

DECORATIVE DHARMA

One should not view one's dharma practice as being something decorative, regarding statues and images as material possessions or as furnishings for one's house, or thinking that because there is an empty space on a wall one might as well put up a thangka for decoration. That kind of attitude should not be cultivated. When you arrange the statues or thangkas, you should do so out of a deep respect from the mind, moved by your faith and conviction. If you can arrange these physical representations—statues and so forth—out of deep respect and faith, that's all right. On the other hand, the attitude that they are merely material possessions is dangerous and destructive. I think that some people who have a cupboard or the like in which they keep all their precious possessions may arrange an altar on it just for the sake of decoration. This is very wrong.

Having such motivations is not the proper way to become a Buddhist; the proper way to become a Buddhist is to bring about some positive change within the mind. Any practice that can give you more courage when you are undergoing a very difficult time and that can provide you with some kind of solace and calmness of mind is a true practice of the dharma.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama - Path to Bliss: A Practical Guide to Stages of Meditation; Page 32.

FAMILY PICNIC DAY

Sunday November 25

Heart Teaching by Geshe Doga at 10.30am

As we approach the end of the year with Christmas and the holiday season ahead, it is wonderful to be reminded of the value of cultivating harmony in our families, friendships and workplaces. Geshe Doga gives heartfelt instructions on how to skillfully negotiate this potentially stressful time with a happy and patient mind.

We all need this ... don't we?

This newsletter is Dharma material; please treat it with respect. For information on the disposal of Dharma materials, see www.fpmt-ldc.org/res_pracdharma.php

Tara Institute

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Tara Institute is affiliated with the FPMT — the Foundation for the Preservation of the Mahayana Tradition — a network of Buddhist Centres in Australia and worldwide. Following the Mahayana teachings of the Buddha — in the tradition of Lama Tsong Khapa — we work to relieve all beings from suffering in all its forms. Tara Institute is fully audited, not-for-profit and mainly run by volunteers. We rely entirely on the support of members, friends, benefactors and bequests. Donations and fees are requested in order to keep the Centre running.



followed by a picnic in Landcox Park at 12.00pm

Please join us after the teaching in Landcox Park for lunch, relaxation, conversation and games for the children of all ages.....that means you! Bring picnic rugs, sunscreen, food to share, cricket bats, Frisbees etc.

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



If undelivered, please return to -
 3 Mavis Avenue, East Brighton 3187

Vajrasattva Empowerment
 Sunday 11 at 10.am

Long Life Puja for Geshe Doga
 Sunday 18 at 10am
 Preparation Day
 Saturday 17 at 1pm

Heart Teaching by Geshe Doga
 Sunday November 25 at 10.30am followed by the
Family Picnic Day
 at 12.00pm

How to Make Life Dharma While Studying

Rinpoche commented that: "This is very, very, good advice for other monks and nuns [and all] who are studying at Sera, Kopan, Nalanda, Istituto Lama Tzong Khapa, etc. and for other students. This explains how to make the life Dharma. One thing is how to study, but it's also how to make the life Dharma."



Lama Zopa Rinpoche at Land of Medicine Buddha August 2012 - photo by Chris Majors

"...Yes, studying the Dharma is good and studying the extensive scriptures is good. Yes. But that doesn't necessarily mean that your study and debate becomes practicing Dharma. For all these things to become Dharma, your mind has to become Dharma. If your mind becomes Dharma, then everything becomes Dharma, even eating, walking, sitting and sleeping."

The full advice can be read on www.fpmt.org

MONDAYS ~ 8pm
•5, 12, 19 & 26 November

Introduction to Buddhist Meditation



with Clare Callinan

“Usually our mind is completely occupied with unprofitable, repetitious thoughts, clutching at fantasies and giving way to anger, jealousy or despair when they elude us. Learning some Buddhist philosophy and meditation means ringing our inner wisdom bell, being constantly on the alert and clearing away the refuse that clogs our mind, the attachments and addictions that haunt our day dreams. By making this our daily practice we ourselves become dharma; all our energy becomes dharma wisdom.”

– Lama Yeshe

We will learn some meditation techniques that, if practiced regularly, will lead to a wiser and calmer state of mind. Everything you engage in becomes more meaningful for yourself and also for others around you.



The atmosphere on Monday nights is relaxed and open and people are welcome to attend all four teachings.

A facility fee is requested (members free) to help cover administration expenses. Just turn up at 7.50pm or phone Llysse in the Tara Institute office on 9596 8900 for more details.

TUESDAYS ~ 7.45pm
•6, 13 & 20 November
•27 November - Discussion

STUDY GROUP



Study Group offers students the opportunity to study more deeply in a structured and supportive environment. The course runs in six-week blocks comprising four weeks of teachings, one night of discussion group and a written exam on the subject matter of that series. Homework is given each teaching week and is assessed by experienced students from the group.

Geshe Doga's commentary on Nagarjuna's *Precious Garland* continues this year.

