

News

December 2022

January 2023



Lama Tsong Khapa Day

Sunday December 18th 2022

Lama Tsong Khapa puja starts at 8pm

You are all invited to share in this beautiful ceremony of chanting and meditation. If you wish to make offerings of candles, food and flowers, you are most welcome to do so.

Please contact Paul at TI office on 9596 8900 or email spc@tarainstitute.org.au

Who is Lama Tsong Khapa and what was his significance?

Lama Tsong Khapa lived from 1357 to 1419 or roughly about 600 years ago now. He was the founder of the Gelugpa tradition which is the tradition that HH the Dalai Lama, Lama Zopa Rinpoche and Geshe Doga and the Tara Institute Geshes all trained in. The Gelugpa tradition was a synthesis of the existing traditions in Tibet with a special focus on the Nalanda tradition from India.

According to His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Tsong Khapa's legacy was the special emphasis he placed on critical analysis as essential to the attainment of Enlightenment and to understanding the nature of reality. Other achievements included his meticulous approach when interpreting crucial philosophical issues and going back to the authentic Indian sources for these as well as strictly adhering to the practice of Vinaya (monastic discipline).



Apart from being a great scholar, Tsong Khapa was also a great practitioner. He did many retreats throughout his life and in particular with a group of eight disciples entered into a four year retreat, where as part of that retreat he did three and half million full length prostrations and 1,800,000 mandala offerings. Finally, to quote Tsong Khapa himself

"First, I sought wide and extensive learning

Second, I perceived all teachings as personal instructions

Finally, I engaged in meditative practice day and night

All these I dedicated to the flourishing of the Buddha's teaching."

This is definitely a life to be inspired by and to try and emulate.

- from John Wright

MONDAYS ~ 8pm

Introduction to Buddhist Meditation

5, 12 & 19 December

9, 16, 23 & 30 January



with Ashvini Shekhar

"If you would like to be selfish, you should do it in a very intelligent way. The stupid way to be selfish is seeking happiness for ourselves alone. The intelligent way to be selfish is to work for the welfare of others." HH The Dalai Lama

Whether we are religious or not, we can all see some value in the altruistic wish to benefit others. Remarkably, from the Buddhist point of view, this altruistic mind is also the best way to benefit ourselves.

In pursuing our own self-interest in this way – caring about others over ourselves – we are led to a genuine and unwavering inner happiness.

This month on Monday nights, we will delve into how altruism can be the foundation of a happy and meaningful life and explore techniques to strengthen this attitude.

Sessions will run for one hour and include guided meditations, a talk, and time for questions. While our teachers kindly volunteer their time for these teachings and do not take any payment, there is a suggested facility fee of \$5. This fee goes towards the general running of our centre. Everyone is welcome and there is no need to book. For any inquires about these teachings please contact spc@tarainstitute.org.au or call 9596 8900.

with Mark Fernandes

One of the many interesting things about modern psychology is the interest in mindfulness. From a Buddhist perspective being mindful is important but this should be tempered by increasing our ability to focus on our inner thoughts and as important being able to switch off.

In modern life the ability to rest the mind is difficult without knowing how.

Come along and learn about some of the Buddhist techniques to bring inner peace and happiness that is long lasting and effective.

Mark is a senior student at Tara Institute and has been keenly teaching about Buddhist philosophy for several years.



TUESDAYS ~ 7:45pm

Study Group Discussion Night

22 & 29 November
6 December

On developing bodhichitta through the seven point cause and effect method.

Bodhichitta is the wish to become enlightened for the benefit of all sentient beings. We do this through cultivating great love, compassion and superior intention. All welcome.

WEDNESDAYS ~ 8pm

11, 18, 25 January & 1 February

with Damien Busby



The Wednesday night classes in January will be meditations on developing compassion. This will involve visualising Chenrezig the Buddha of compassion and developing a compassionate attitude. The sessions will consist of explanations of the practice and time engaging in the meditations themselves. There will be time for discussion as well. These classes are suitable for beginners as well as for experienced meditators.

