

Tara Institute Students at Kalachakra



Photo taken by Damien Busby, Bodhgaya

On day one, no mucking around, His Holiness dived straight into teachings on emptiness and how to approach the Kalachakra initiation. “The purpose of receiving the Kalachakra initiation is to make transformation within oneself.” But we can’t blindly just follow and hope the good vibes of the initiation will do (oops, I better get my act together). He said prayers and faith alone won’t lead to transformation of the mind; instead we need to integrate the teachings to train our mind.

There were noticeably less crowds in Bodhgaya than last time in 2012 when most of our group couldn’t even get into the teaching ground. According to The Tibetan Central

Administration, about a hundred thousand people turned up.

His Holiness is always inspiring, but inspiration comes from closer to home as well. From watching His Holiness streaming at Tara Institute to seeing and hearing His Holiness in person in the holy city of Bodhgaya for just a few days, TI student and resident Padraig Fitzpatrick had a sliver of an opportunity to come over to India and he took it. I’m not sure I would have come to Bodhgaya for just a few days, but listening to the Dalai Lama in person in India is a very different experience from hearing him in Australia. Apart from the crowds and the dust, India is the land of the Buddha and Bodhgaya is where he became enlightened, so it is very special.



Radio and TV personality Meshel Laurie connected with the TI group. This was her first trip to India and she chose a crowded Kalachakra teaching in Bodhgaya! We had a few pleasant afternoons drinking chai and ginger lemon honey in the hotel lobby.

The most embarrassing moment came when a couple of us were glued to our mobile phones, checking social media in the

lobby of our hotel, and completely missed the presence of the delightful Tenzin Yeshe Sonam, the eight year old reincarnation of Khensur Urgen Tseton, one of Geshe Doga’s teachers. By the time we looked up, he had run off to the dining room. What a missed opportunity. What a lesson to learn.

If you’ve never been to Bodhgaya, even though it is in the middle of Bihar, the most corrupt state in India, you must go. The energy is profoundly moving; dare I say transformative.

By Cynthia Karena



Photo taken by Damien Busby, Nalanda Group

Tara Institute news

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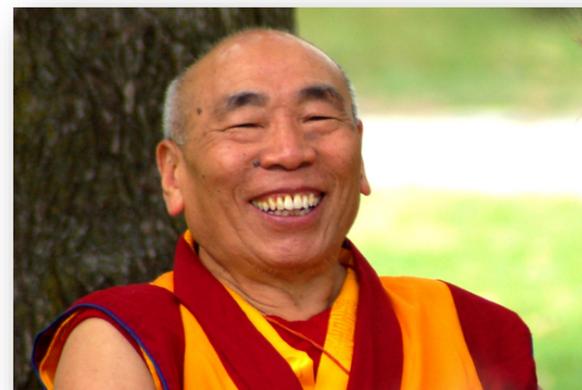


March 2017

Nyung Nye Friday March 10th 8pm to Monday March 13th 6am

Easter Retreat Friday 14 April 9am to 5pm, finishing on Monday 17 after lunch

Meditation is about transforming the mind into a positive state – everyone has the potential to meditate



The purpose of meditation is to transform our energy or thought patterns into something wholesome and positive. Through meditation we can aim to develop a good heart, kindness and wholesome thoughts. To

achieve this it is not necessary to sit in a formal meditation posture.

The point of meditation is to prevent the retention in the mind of any object that induces negative thought. This we can practise even while going about our daily activities. Sometimes there is confusion about how to meditate.

Although we might know of a mediation practice that would benefit us, we may think that in order to do it we might need some sort of prerequisite. This is not the case. Meditation is about transforming the mind into a positive state.

Through meditation we can remove the influence of the states of mind that cause unhappiness, such as desire, hatred, jealousy and so forth, and generate a calm mind. Everyone has the potential to meditate.

In our personality there are both positive and negative sides. No matter how bad we may be there is always a good quality to be found. It is logical to meditate with the intentions of developing further those positive qualities we already possess. We have weaknesses as well as strengths. It is very important to work on the positive aspects to develop them fully, so that eventually we can start to acquire other qualities that we now lack.

Inner Peace and Happiness—by Venerable Geshe Doga

You are welcome to contact the Tara Institute newsletter editors Allys Andrews and Sandra Kinread at allys.andrews@gmail.com for issues relating to the newsletter.

MONDAYS ~ 8pm

6, 13, 20 & 27 March

Introduction to Buddhist Meditation



With Clare Callinan

There are many things in life that are beyond our control. However it is possible to take responsibility for our own states of mind – and to change them for the better. According to Buddhism this is the most important thing we can do, and Buddhism teaches that it is the only real antidote to our personal sorrows, and to the anxieties, fears, hatreds, and general confusions that beset the human condition.

On these Monday nights we will learn some meditation techniques that encourage and develop concentration, clarity, emotional positivity and a calm seeing of the true nature of things.



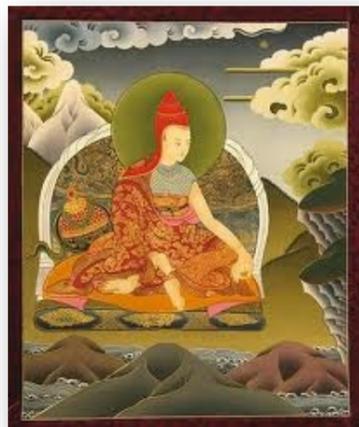
The atmosphere on Monday nights is relaxed and open and people are welcome to join us for one or all of these sessions this month. No need to register; just come along.