Nagarjuna is renowned for his penetrating analysis of reality. In *Precious Garland* he offers advice on how to conduct one's life and how to construct social policies that reflect Buddhist ideals. The advice for personal happiness is concerned first with improving one's condition over the course of lifetimes and then with release from all kinds of suffering, culminating in buddhahood.

The evenings run in six-week blocks and students are asked to attend all six sessions. You are most welcome to come and experience Study Group at any time but conditions apply if you wish to attend on a regular basis.

If you have any questions please contact Ven. Lhamo on 9596 7410 or spc@tarainstitute.org.au.

WEDNESDAYS ~ 8pm
•7, 14 & 21 November
•28 November -
Vajrasattva Commitment
An Evening with Geshe Doga



Geshe Doga will continue to teach on the Lam Rim or Graduated Path to Enlightenment. Using the every day 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 Venerable Lhamo on 9596 7410 or spc@tarainstitute.org.au.

Note for your Diary

Lhama Tsong Khapa Puja
Saturday December 8th at 8pm

For centuries, Tibetan and Mongolian Buddhists have commemorated the passing of the famous Tibetan yogi and scholar Tsong Khapa whose life and work gave us the Gelupka lineage which continues to this day.

Everybody is invited to share in this beautiful ceremony of chanting and meditation.

Merit Box Offerings

The money from the merit boxes is offered at this puja. It would be so appreciated if you could count the money and write down the total on a slip of paper and include it with your offering and place it on the table under the Chenrezig thanka in the gompa.

To see how your offering benefits others go to fpmt.org and follow the prompts. See Ven. Lhamo should you want to participate in the future and get a Merit Box.

Vajrasattva Empowerment

Sunday 11th at 10am
COMMITMENTS APPLY

Common to all four traditions of Tibetan Buddhism, the practice of Vajrasattva is used to purify obstacles to spiritual development, negative karma and illness.

Geshe Doga will confer the Vajrasattva empowerment on Sunday 11 November at 10am.

There are no prerequisites but there is a commitment to attend all three practice nights on Wednesday 28 November, 5 December and 12 December at 8pm.

Please note; you must attend ALL THREE nights; no exceptions.

Long Life Puja for Geshe Doga

Sunday 18th at 10am

Each year, in order to thank Geshe Doga for his unfailing commitment and kindness to the students and friends of Tara Institute, the 16 Arhat Puja is offered to him for his long and healthy life.

Everybody is most welcome – new students, old students, friends and family.

Geshe Doga is offering lunch to everyone after the puja.

Setting up for the Long Life Puja - Saturday 17th at 1pm

Setting up the tables with flowers, incense, light, food and water offerings is a beautiful expression of creativity and so uplifting for our minds. We work harmoniously, drink tea and meet many new and old friends. Working together is so joyful.

If anyone would like to contribute any of the following offerings or part of them, please let Margie Hanrahan know or myself Ven. Lhamo on 9596 7410. or email spc@tarainstitute.org

- ◆ White and yellow flowers for water bowls only on the day
- ◆ White and yellow flowers for Geshe Doga's throne
- ◆ Bunches of flowers for the main altars
- ◆ Sponsorship of the tsog (\$200)
- ◆ Monetary offerings to the sangha

If you have any questions please contact Venerable Lhamo on 9596 7410 or spc@tarainstitute.org.au.



WEEK 1
MONDAY 5
8pm - Intro to Buddhist Meditation
TUESDAY 6
7.45pm - Study Group
WEDNESDAY 7
8pm - An Evening with Geshe Doga
FRIDAY 9
6.00pm - Guru Puja
SUNDAY 11
10am - Vajrasattva Empowerment

WEEK 2
MONDAY 12
8pm - Intro to Buddhist Meditation
TUESDAY 13
7.45pm - Study Group
WEDNESDAY 14
10.00am - Healing Group
8pm - An Evening with Geshe Doga
SATURDAY 17
1pm - Preparation for Long Life Puja
SUNDAY 18
10am - Long Life Puja for Geshe Doga

WEEK 3
MONDAY 19
8pm - Intro to Buddhist Meditation
TUESDAY 20
7.45pm - Study Group
WEDNESDAY 21
10.00am - Healing Group
6.00pm - Tara Puja
8pm - An Evening with Geshe Doga
FRIDAY 23
6.00pm - Guru Puja
SUNDAY 25
10.30am - Dharma Club
10.30am - Heart Teaching by Geshe Doga
12pm - Family Picnic in Landcox Park

WEEK 4
MONDAY 26
8pm - Intro to Buddhist Meditation
TUESDAY 27
7.45pm - Study Group Discussion
WEDNESDAY 28
10.00am - Healing Group
8pm - Vajrasattva Commitment Evening

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

Friday 9	Tibetan 25	Tsog Day	Guru Puja at TI 6pm
Tuesday 13	Tibetan 30	New Moon	Precepts
Wednesday 21	Tibetan 8	Tara Day	Tara Puja at TI 6pm
Friday 23	Tibetan 10	Tsog Day	Guru Puja at TI 6pm
Wednesday 28	Tibetan 15	Full Moon	Precepts