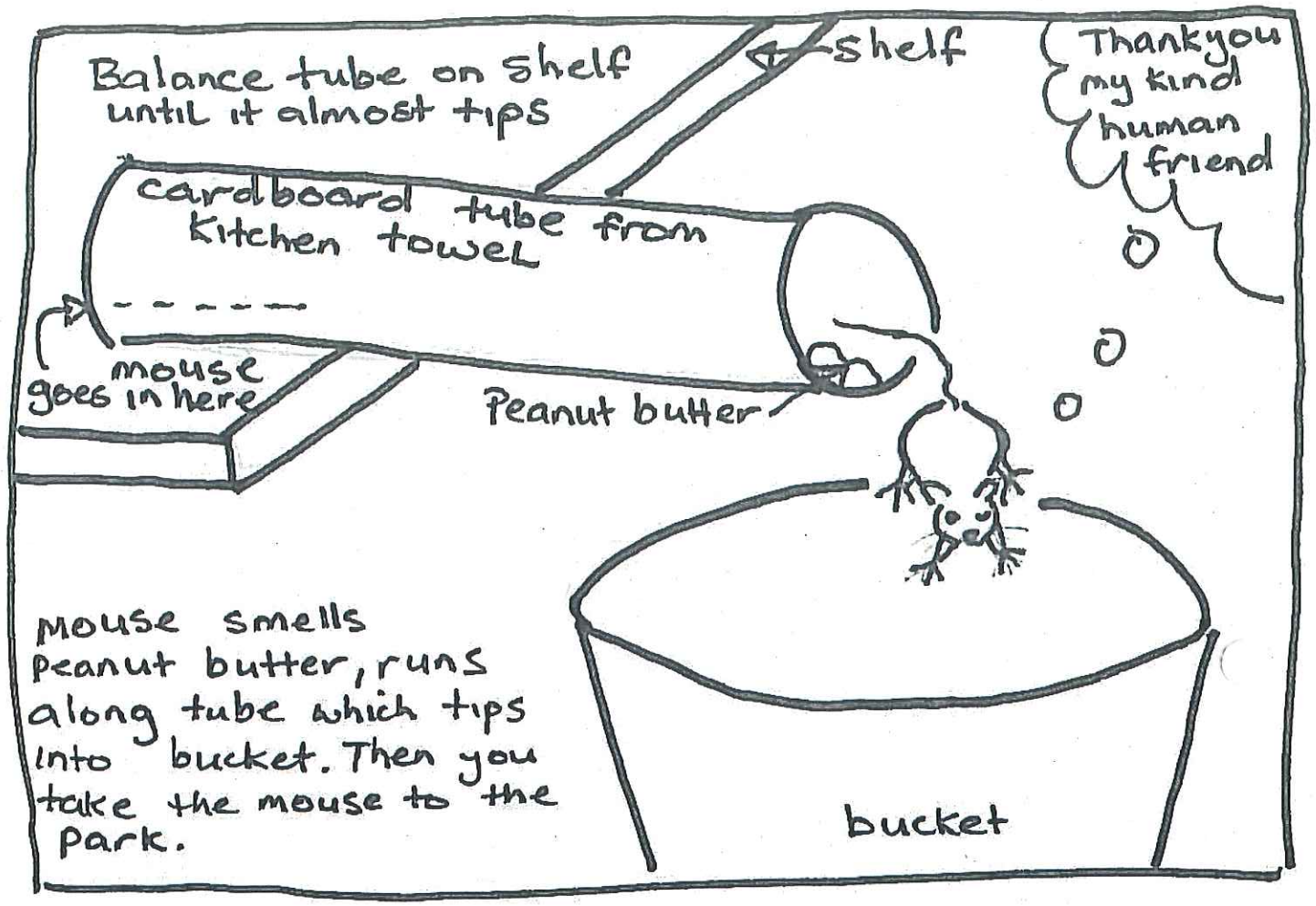

A Friendly Mouse Trap

This year quite a few families of mice have occupied our house. One time, after days of mouse mayhem and mouse pooh in every corner of the pantry, we put all food in plastic containers, washed everything with bleach, placed cotton balls soaked in peppermint oil on every shelf and crossed our fingers. The next day milk dripped from every shelf. The mice had eaten through the long-life milk packets – all 12. I can't remember where the idea came from but the cardboard tube in the kitchen towel and bucket method has worked a treat – we have caught about 9 mice in the last few months and relocated them to the park at the end of the road. As always, cultivating the most compassionate motivation for doing this is crucial.

Mark your diaries!

Fundraiser

Tara Institute will hold a music and poetry recital fundraiser on Sunday 23 October at 5pm. More information will be available soon. Watch this space.

