 poster
 Please send me details of the benefits of membership
 Please put me on your newsletter list



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