the main reasons why one partner decides to break off a relationship.

When someone just cares about themselves, they can't be trusted. Relationship break- ups cause misery and sorrow in our lives. We have to realise that, for the sake of our own future, we can't just always think of ourselves but need to think about other people's needs and win their trust by showing genuine care in our thoughts and actions.

For example, you can open your mind and put aside your own needs in order to help someone else in their time of need. They will then realise that you care.

Many problems won't arise if we have a less selfish mind. When we get upset very quickly for minor reasons with a partner or friend, this is a sign of a strong selfish mind. For example, if we get upset when a close friend uses an object we regard as our personal possession, this is a sign of a selfish mind. When we get upset quickly for minor reasons, we can also feel ourselves become proud and arrogant if we think we are in the right. The selfish mind affects both our mental attitudes and our physical actions. When we are motivated or influenced by a selfish mind, we become unpleasant to others. Our speech and even our facial expressions become unpleasant. The selfish mind destroys our whole outlook and personality. As we don't really want to appear selfish, arrogant, short-tempered and uncaring, then we have to change. We replace the self-cherishing mind with a mind that cherishes others and considers their needs. And out of this positive speech and actions will follow.

Wherever we are, whatever we are doing or saying, if we make sure that our motivation considers other people's needs, then our actions will be true spiritual actions. Others will then naturally regard us as good, reliable people with a friendly nature.

Geshe Doga was once travelling by bus from Kathmandu to the great Stupa in Boudanath. There was a woman in the bus sitting next to him with a load of goods. She told him her purse was missing. There was a lot of money in the purse, but what impressed Geshe Doga was that she didn't seem upset or worried. She told Geshe Doga that she hoped the thief would benefit from the money. This woman had a different mental attitude, regardless of whether she was a spiritual practitioner or not; she knew that the money would benefit others just as it had would have benefited herself. With this sort of consideration of others, we can tolerate loss in our own lives and prevent such adverse situations from bringing unease and unhappiness in our minds.

Tara Institute
3 Mavis Avenue, East Brighton Victoria 3187
Phone 9596 8900, Fax 9596 4856

Tara Institute is a branch of 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, non-profit and 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.

If undelivered, please return to —
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Phone (03) 9596 8900 Fax (03)9596 4856

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Tara Institute NEWS

M A Y 1 9 9 8

THIS MONTH

WHITE TARA
PRACTICE DAY for Lama Zopa Rinpoche
• Sunday 10

Saka Dawa
NYUNG NA
• Friday 29 to Monday 1 June

Mind training

Commentary by Ven. Geshe Doga on Dharmarakshita's *The Wheel of Sharp Weapons*
Translated by Samdup Tsering, and edited by Mary-Lou Considine

It is our responsibility to take care of our mind and body. We look after our mind by having a meditation practice where we are always observing our mind and watching our thoughts in the continuum of our mind. Whenever we recognise a bad thought or any negative states of mind, we try to subdue and correct them.

We will then find that our mind will become calmer and we can enjoy both a healthy body and healthy mind with lasting peace and happiness.

There are some ways of thinking and states of mind that we must change. So we shouldn't, as some people do, acknowledge their negative and destructive states of mind and say that they can't change and that it's almost impossible to change. They don't even make any initial attempt to change or to challenge these negativities in the mind. Rather, we need to remember that we do have the ability to change and to shape our mind.

Practising involves keeping what we recognise to be positive and beneficial states of mind, and overcoming the recognisable negative and destructive states of mind. We shouldn't feel discouraged or hopeless. With strong determination and effort we can diminish the negative states of mind. As the famous Indian master Ashvagosha said, "You are master of your own self, but you can also be the enemy of yourself.

Continued on Page 5...

Mind training

...continued from Page 1

Whenever we face a problem in life we tend to place the blame externally, ie. on to other people or objects. But we actually receive more harm from our own negative states of mind than from any external person or object. If we don't challenge and minimise our negative states of mind, then they can destroy us like a real enemy would We can protect ourselves by challenging the negative states of mind and making an effort to keep our positive states of mind.

The text, "The Wheel of Sharp Weapons", teaches us about mind training which is like a weapon for destroying our self-centred and self-cherishing states of mind. The main thrust of the whole text is to overcome the self-cherishing attitude However, a clarification is needed. Self-cherishing does not mean that you shouldn't look after yourself or value yourself. It is most important that we all value ourselves and look after ourselves as best we can.