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

DECEMBER 2022

Thursday 1	Tibetan 8	Tara Day	Tara Puja
Saturday 3	Tibetan 10	Tsog Day	Guru Puja - Lama Zopa Rinpoche's birthday
Wednesday 7	Tibetan 15	Full Moon	Precepts
Sunday 18	Tibetan 25	Tsog Day	Guru Puja - Lama Tsong Khapa Day
Friday 23	Tibetan 30	New Moon	Precepts
Friday 30	Tibetan 8	Tara Day	Tara Puja

JANUARY 2023

Sunday 1	Tibetan 10	Tsog Day	Guru Puja
Friday 6	Tibetan 15	Full Moon	Precepts
Tuesday 17	Tibetan 25	Tsog Day	Guru Puja
Saturday 21	Tibetan 30	New Moon	Precepts
Sunday 29	Tibetan 8	Tara Day	Tara Puja
Tuesday 31	Tibetan 10	Tsog Day	Guru Puja

Silent Mind, Holy Mind

Christmas Dharma



In 1971, Lama Yeshe gave a teaching to Westerners who were in Nepal. He reminded them that for Buddhists, Christmas is the perfect time to practise equanimity and recall the qualities of Jesus.

'When we see each other again on Christmas Eve for the celebration of Holy Jesus' birth, let us do so in peace and with a good vibration and a happy mind. I think it would be wonderful. To attend the celebration with an angry disposition would be so sad. Come instead with a beautiful motivation and much love. Have no discrimination, but see everything as a golden flower, even your worst enemy. Then Christmas, which so often produces an agitated mind, will become so beautiful.

When you change your mental attitude, the external vision also changes. This is a true turning of the mind. There is no doubt about this. ...

Some of you might think, "Oh, I want to have nothing to do with Jesus, nothing to do with the Bible." This is a very angry, emotional attitude to have towards Christianity. If you really understood, you would recognize that what Jesus taught was, "Love!" It is as simple and as profound as that. If you had true love within you, I am sure you would feel much more peaceful than you do now.

How do you normally think of love? Be honest. It is always involved with discriminations, isn't it? Just look around this room and see if

anyone here is an object of your love. Why do you discriminate so sharply between friend and enemy? Why do you see such a big difference between yourself and others?

In the Buddhist teaching, this falsely discriminating attitude is called dualism. Jesus said that such an attitude is the opposite of true love. Therefore, is there any one of us who has the pure love that Jesus was talking about? If we do not, we should not criticize his teachings or feel they are irrelevant to us. We are the ones who have misunderstood, perhaps knowing the words of his teachings, but never acting upon them. ...

What I have read in the Bible has the same connotation as the Buddhist teachings on equilibrium, compassion and changing one's ego-attachment into love for others. ...

The teachings on love are very practical. Do not put religion somewhere up in the sky and feel you are stuck down here on earth. If the actions of body, speech and mind are in accordance with loving kindness, you automatically become a truly religious person.'

The full version of Lama Yeshe's 1971 Christmas teachings has been made into a book that is available from the [Lama Yeshe Wisdom Archive](#)

