

Tara Institute

News

November 2025



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Cultivating genuine loving-kindness and compassion

By Venerable Geshe Doga

Before, when we practised love and compassion, whenever we saw others in pain, we may have simply recognised their suffering on a superficial level, without feeling any deep or heartfelt empathy. But as we continue our meditation (on bodhicitta), we begin to feel a genuine and almost unbearable empathy for those who suffer – whether humans or animals.

In particular, when we see stronger beings taking advantage of weaker ones, we develop an instinctive and powerful sense of compassion and concern. So even if we do not immediately give rise to a fully realised bodhicitta or perfect love and compassion, through consistent effort and practice we can gradually generate the bodhicitta mind. We can do this by following the sevenfold cause-and-effect method – recognising all beings as our mothers, remembering their kindness, developing a sense of gratitude, and so forth. These instructions are presented in a gradual sequence that leads to the development of the bodhicitta mind.

Similarly, by practising the meditation on exchanging self with others – reflecting on the equality of all sentient beings who equally wish for happiness and seek to avoid suffering – and by continuing the meditation on giving and taking (tonglen), we can strengthen our loving-kindness and compassion. This process then leads to the generation of what is called the special intention – the heartfelt resolve to take responsibility for freeing all beings from suffering and guiding them to true happiness.

In this way, by following this method, we generate the aspiration to accomplish the welfare of all sentient beings. This very aspiration is the bodhicitta mind – the mind that aspires to attain enlightenment for the benefit of all beings.

Even though the more immediate or direct cause of bodhicitta is loving-kindness and compassion, before we can truly generate these two qualities, we must first develop a sense of renunciation. Renunciation is an essential foundation for cultivating genuine loving-kindness and compassion.



(from Study Group, 14 October 2025) **Photo: The late Lama Zopa Rinpoche with a goat rescued from slaughter, Nepal.*

November Events

- **Sunday 23 November - Annual Long-life Puja for Ven. Geshe Doga, 10am to 12 noon**
- **Sunday 16 November - Understanding the Bodhisattva Vows (one-day course), 9am to 5pm**
- **Regular weekly Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday evening teachings, see page 2**
- 5, 12, 19 & 26 November (Wednesdays) - **Morning Meditation, 11am**
- 13 & 27 November (Thursdays) - **Healing Group, 11am**
- 14 & 30 November - **Monthly Guru pujas, 6pm**
- 28 November - **Monthly Tara puja, 6pm**
- 16 November (Sunday) - **Dharma Club, 10.15am**

MONDAYS ~ 8pm

3, 10, 17 & 24 November

Introduction to



with **Dennis Marsh**

If we don't utilise this most precious human life to at least create the causes to obtain another fortunate human rebirth in our immediate next life, we have lost a great opportunity.

During the November meditation evenings, we will discuss how we can enrich our lives through engaging in virtuous practices and avoiding non-virtue.

In the words of the great Buddhist master, Shantideva: 'So if, when having found leisure such as this, I do not attune myself to what is wholesome, there could be no greater deception, and there could be no greater folly.'

These relaxed and informal sessions run for one hour and include guided meditations, a talk and discussion. A facility fee of \$5 or \$10 (for those able to contribute more) goes towards the running of the Centre. Everyone is welcome; there is no need to book. For more information, please email spc@tarainstitute.org.au or phone 03 9596 8900.

TUESDAYS ~ 7.45pm

4, 11, 18 & 25 November

Study Group



Middle Length Lamrim

by Lama Tsong Khapa

with **Venerable Geshe Doga**

'Love is a mental attitude of giving happiness and wishing others to have it. If we feel love for others, we should have a genuine thought of wishing them happiness and goodness.'

'Whereas compassion is an attitude of wishing others to be free of suffering and problems. Obviously both love and compassion are very positive mental attitudes towards others.'

'On the contrary, sometimes our attitude is such that we hate to see others with happiness or doing well, or we feel jealousy, hatred and competitiveness. And if they are inflicted with loss and suffering, sometimes we even feel good and wish them more suffering.'

'Think about it – this is so unnecessary and unwarranted. We should ask ourselves, is holding such a negative attitude worthwhile?'

- Geshe Doga, June 2025

Study Group offers an opportunity to study Buddhism in-depth in a supportive, friendly environment. You are welcome to experience Study Group at any time, but conditions apply if you wish to attend regularly. Geshe Doga begins teaching promptly at 7.45pm. To find out more, please feel free to email spc@tarainstitute.org.au

WEDNESDAYS ~ 8pm

5, 12, 19 & 26 November

Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life



with

Geshe Lobsang Dorjee

Geshe Lobsang has commenced his teachings on Chapter 6: Patience, from Shantideva's text, Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life.

'We can talk about patience in terms of accepting harm caused by others – for example, when people have ill thoughts or harmful intentions toward us, patience allows us to endure it. There is also patience in accepting and enduring suffering that we experience personally...'