A self-cherishing attitude is destructive. We need to understand what this self-cherishing attitude is and what effect it has on our lives and the lives of the people around us. Then we can see it is the source of all our problems and any harm we receive. The self-cherishing attitude arises when we have a strong grasping or hold onto our own self. Deep within us there is some sense of 'I'. When we hold this 'I' with a self-cherishing attitude we place our needs above others and have no concern about anybody else's needs. There is no room in our minds to even think about caring or helping others.

When this self-cherishing attitude arises we want to gain all benefits for ourselves and not give any portion of the benefit to others. When we have a self-cherishing attitude, all the people around us who support us in life turn into our enemies, or at least start to dislike us. Not only do our friends become enemies, but all other surrounding conditions also become a source of unhappiness and suffering. If, however, we adopt an attitude of cherishing others, rather than cherishing ourselves, the outcome is reversed - all our friends become closer and all the surrounding conditions become a source of happiness.

We can see the difference in our lives between being selfish and being thoughtful of other people's needs. There is great benefit when we show a less selfish mind, and more consideration, towards our family, friends and workmates.

When living with others, the best attitude to show the other person is one of care and concern, while reducing our own self-importance. If we don't reduce our selfish mind, our actions will seem uncaring and inconsiderate. People, of course, don't like this and this is one of

TIBETAN GOVERNMENT LEADER VISITS TI

On Saturday 18 April, Melbourne's Tibetan Community met with Ven. Professor Samdhong Rinpoche at Tara Institute. Rinpoche is the Chairman (or speaker) of the Tibetan People's Deputies - aka Tibetan Parliament in Exile- and is the most important political leader after His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

Venerable Geshe Doga, Venerable Carolyn Lawler and some TI students greeted him on his arrival. Geshela gave Rinpoche a tour of the centre. Carolyn said that Rinpoche appeared most interested in the gompa and "looked closely at things". The Tibetans were really warmed by Rinpoche and felt "inspired" by his talk. Rinpoche is an advocate of "Satyagraha" — the non-violent path of resistence developed by Mahatma Gandhi.

As well as being an important political figure, Venerable Samdhong Rinpoche is the Vice Chancellor of the Tibetan Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies in Varanassi. It is in this capacity that he is visiting Australia. His tour was organised by Chime Ringzig, His Holiness' Representative and Professor Jay Garfield of the University of Tasmania. Rinpoche is working with Professor Garfield on developing an exchange program with the University of Tasmania.

THANK YOU FROM SAMDUP!

A brief but heartfelt thankyou to all the TI people who came to the fund raising dinner held for my parents. Your support and kindness were greatly appreciated. My parents are well and safely back in India. I know they would want me to thank you all on their behalf. They had a wonderful time in Australia and were sad to leave.

Samdup Tsering

CONGRATULATIONS HELEN AND PHILIP !!

Congratulations to Helen (Price) and Philip Ponder on the birth of their baby, David John, who was born on 7 April, and weighed 10lb 3oz!

We wish you much bliss and enough sleep.

With love and best wishes from the Tara Institute Community.

MONSTER TI GARAGE SALE

Saturday 23 May

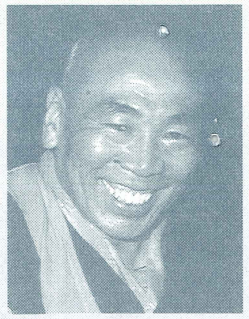
Roll up, roll up, and tell all your friends about the monster TI garage sale on **Saturday 23 May** at 8.00am.

TI garage sales are famous for fun and fabulous bargains, as well as raising much needed funds for TI.

We need you to:

- Tell everyone about the Monster TI garage sale!
- Bring us your wares for us to sell – any furniture, household goods and plants etc.
- Volunteer! Anyone interested in helping out the Friday night before and/or early (6.00am) Saturday morning – please leave a message with Sheena at TI on 9596 8900. Thanks.

PROGRAM



It is our responsibility to take care of our mind and body.

We need to remember that we ... have the ability to change and shape our mind.

With strong determination we can diminish the negative states of mind.

We actually receive more harm from our own negative states of mind than from any person or object.

