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# Tara Institute News

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## From the Director's desk

It's Spring! And it's a time of exciting change at Tara House.

Firstly, we're rearranging the front of the house. The beautiful, light-filled room to the right of the front door is to become the library. It's a splendid room with spectacular paintings on the ceiling panelled in blue, gray and pink. The hand-painted figures are said to represent music and poetry and they are lovely to behold.

There will be space for an FPMT notice-board and a sitting area. Mira Slade, a member of TI for many years, has generously donated bookshelves and armchairs. This will be a lovely area in

which to relax and browse through magazines and books.

Any donations of pot plants, coffee tables, light fittings and so on would be much appreciated.

The old library is to become a multi-purpose office space with areas for desktop publishing, Program co-ordination, His Holiness The Dalai Lama's Tour Committee and so on.

Sönam's old office will become a meeting and consulting room. The Reception office will remain to the left of the front door.

There are also changes to the way in

which TI is managed. We have a new streamlined Executive Committee and a separate Management Committee.

*For more about who we are, see pg 3.*

The Spiritual Program Committee is being formed and should be functioning by the start of 1992. Sönam and Kaye will manage this committee. Sönam's hours at TI will change and his and Kaye's roles re-defined. More details in our next issue.

Nancy Patton is our Newsletter editor. She will be delighted to receive articles and letters. Ring her on **699 5017**. Members' News will still be published regularly.

I look forward to seeing many of you at our Family Day later this month (*see inside*). *Alison Ribush*



Meet your new Executive and Management Committee members et al. Back row, from left: Phil Lengyel, Wendy Cook, Gabrielle (Gabe) Wallace, George Farley, Alison Ribush and Andy Melnic. Front row: Diana Taylor, Jane Lewis, Julia (Jools) Gardner, Kaye Miner, Tom Castles and Jenny McRae.

INSIDE

*Family Day with  
Geshe Doga*

*Lama Tsong Khapa Day*



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.

# A Real Spiritual Life

Extract from a Study Group teaching by the Venerable Geshe Doga



**Question to Geshe Doga:** How can we distinguish life in the world from a worldly life?

**Geshe-la's reply:** The whole emphasis must be placed on one's mind rather than focusing so much on the world, on the people with whom we live, and the place, and our job and so forth. What we are really talking about here is overcoming attachment to worldly objects and these can be anything – clothes, houses, people. We are not saying that we must get rid of our house, stop wearing a new dress and abandon the people we know in life and in our daily work.

The Lord Shakyamuni Buddha said in a sutra: "Even in the household life, Liberation and Nirvana can be sought and obtained". Therefore whether or not

something is pure Dharma comes down to our motivations or internal attitudes. It is just like the situation with a mother. As a mother we must be very patient with the children. Likewise, if we act out of a good motivation based on a loving and caring thought, then that will be pure Dharma.

In one text it refers to the Seventh Dalai Lama, Kelsang Gyatso, as one of the best examples of what constitutes a contented person. When we look at his situation we see that he possessed immense wealth. But those who knew him well understood that in his heart he had no attachment, not even to his own monk's robes. So again, when we talk about the practice of lessening attachment and being contented, we again have the implication that we cannot guarantee personal contentment by outwardly having less possessions nor, conversely, can we guarantee that by having possessions we would be discontented.

We also have the good example of Arya Lamchung who achieved Nirvana. When we look back to see how he achieved Liberation we see that the main outer action was sweeping the ground! But the real reason is the internal one underlying that outer action. This motivation is the real cause that transforms the action into a cause of Liberation.

So now if we look at the example of a proud person – they may pride themselves on keeping their place very neat and tidy but as soon as they see someone dirtying that environment, they go mad with anger. The virtue created by cleaning is then destroyed by that anger.

## Coffee Corner

We now have a well-stocked little shop at TI. The shelves are filled with your favourite chocolate bars – including that very exclusive chocolate made by the nuns at Chenrezig – and carob and fruit bars, soya drinks, juices and soft drinks.

There are also lots of ideas for Puja offerings, and goodies you might like to take home.

The little samsaric shop is now launching a line of beauty products made

according to the vegetarian ethic. There are absolutely no meat or fish industry by-products, and they are made with harmlessly-obtained substances and have undergone no animal testing.

Overheads at the shop are reduced to a minimum to ensure that all profits go to help maintain TI. Our prices are low to make sure you get the best deal. By shopping at TI, your money goes a long way.

And we can order in other products for you like vitamins etc.

● Just leave a message for Suzanne or Isabel on 596 2465.