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

This newsletter is Dharma material; please treat it with respect.

For information on the disposal of Dharma materials, please contact the Office on 9596 8900. Thank you.

Tara Centre for Wisdom Cu[illegible] Inc.

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www.tarainstitute.org.au

3 Mavis Avenue, East Brighton, 3187

Phone 03 9596 8900

Email: admin@tarainstitute.org.au

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: www.fpmt.org

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.

Tara Institute news

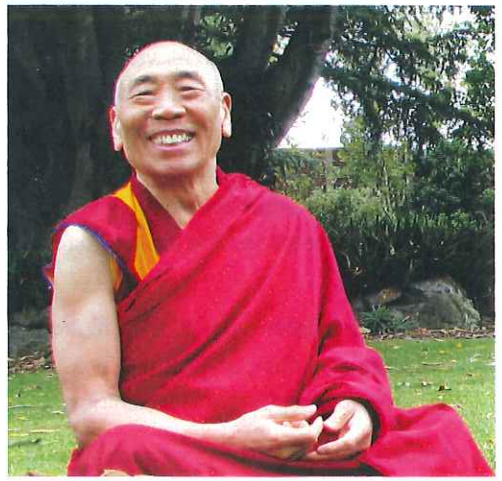
September 2011

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

How to Develop a Daily Meditation Practice - One-day course with Dr Ross Moore
9am to 4pm - Sunday 4th September

Mental Medicine

Excerpt from a teaching by the Venerable Geshe Doga – Tara Institute 1989



On checking our current situation we will see that we have everything needed to sustain life; food, clothing, shelter and so forth. Because of this our suffering seems quite insignificant, unless we are involved in acute physical illness or some specific mental distress. Yet, underlying these favourable circumstances we always sense something is wrong. Why are we always so restless and dissatisfied?

It is obvious our physical wellbeing and material resources cannot solve our underlying mental unease. They would have if they could have! We can only resolve a mental problem via internal mental remedies. However, we won't bother to do this un[illegible] we acknowledge that it is indeed an internal cause that is causing our mental unrest. What has been created by the mind must be solved by the mind. Teachings that bring about internal solutions to unhappiness are therefore mental medicine.

We all pursue our goals driven by a blind faith in thoughts and notions that are highly deceptive in that they deliver us over and over again into experiences of dissatisfaction. Yet, remarkably, we trust these thoughts so totally that we never stop to check their consequences. We don't even notice how intention of the thought and what the thought actually delivers in terms of experience end up being vastly different; initial promise and reality fail to coincide. To start working with our situation we must start observing how our thought processes actively determine our life experiences. That certain thoughts lead to happiness and certain other thoughts lead to unhappiness clearly shows the interrelation of thoughts to self. But have we actually ever fully acknowledged this fact?

The challenge is to actively initiate mental counter forces of thought to deal with those thoughts causing our restlessness and suffering.

We must enquire what is behind our thoughts – what kind of object is being held and maintained by the thought and how it is acting as a pathway of impulse towards another action? Such investigation will carry us deeply into the mechanics and nature of thought itself. We will discover their distorting power. We will recognize how the objects held by distorted thoughts have no basis in reality; they simply lack a solid ground.

In invalidating such thought processes we generate inner wisdom. The very fact that we have been relying so heavily on misconceptions reveals how we are underestimating our wisdom power which is the foundation of personal possibility; the great potential for positive qualities residing within. So the extent to which we experience ignorance and confusion precisely measures the degree to which our wisdom is being suppressed by the dominant force of misconceptions. *To be continued ...*

MONDAYS ~ 8pm

• 5, 12, 19 & 26 September

Introduction to Buddhist Meditation

with Allys Andrews

When we listen to the Buddha's teachings and really take them to heart, then every word we utter, every single footstep we take, every meal we prepare and every task we undertake can be integrated as part of our spiritual development.

Over the four Monday nights in September we will consider ways to bring the teachings into our daily lives by establishing routines that can support our positive intentions. The sessions will comprise guided meditations, a talk on the topic and time for questions.

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.

"Can you imagine the merit? Wow, wow, wow, most amazing!"

Volunteer a couple of hours on Monday mornings from around 10.30am to assist with pricing, date entry and ordering goods and books in the Tara Institute Bookshop. Call Llysse in the office on 9596 8900 if you feel you can commit to this important task on a weekly basis. As Lama Zopa Rinpoche said in Bendigo in April this year; "Whatever you offer, whatever help [you provide] is an offering to the guru ... The merit that you collect is most amazing, most amazing."

TUESDAYS ~ 7.45pm

• 6, 13, 20 & 27 September

STUDY GROUP

Study Group continues with Nagarjuna's Precious Garland.