'The patience of accepting harm means not having anger toward the person responsible for the harmful actions. This type of patience helps us overcome feelings of anger toward those who harm us. However, we should still take necessary actions to prevent their wrong deeds, but without anger toward them – completely managing our anger. This is what we will learn in this text: how to prevent feeling anger and hatred toward such persons.'

- Geshe Lobsang Dorjee, Oct. 2025

Students are welcome to attend these Wednesday night teachings whenever they are able to do so.

For information about any of the weekly teachings, please email spc@tarainstitute.org.au or phone 03 9596 8900.

Auspicious Days in November

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

Wednesday 5	Tibetan 15	Full Moon	Precepts
Tuesday 11	Tibetan 22	Lha Bab Du Chen (Merit-multiplying day)	Precepts
Friday 14	Tibetan 25	Tsog	Guru Puja
Wed. 19 & Thurs. 20	Tibetan 30	New Moon	Precepts
Friday 28	Tibetan 8		Tara Puja/Precepts
Sunday 30	Tibetan 10	Tsog	Guru Puja

Annual Long-life Puja for Venerable Geshe Doga

Sunday 23 November 2025, 10am to 12 noon



Each year, to thank Geshe Doga for his unwavering commitment and kindness to the students and friends of Tara Institute, we offer a long-life puja for Geshela's long and healthy life

Geshe Doga arrived in Australia in 1983, having been invited by Lama Yeshe. In 1984, Geshela became the resident teacher at Tara Institute.

Over the years, TI has grown enormously, thanks to the confidence Geshela's patient and lucid guidance has given us. The late Lama Zopa Rinpoche always asked us to treasure Geshela and heed his advice.

If you can, please join us on Saturday afternoon, 22 November, from 1pm to prepare the extensive offerings of flowers, incense, light, food and water for the puja. It's a great opportunity to accumulate merit and create a beautiful offering for our guru, as well as catch up on old friendships and create new ones. (Contributions of white or yellow flowers for the offering bowls are welcome.)

We are inviting donations to cover extensive flower offerings for the main altar, throne and offering bowls; food and tsog offerings; and offerings to Venerable Geshe Doga and attending Sangha.

For those wishing to donate, please phone the Office or transfer funds to this account – Tara Centre for Wisdom Culture, BSB: 063242, Account: 10227562, Transaction code: LLP2025. You can also donate online here:

PUJA OFFERINGS

Everyone is most welcome to attend. Please register your attendance via the link below, or phone the TI office on 03 9596 8900.

PLEASE REGISTER

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CLICK HERE

Understanding the Bodhisattva Vows



Geshe Lobsang Dorjee

Sunday 16 November 2025, 9am to 5pm

The main deeds of bodhisattvas, the beings who have generated bodhicitta, are the observation of a high code of ethics. How quickly or slowly we achieve enlightenment solely depends on how purely we observe these vows. Geshe Lobsang will explain what the vows entail and how to practise them. The course is open to all who are interested, even if you have not taken bodhisattva vows.

'It is not enough just to habituate our mind and generate or cultivate the altruistic mind in our meditation – besides generating the altruistic mind, we also need to actually venture into the deeds of such a mind. To do this, we take the bodhisattva vows, which need to be received or taken from a lama, and then all the various aspects of the vows need to be observed.' (Lhama Lhundrup Rigsel, late Abbot of Kopan Monastery)

PLEASE REGISTER

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CLICK HERE

*** SAVE THESE DATES IN DECEMBER ***

- Sunday 7 December, **Family Day Teaching & Picnic**
- Sunday 14 December, **Lama Tsongkhapa Day**

November Calendar

Week 1

MONDAY 3

8pm - Intro to Buddhist Meditation

TUESDAY 4

7.45pm - Study Group

WEDNESDAY 5

11am - Wednesday Meditation

8pm - Bodhisattva's Way of Life

Week 2

MONDAY 10

8pm - Intro to Buddhist Meditation

TUESDAY 11

MERIT-MULTIPLYING DAY

7.45pm - Study Group

WEDNESDAY 12

11am - Wednesday Meditation

8pm - Bodhisattva's Way of Life

THURSDAY 13

11am - Healing Group

FRIDAY 14

6pm - Guru Puja

Week 3

SUNDAY 16

9am - 5pm: **Generating Bodhicitta.**

1-day course with Geshe Lobsang

10.15am - Dharma Club

MONDAY 17

8pm - Intro to Buddhist Meditation

TUESDAY 18

7.45pm - Study Group

WEDNESDAY 19

11am - Wednesday Meditation

8pm - Bodhisattva's Way of Life

SATURDAY 22

10am - Preparation of offerings and gumpa for Geshe Doga's Long-Life Puja

Week 4

SUNDAY 23

10am - 12 noon: **Annual Long-life Puja for Venerable Geshe Doga**

MONDAY 24

8pm - Intro to Buddhist Meditation

TUESDAY 25

7.45pm - Study Group

WEDNESDAY 26

11am - Wednesday Meditation

8pm - Bodhisattva's Way of Life

THURSDAY 27

11am - Healing Group

5pm - 21 Taras Online Meditation (click on this link just before 5pm)