# Meditation on the Buddha

*Lake stretches still  
beyond, the hills  
surround*

*This vast dry space  
contains release  
and refuge*

*Before me, Buddha  
floats, a golden rose  
above the crowd  
the incense clouds his robes*

*Around me millions  
chant and pray  
the sadnesses of lifetimes  
sway like prayer-flags  
in the dust*

*We are among old bones  
and years of wars  
and death  
each bereft  
and alone*

*Our desire for  
small tendernesses  
supplicates the Buddha  
who, with infinite gentleness  
strokes our hair  
with lotus fingers  
that drift on water*

*The lake is still  
and this ancient space is filled at last  
with peace.*

Contributed by a TI member

## STOP PRESS

Some exciting news for 1992. Kirti Tsenshab Rinpoche will tour Australia from September to November next year, at Lama Zopa's request. Kirti Tsenshab will tour with three attendants and will probably stay at TI in the middle of his tour. We'll let you know in due course which initiations and teachings he will give.

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# Change in Tara Institute Management Structure

The activities of Tara Institute have expanded significantly since our move to Mavis Avenue. Realising that the Centre management needed to change to meet new challenges, the Executive Committee (EC) unanimously decided to hold a workshop to look at improving the way it functioned. This workshop was held at Dromana on October 13 and was attended by nine EC members, Wendy Cook (Office Manager), Diana Taylor as Facilitator and George Farley as Chairman.

The workshop focused on the management structure and the way decisions affecting the future direction and day-to-day running of the Centre were made.

Major organisational changes were agreed to as follows:

#### **Old Structure**

Executive Committee of ten comprising Director, Assistant Director, Secretary and Portfolio holders.

#### **New Structure**

Streamlined **Executive Committee** of six comprising –

**Director:** Alison Ribush

**Assistant Director:** Jools Gardiner

**Treasurer:** Tom Castles

**Spiritual Program Co-ordinator:**

Kaye Miner/Sönam Jampa

**Members' Representative:** Jane Lewis

**Residents' Representative:** Andy Melnic

Also attending (non-voting positions) –

**Chairman:** Diana Taylor

**Minutes Secretary:** Wendy Cook/Phil Lengyel

The EC will concentrate on deciding issues of policy and longer term direction for the Centre. Day-to-day decisions on the management of portfolios will not be made in these fortnightly meetings.

A new **Management Committee (MC)** of nine comprising;

**All six members of the EC**

**House Manager:** Damien Busby

**Geshe Care Co-ordinator:** Gabe Wallace

**Healing Program Co-ordinator:**

Bob Sharples/Jenny McRae

The MC will be the forum where portfolio activities are reported upon and where day-to-day decisions which affect more than one portfolio can be made. Decisions will be made within the bounds of existing Centre policy. Any new policies will be referred to the EC.

#### **Voting Procedures**

For both the EC and MC, voting procedures were clarified. All decisions will be passed on a simple majority (50%) basis, with the Centre Director, as Lama Zopa's appointee, having the right to veto any decision. This procedure was agreed to unanimously.

Members wishing to have something raised at EC or MC meetings should contact Jane Lewis, Members' Representative or the relevant portfolio holder. If you have any questions regarding the organisational changes, feel free to contact any of the EC members.

● *Phone numbers can be obtained from Wendy in the Office. Telephone 596 2465.*



## Healing Program Committee

The Healing Program Committee (HPC) met last month to formalise its structure and plan ongoing activities. Jill Gillies handed over the portfolio to Bob Sharples who is the new Healing Program Co-ordinator. Jenny McRae has agreed to act as personal assistant to Bob and will handle all day-to-day matters arising from the committee and its activities.

Follow-up healing meditation nights have been organised for the August Course participants – the first was held last month. These nights have been put together especially for the Course people who have life-threatening illnesses.

The HPC is taking an opportunity to develop external networks. The Venerable Kaye Miner and Jenny McRae are representing TI on an Interfaith Advisory Group which has been set up to provide input to the 1993 national Palliative Care conference being hosted by the Victorian Palliative Care Association. This is a great chance to include the Buddhist viewpoint in such forums.

● *Any enquiries regarding the Healing Program Committee can be directed to Jenny McRae on 550 2711 (W) or 578 4370 (H).*

## Moments of fame on TV

Geshe-la and some of our members and friends will feature in a TV documentary being produced by Catholic Communications for the Seven Network.

Filming took place on a Tuesday night last month at TI. It was a diverting and interesting exercise, and presented us with a wonderful opportunity to explain to a wider audience some of the Buddhist philosophies and how they relate to every day living.

The segment will appear in a program focusing on *Religion in Australia* and is due to go to air in early December. We'll keep you informed.