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.

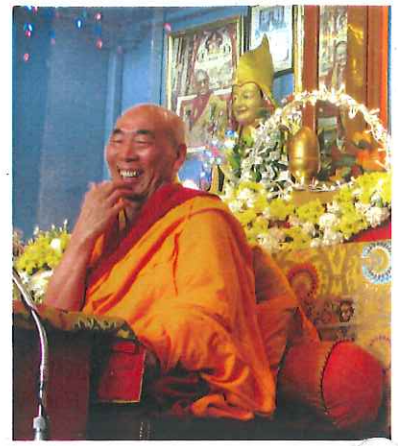
You are most welcome to come and experience Study Group at any time but conditions apply if you wish to attend on a regular basis.

If you have any questions please call the SPC office on 9596 7410

WEDNESDAYS ~ 8pm

• 7, 14, 21 & 28 September

An Evening with Geshe Doga



"Inner determination

To achieve any goal it is better to develop inner determination and courage than to rely upon favourable outer factors. For example, if we enjoy very good health we can accomplish more things. Similarly, with a clear, positive state of mind we have a tremendous force encouraging us to accomplish our aims and objectives. Because of this inner driving force, we can feel very positive about ourself, and so accomplish more.

If, on the other hand we are dictated to and always under the control of our negative mind, we become discouraged and put ourself down. We reduce ourself to incompetence, even to the point of becoming isolated from the rest of society. These very negative feelings about ourself are the result of our own mind."

Excerpt from 'Inner Peace and Happiness – The Path to Freedom' Ven. 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 charge for these evenings.

If you have any questions please call the SPC office on 9596 7410

ONE-DAY COURSE WITH DR ROSS MOORE

Sunday 4th September - 9am to 4pm

How to develop a daily meditation practice

So often we hear people say, " I want to learn to meditate but I don't know where to start." Or, "I meditated for a week and then didn't know what to do next." And sometimes even: "I meditated a few times but got bored as nothing happened. So I threw it in and took up life-drawing classes instead."

So what is the purpose of meditation? And how do we start? And how do we determine our progress and success? Over this one day workshop Ross will introduce and lead meditations drawn from the famous Lam-Rim or Graduated Path to Enlightenment tradition. Extensive question and answer periods will foster vigorous discussions during which we can share our discoveries and doubts. In the final part of the workshop, the various methods for utilizing the classical Lam-Rim frameworks in daily practice will be explained together with what to look for as indications of meditational accomplishment.

The one day format is ideal for those of us who do not have time to do retreat let alone sit for extended periods on a meditation cushion. In fact, even the chance to take even this short amount of time off to reconsider and refocus our lives is a valuable opportunity not to be missed.

Dr Ross Moore, exhibiting artist and writer, has been a lecturer on Art & Design for many years and is an experienced teacher of Buddhist philosophy and meditation.

Course fees:
$60 non-Members or $40 Members

Includes vegetarian lunch and morning and afternoon tea.

Bookings are essential for catering purposes.

Please pay the office by 2 Sept.; (call 03 9596 8900)

September 2011

WEEK 1

SUNDAY 4
9am-4pm - One Day Course; Dr Ross Moore
MONDAY 5
6pm - Tara Puja
8pm - Intro to Buddhist Meditation
TUESDAY 6
7.45pm - Study Group
WEDNESDAY 7
10am - Healing Group
6pm - Guru Puja
8pm - An Evening with Geshe Doga

WEEK 2

SUNDAY 11
10.30am - Dharma Club
MONDAY 12
8pm - Intro to Buddhist Meditation
TUESDAY 13
7.45pm - Study Group
WEDNESDAY 14
10am - Healing Group
8pm - An Evening with Geshe Doga

WEEK 3

MONDAY 19
8pm - Intro to Buddhist Meditation
TUESDAY 20
7.45pm - Study Group
WEDNESDAY 21
10am - Healing Group
8pm - An Evening with Geshe Doga
THURSDAY 22
6pm - Guru Puja

WEEK 4

MONDAY 26
8pm - Intro to Buddhist Meditation
TUESDAY 27
7.45pm - Study Group
WEDNESDAY 28
10am - Healing Group
8pm - An Evening with Geshe Doga

Dharma Club for 2011
October 16th
November 13th
December TBA

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

Monday 5	Tibetan 8	Tara Day	Tara Puja at TI 6pm
Wednesday 7	Tibetan 10	Tsog Day	Guru Puja at TI 6pm
Monday 12	Tibetan 15	Full Moon	Precepts
Thursday 22	Tibetan 25	Tsog Day	Guru Puja at TI 6pm
Tuesday 27	Tibetan 30	New Moon	Precepts