FRIDAY 28

6pm - Tara Puja

Week 5

SUNDAY 30

6pm - Guru Puja

NOVEMBER 2025

Wednesday teachings at TI: Developing Patience



It's easy to forget how blessed our Centre is to have not just one, but two, fully qualified Tibetan Buddhist geshe teaching weekly. In addition to the Venerable Geshe Doga teaching weekly – which he has done, unstintingly, for the past 41 years – Venerable Geshe Lobsang Dorjee has been teaching Wednesday evenings, Easter courses and one-day courses for the past six years. At the moment, Geshe Lobsang is teaching the chapter on patience from Shantideva's classic, **Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life**. Here's an excerpt from a recent Wednesday teaching by Geshe Lobsang...

'We want to know what is meant by patience. Does it mean when someone provokes us and we don't express anger toward that person – is that patience?

If simply not getting angry or expressing anger is patience, of course, we can say it is patience. But according to Buddhism, there is more to patience than just not expressing anger. As to the description, measure, or characteristic of patience, it is said that patience is a state of mind that is not disturbed or shaken by harm, pain, or suffering.

When we talk about patience, there are different types of patience. The **first** one is to practise patience in a situation when we receive harm from others – for example, when someone criticises, abuses, or annoys us. In that situation, we need to practise patience and not lose our temper or our mind to anger.

The **second** type of situation is when we need to practise patience as we face hardship in our lives – in the form of sickness, crisis, or whatever the situation may be. For example, if we know the immediate cause and condition, we can get some idea.

However, on top of that, if we have some understanding and acknowledge not only the immediate cause and condition but also some underlying cause – our own karma – which is also involved in that situation, this understanding of the role of our karma will help us practise patience.

When we recognise that the cause of the hardships and difficulties we face – physical sickness and life crises – is not just from the immediate cause, circumstances, and conditions we are aware of, but also acknowledge the role of our own karma, it will help us reduce at least half of the worries in our mind. We can see how it can help us change our perspective on the cause of our problems and at least reduce our suffering on a mental level.

If we go further, we can also think that the whole problem and situation can be made acceptable by understanding

that these problems arise due to causes and conditions already present. Understanding that the cause was created and the result has to arise, we can think it is good that the result has arisen now – at a time when it is a relatively favourable situation, when one can get medical support and when there are friends who can assist us.

Knowing this, we can make the situation more acceptable instead of seeing it negatively, and can view it in a positive way.

We can also take this further in our perspective. When thinking of the hardships we face – whether physical sickness, health problems, or other difficulties – we can think that it is not only ourselves, but many other beings who are undergoing similar or even worse problems.

Thinking this way, rather than worrying about our own suffering, we can direct our mind toward the suffering of other beings and the suffering in the world. We can reflect and think, 'May the suffering I am going through be a cause that no other beings have to suffer the same.' In this way, one takes what one is going through as taking the sufferings of others upon oneself.

When we are thinking of the suffering of other sentient beings and taking that suffering upon ourselves, this is the true practice of the Mahayana, or the Great Vehicle. In this way, it makes a huge difference to our mind regarding whatever we are facing, externally or physically, and it helps us not to suffer on a mental level.

There is another, **third** type of patience, which is literally translated as the patience of voluntarily accepting suffering by definitely thinking of Dharma or thinking of virtue. This patience relates to the patience we need to practise in order to overcome the hardships and difficulties we face in practising Dharma or engaging in virtuous practice...

...(Then) we need to reinforce to ourselves the benefits, for example, of Dharma practice, of meditation, and of developing patience.'

Help make our Centre shine

If time allows, please come along to the cleaning bee at Tara Institute on **Sunday 30 November**, from 9am to 4pm. It's an opportunity to present our Centre in its best light for our geshe, sangha, students, visitors and residents. It's also a great karma yoga practice to purify obstacles. To find out more, please email macfarlaneshane@gmail.com

LATE NEWS...

Visit the TI Bookshop in late November to see the new book from TI Publishing **STEPS ON THE PATH TO HAPPINESS** – Geshe Doga's commentary on Lama Tsongkhapa's **FOUNDATION OF ALL GOOD QUALITIES**. It's an inspirational read and a great Christmas gift for Dharma friends.

Acknowledgment of Country

Tara Institute acknowledges the sovereign Bunurong/Boonwurrung people of the Kulin Nation as the Traditional Owners of the land on which our Centre stands.