Geshe Doga,
TI's Resident Lama
Wednesday 25 March 1998

WHITE TARA PRACTICE DAY AND LONG-LIFE PUJA FOR LAMA ZOPA RINPOCHE

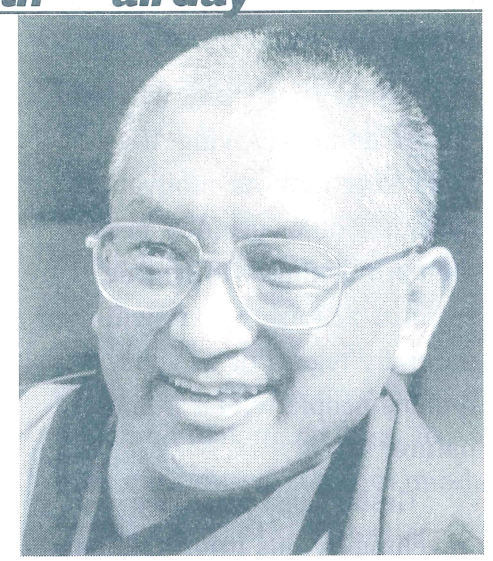
- Sunday 10th — all day

The practice begins with precepts with Geshe Doga at 5am, followed by four sessions of the White Tara practice (sadhana), and a lunch offered by the Centre. Please feel free to attend one or two sessions, if you cannot do the full day.

The schedule for the day is:

- **5am - Precepts with Geshe Doga**
- **8am - First session of White Tara sadhana**
- **10am - Second session of sadhana**
- **11am - Lunch offered by the Centre**
- **1.30pm - Third session of sadhana**
- **3.30pm - Fourth session of sadhana**
- **8pm - Long Life Puja for Lama Zopa Rinpoche**

Lama Zopa Rinpoche is the Spiritual Director of the Foundation for the Preservation of the Mahayana Tradition (FPMT) of which Tara Institute is a branch. TI is one of more than 80 FPMT Centres in 17 countries — teaching centres (like TI), healing and hospice centres, meditation retreats, monasteries and publishing houses — all of them a tribute to



Rinpoche's incredible energy and selflessness.

Rinpoche amazes his students by maintaining a punishing schedule of constant travel between the different centres - to teach, advise, consult, comfort and support - while maintaining a heart-touching humility, sense of humour and great warmth. The puja is an opportunity for all of us to pray for his long life and repay his kindness. All Members and friends are invited - offerings of flowers or food are most welcome.

Please note: If you plan to take precepts and be at TI for the practice day lunch, phone Sheena at the TI Office before Wednesday 6 so that we can organise numbers for catering!!!!!

Saka Dawa

NYUNG NA

- Friday 29 at 7.30pm (Introductory session) — Monday 1 June at 6am

The Nyung Na meditation retreat is a traditional Saka Dawa activity. It is a concentrated practice consisting of eight meditation sessions, with praises, prostrations and mantra recitations over two days. The eight Mahayana precepts are taken for the duration of the practice and on the second day, additional vows of not eating drinking or talking are observed. The emphasis of this practice is to develop compassion.

The retreat finishes early on Monday June 1 in time for a fabulous breakfast and plenty of time to get to work. The benefits of this retreat are inestimable.

$45 ($40 FPMT Members) residential $35 ($30 FPMT Members) non-residential. Bookings are essential. For more information please contact the Ven. Carolyn Lawler on 9596 7410.

MONDAYS

- 4, 11, 18 and 25 at 8pm

INTRODUCTION TO BUDDHIST MEDITATION

with Ross Moore

Monday nights offer beginners a practical introduction to meditation and basic Buddhist principles. Through guided meditations and discussion, new students can experience how meditation can bring calmness, insight and happiness to their lives. These one-hour classes are very relaxed, and suitable for students at any level. Please feel free to stay for tea and cake after class.

A facilities fee of $5 per class is requested to help cover administration expenses (Members free). Just turn up at 7.50pm or phone Sheena in the TI office on 9596 8900.

WATER BOWL OFFERINGS

- Tuesday 5th — at 8am

CREATE BENEFITS BY SPONSORING WATER BOWL OFFERINGS

"Anyone who is having difficulties in their job or business and thinks that they don't have time to do offerings at home could sponsor offerings at TI"

(Lama Zopa Rinpoche)

Lama Zopa Rinpoche has stressed the benefits of making water bowl offerings to overcome hindrances, illness or family problems.

Please contact Ven. Carolyn Lawler on 9596 7410 if you would like to sponsor lights and water bowl offerings to overcome your own or others' difficulties.