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# NOVEMBER PROGRAM

## WEEK ONE

FRIDAY 1

8pm Guru Puja

SUNDAY 3

10am Debate Class

## WEEK TWO

MONDAY 4

8pm Introduction to

Buddhist Meditation

TUESDAY 5

8pm Study Group

WEDNESDAY 6

8pm From Chaos to Serenity -

Evening with Sönam Jampa

and Patrick Campisi

SUNDAY 10

10am Sunday School

10am Debate Class

## WEEK THREE

MONDAY 11

8pm Introduction to

Buddhist Meditation

TUESDAY 12

8pm Study Group

WEDNESDAY 13

8pm Evening With Geshe Doga

THURSDAY 14

8pm Tara Puja

SATURDAY 16

8pm Guru Puja

## WEEK FOUR

MONDAY 18

8pm Introduction to

Buddhist Meditation

TUESDAY 19

8pm Study Group

WEDNESDAY 20

8pm Evening With Geshe Doga

SATURDAY 24

10am-3pm Family Day

with Geshe Doga

## WEEK FIVE

MONDAY 25

8pm Introduction to

Buddhist Meditation

TUESDAY 26

8pm Study Group

WEDNESDAY 27

8pm Evening With Geshe Doga

SATURDAY 30

5am Nyung Nä commences

(finishes Monday morning)

8pm Lama Tsong Khapa Day

## Introduction to Buddhist Meditation

**Mondays: November 4, 11, 18, 25 at 8pm**

This month the Venerable Sönam Jampa will talk on how to unlock our limited self view by developing new ways of relating to ourselves and the world, particularly through love and compassion. Painful emotions can be transformed into positive ones through meditation.

Designed for meditation beginners, these evenings are also beneficial for those who have been meditating for some time.

● A facilities fee of \$5 per class is asked to help cover administrative expenses (Members free). Just turn up before 8pm or contact Wendy on 596 2465 for further details.

## Study Group

**Tuesdays: November 5, 12, 19, 26 at 8pm**

The Study Group is designed for students wishing to develop a deeper understanding of the principles of Buddhist practice. New and prospective students are welcome to 'sample' the Study Group at any time.

● Please ring Wendy on 596 2465 for details. There is no facilities fee for these classes.

## From Chaos To Serenity -

*An evening with Sönam and Patrick*

**Wednesday November 6 at 8pm**

Tonight, Sönam Jampa and Patrick Campisi will host a special meditation/discussion on integrating patience in our lives. With patience we can skilfully handle anything that comes our way. We can deal with any kind of suffering or harm and can pacify anger. After a group meditation and talk, tea will be brought into the Gumpa. Everyone is then invited to ask those burning questions they have been storing up all year! So this is your chance.

● All welcome. Ring Wendy on 596 2465.

## Evenings with Geshe Doga

**Wednesdays: November 13, 20, 27 at 8pm**

On Wednesday nights, Geshe Doga shows us how we can apply the timeless insights of Buddhism to the problems and difficulties of life in this 'degenerate age'.

The Meditation Chapter of Shantideva's Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life used by Geshe-la focuses on developing concentration, overcoming attachment and, in particular, developing the compassionate mind of bodhicitta.

These classes are suitable for all. No commitment to attend regularly is required.

● There is no facilities fee for these classes. Please ring Wendy on 596 2465.

## Family Day with Geshe Doga

**November 24 9am-3pm**

● (see insert for details)

## Lama Tsong Khapa Day Celebration

**Saturday November 30 at 8pm**

For centuries, Tibetan and Mongolian Buddhists have commemorated the passing of the extraordinary sage and scholar Lama Tsong Khapa. Known as 'the second Buddha', Lama Tsong Khapa was considered an emanation of Manjushri and, as the founder of the Gelugpa lineage, he single-handedly inspired an entire spiritual renaissance throughout Tibet. The flowering of pure Buddhist teaching and practice he initiated is responsible even for the existence of Tara Institute and the FPMT.

Today many thousands of Western Buddhists also commemorate this day.

Please join us in this joyous celebration. Offerings of candles, flowers, food to share etc. most welcome.

● Please ring Wendy on 596 2465.

## AUSPICIOUS DAYS IN NOVEMBER

**Fri 1** Tibetan 25th - Tsog Day; **Wed 6** Tibetan 30th - New Moon (Precepts); **Thur 14** Tibetan 8th - Tara Day (Precepts); **Sat 16** Tibetan 10th - Tsog Day; **Thur 21** Tibetan 15th - Full Moon (Precepts); **Sat 30** Tibetan 25th - Tsog Day, Lama Tsong Khapa Day (Precepts).