DECEMBER 2022

Week 1

THURSDAY 1

6pm - Tara Puja

SATURDAY 3

6pm - Guru Puja

Week 2

MONDAY 5

8pm - Intro to Buddhist Meditation

TUESDAY 6

7.45pm - Study Group discussion

WEDNESDAY 7

11am - Wednesday Meditation Session

THURSDAY 8

11am - Healing Group

Week 3

MONDAY 12

~ Office closes ~

8pm - Intro to Buddhist Meditation

WEDNESDAY 14

11am - Wednesday Meditation Session

Week 4

SUNDAY 18

8pm - Lama Tsong Khapa Puja

MONDAY 19

8pm - Intro to Buddhist Meditation

Week 5

FRIDAY 30

6pm - Tara Puja

JANUARY 2023

Week 1

SUNDAY 1

6pm - Guru Puja

Week 2

MONDAY 9

~ Office reopens ~

8pm - Intro to Buddhist Meditation

WEDNESDAY 11

8pm - Chenrezig Meditation

Week 3

MONDAY 16

8pm - Intro to Buddhist Meditation

TUESDAY 17

6pm - Guru Puja

WEDNESDAY 18

11am - Wednesday Meditation Session

8pm - Chenrezig Meditation

Week 4

MONDAY 23

8pm - Intro to Buddhist Meditation

WEDNESDAY 25

11am - Wednesday Meditation Session

8pm - Chenrezig Meditation

Week 5

SUNDAY 29

6pm - Tara Puja

MONDAY 30

8pm - Intro to Buddhist Meditation

TUESDAY 31

6pm - Guru Puja

WEDNESDAY FEB 1

11am - Wednesday Meditation Session

8pm - Chenrezig Meditation

MERIT BOX COLLECTION



Quick reminder, please give your donation to the office or ring up Paul after you deposit the collection into Tara Institute's bank account with the note saying MERIT BOX

Reflections

of Tara Institute

from George N McQ

Tara Institute (TI) has a very kind and welcoming community, but what's also good is you don't need to involve yourself into anything if you don't want to, it's all up to yourself.



I have been attending TI since I was **very** young, and so have been learning a few practices of Buddhism for quite some time. I can confidently say that this has been extremely beneficial for me, and has helped me in many ways. It's helped me in my hobbies, for example I like writing (mainly in Japanese) and my Buddhist understanding gives me lots of originality and depth in it. This even helps me in school, especially with those English text response essays as I can understand and propose philosophical ideas corresponding to the text which come from my Buddhist knowledge, that many of my peers may not

have been able to grasp because they didn't learn it (sadly only the ideas are my strong point, and not the actual English writing itself).

Of course there's meditation which also assists to relieve stress too, and advocates awareness in you of what is actually important (which I definitely should do more of and less of procrastinating). In this way the Dharma is fruitful for specific things in life - however what I find the most important is that it has definitely made me a better person.

Just thinking about Buddhist concepts of karma (cause and effect) and cyclic existence (reincarnation) or merely keeping in my mind the concept of Bodhicitta (in simple words mind of love and compassion) has helped me in an unimaginable amount. Even right now I am known for making many mistakes, am also lazy and a proud procrastinator (I totally did not write this a month late). So, just the thought of 'if I didn't have the Dharma, how sinister a person I would be?' sends shivers through my spine.

To sum my personal experience up, I think TI's community is friendly, Dharma helps with your daily goals but also helps to make you a better and wiser person in the long term. Personally I feel the Dharma is a path, and of course there are many other ways to get to our goal, but at least this one with Geshe Doga is very safe and efficient.

OFFICE CLOSURE

Tara Institute's office will be closed from Monday December 12th and will reopen on Monday January 9th.

The phone and emails will be unattended during this period.

If you have an urgent enquiry, please email

director@tarainstitute.org.au

or

spc@tarainstitute.org.au

WORKING BEE

The next working bee is scheduled for 9.00am – 1.00pm on Sunday December 11th.

We will be focussing on cleaning out the garage/workshop.

Lunch and morning tea will be provided.

Please inform Paul, the Centre Manager admin@tarainstitute.org.au if you are planning to come so that we can plan the equipment and catering.

TI Social Media Photo Shoot



Tara Institute Social Media Group is organising a photoshoot. Photos will be posted on all Tara Institute social media promoting our Monday night meditation class. It will take place in the main Gompa. We will be taking group shots and single shots.

If you're available for a couple of hours on either Saturday the 14th or the 21st of January in the afternoon, we would love to see you.

Please email Kate at library@tarainstitute.org.au