TUESDAYS

- 5, 12, 19 and 26 at 8pm

STUDY GROUP

Students who have been introduced to meditation may wish to undertake a more detailed study of Buddhism. Tuesday night Study Group provides an ideal environment in which to study with a highly qualified teacher, TI's resident lama, Ven. Geshe Doga. Geshe-la has been teaching from the Lam Rim, a classic text which covers every aspect of the Buddhist Path to Enlightenment. Students are welcome to sample Study Group at any time, but there are conditions for attending the full program.

For further information please contact Ven. Carolyn Lawler through the TI Office on 9596 8900.

STUDY GROUP SEMINAR

- 10am - 4pm, Sunday May 24

The Study Group will host a seminar to provide an opportunity for students to investigate, discover and come to some understanding of the first teaching that the Buddha gave after his enlightenment - The Four Noble Truths.

Everyone is invited to participate in what will be a stimulating and fun filled day. Please bring some lunch to share.

A donation of $5 is requested to help with utilities and refreshment costs. For further details please contact Sheena in the TI Office on 9596 8900.

WEDNESDAYS

- 6, 13, 20 and 27 at 8pm

EVENINGS WITH GESHE DOGA

Wednesday nights provide a great introduction to the wonderful teaching style of the Ven. Geshe Doga, TI's resident Tibetan lama. Geshe-la integrates the wisdom of the Buddha's teachings into practical advice on how to diminish the painful aspects of our lives and develop positive states of mind that lead to greater happiness and peace. These nights are suitable for beginners and more advanced students.

For more details ring Sheena on 9596 8900. There is no facilities fee.

SUNDAYS

- 3, 17 and 31 at 10am

CHILDRENS' DHARMA CLUB

Dharma Club is run by John Carroll who has created a wonderful environment in which the children can experience meditation, simple Buddhist rituals, stories and artistic projects. Come along and see for yourself the great job John and the children have done on the Club room!

For more information please contact the Centre on 9596 8900.

AUSPICIOUS DAYS IN MAY

MONDAY 4
Tibetan 8th
Tara Day
(Tara Puja, precepts)

WEDNESDAY 6
Tibetan 10th
Tsog Day
(Guru Puja)

MONDAY 11
Tibetan 15th
Full Moon
(precepts)

THURSDAY 21
Tibetan 25th
Tsog Day
(Guru Puja)

MONDAY 25
Tibetan 30th
New Moon
(Precepts)

TUESDAY 26
Tibetan 1st
First day of month of Saka Dawa

MAY

WEEK 1
- *SUNDAY 3*
  10am-12noon — Kids' Dharma Club

WEEK 2
- *MONDAY 4*
  6pm —Tara Puja
  8pm —Intro to Buddhist Meditation
- *TUESDAY 5*
  8am —Water Bowl Offerings
  8pm —Study Group
- *WEDNESDAY 6*
  6pm —Guru Puja
  8pm —Evening with Geshe Doga
- ***SUNDAY 10***
  All day—Precepts with Geshe Doga at 5am, White Tara Practice Day and Long Life Puja for Lama Zopa Rinpoche at 8pm

WEEK 3
- *MONDAY 11*
  8pm —Intro to Buddhist Meditation
- *TUESDAY 12*
  8pm —Study Group
- *WEDNESDAY 13*
  8pm —Evening with Geshe Doga
- *THURSDAY 14*
  8pm —Healing Volunteers' Group
- *SUNDAY 17*
  10am —Kids' Dharma Club

WEEK 4
- *MONDAY 18*
  8pm —Intro to Buddhist Meditation
- *TUESDAY 19*
  8pm —Study Group
- *WEDNESDAY 20*
  8pm —Evening with Geshe Doga
- *THURSDAY 21*
  6pm —Guru Puja
  7.30pm —Healing Support Group
- ***SUNDAY 24***
  10am-5pm—STUDY GROUP Seminar

WEEK 5
- *MONDAY 25*
  8pm —Intro to Buddhist Meditation
- *TUESDAY 26*
  8pm —Study Group
- *WEDNESDAY 27*
  8pm —Evening with Geshe Doga
- ***FRIDAY 29***
  8pm—NYUNG NA begins
- *SUNDAY 31*
  10am —Kids' Dharma Club
- *MONDAY June 1*
  6am —NYUNG NA finishes