A facility fee is requested (\$5—current financial members free) to help cover administration costs. Just turn up at 7.50pm or phone the Tara Institute office on 9596 8900 for more details.

TUESDAYS ~ 7.45pm

7, 14, 21 & 28 March

STUDY GROUP



Geshe Doga continues teachings on the text called 'The Entrance for the Children of the Conquerors', a commentary on the 'Introduction to the Actions of Bodhisattvas' by Gyaltsab Rinpoche, translated by Venerable Fedor Stracke. It contains the root text of Shantideva's Bodhicaryavatara (A Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life).

Study Group provides the opportunity to study the Buddhist philosophy in depth. Study of this text may continue for some years.

The ongoing course runs in ten-week cycles throughout the year that comprise eight weeks of lectures, a week of structured discussion and a written test.

Homework is given each teaching week (optional) and is self-assessed.

Help is always available for new people.

There is no fee for these evenings. If you have any questions please contact Amelia on 9596 7410 or spc@tarainstitute.org.au.

WEDNESDAYS ~ 8pm

1, 8, 15, 22 & 29 March

An Evening with Geshe Doga



The practice of Dharma means calming one's own mind. When we have achieved some control over our own mind and when we are able to discipline and change our own mind by ourselves, then if we apply the practice of Dharma in a time of misery it will be very soothing and very effective in solving our problems.

Inner Peace and Happiness, by Venerable Geshe Doga.

Geshe Doga will continue to teach on the Lam Rim or Graduated Path to Enlightenment. Using the everyday situations that we all experience, Geshe Doga uses humour, stories and precise instructions on how to meditate to help us to work with our own minds.

There is no fee for these evenings. If you have any questions please contact Amelia on 9596 7410 or spc@tarainstitute.org.au.



NYUNG NYE

8pm Friday March 10th to 6am Monday March 13th

Fasting & Purification Retreat on Chenrezig Buddha of Compassion

Geshe Doga emphasised that this is a wonderful time for the Nyung Nye as it falls on the precept days following Losar and the Tibetan 15th. Participating in the Nyung Nye practice during the Saka Dawa period brings about an amazing collection of merit and purification.

The Nyung Nye meditation retreat, based on Chenrezig, the Buddha of Compassion, is a concentrated practice consisting of eight meditation sessions, with praises, prostrations and mantra recitations over two days. The emphasis of this practice is on developing compassion.

The eight Mahayana precepts are taken for the duration of the practice and on the second day, **additional vows of not drinking any fluids, eating or talking are observed.**

The retreat finishes early on Monday in time for a fabulous breakfast and plenty of time to get to work. The benefits of this retreat are inestimable.

There is **very limited accommodation at Tara Institute at the moment. Please call 9596 8900 asap to avoid being disappointed if you wish to stay overnight.**

FPMT members: residential \$55, non-members \$70

FPMT members: non-residential \$40, non-members \$55

If you would like to discuss any aspects of the retreat itself, please call Amelia on 9596 7410 or email spc@tarainstitute.org.au

For bookings, please contact TI office on 9596 8900 or email admin@tarainstitute.org.au

Not to be missed

Tara Institute's Annual Easter Retreat

April Friday 14th 9am to 5pm finishing on Monday 17th after lunch

Geshe Doga will be teaching on Je Tsongkhapa's Three Principal Aspects of the path which are, Renunciation, Bodhicitta and a correct view of Emptiness (voidness).

Auspicious days in March are calculated according to the lunar eclipse. On these days the benefits of actions are greatly multiplied, so are especially good for spiritual practice.

Monday 6	Tibetan 8	Tara Day	Tara Puja at TI 6pm
Tuesday 7	Tibetan 10	Tsog Day	Guru Puja at TI 6pm
Sunday 12	Tibetan 15	Full Moon	Precepts
Wednesday 22	Tibetan 25	Tsog Day	Guru Puja at TI 6pm
Thursday 23	Tibetan 25	Tsog Day	Guru Puja at TI 6pm
Tuesday 28	Tibetan 30	New Moon	Precepts

Week 1

MONDAY 27 February
8pm—Intro to Buddhist Meditation
TUESDAY 28 February
7.45pm—Study Group
WEDNESDAY 1 March
12.30pm—Healing Group
8pm—An Evening with Geshe Doga
THURSDAY 2
8pm Youth Group

Week 2

MONDAY 6
8pm—Intro to Buddhist Meditation
6pm—Tara Puja
TUESDAY 7
6pm—Guru Puja
7.45pm—Study Group
WEDNESDAY 8
12.30pm—Healing Group
8pm—An Evening with Geshe Doga

Week 3

MONDAY 13
8pm—Intro to Buddhist Meditation
TUESDAY 14
7.45pm—Study Group
WEDNESDAY 15
12.30pm—Healing Group
8pm—An Evening with Geshe Doga
THURSDAY 16
8pm Youth Group
SUNDAY 19
10.30am—Dharma Club

Week 4

MONDAY 20
8pm—Intro to Buddhist Meditation
TUESDAY 21
7.45pm—Study Group
WEDNESDAY 22
12.30pm—Healing Group
6pm—Guru Puja
8pm—An Evening with Geshe Doga
THURSDAY 23
6pm—Guru Puja

Week 4

MONDAY 27
8pm—Intro to Buddhist Meditation
TUESDAY 28
7.45pm—Study Group
WEDNESDAY 29
12.30pm—Healing Group
8pm—An Evening with Geshe Doga
THURSDAY 30
8pm Youth Group

March 2017