

# Tara Institute

## News

July 2025



### Tara Institute

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## His Holiness the Dalai Lama to celebrate his 90<sup>th</sup> birthday



On 6 July 2025, His Holiness, the Dalai Lama will turn 90. We are incredibly fortunate that he remains with us, especially at this time, still teaching and inspiring millions of people and practitioners around the world.

*'It is so important to have His Holiness in this world today. No president or leader of a country, or Buddhist leader, in the world today can compare with His Holiness's incomparable wisdom, compassion and special effect on the world.'*

- Lama Zopa Rinpoche, 2015

On **Saturday 5 July**, Tara Institute will mark this very special occasion with a Guru Puja, starting at 10am (**PLEASE NOTE THE CHANGE OF DATE!**)

At the puja, we will have the opportunity to sincerely pray to His Holiness to live for a very long time, and to continue bringing his universal message of compassion to the world. (Geshe Doga has advised us to think about His Holiness as often as we can, and pray for his long life every day.)

**To find out more about the 5 July Guru Puja at TI or to register your attendance, please see page 3.**

### MORE EVENTS IN JULY & AUGUST (*inside...*)

- **LING RINPOCHE @ TARA INSTITUTE:** Tuesday 12 August, 10–11.30am & 3–5pm
- **Venerable Geshe Doga's 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday celebration:** Sunday 13 July, 2.30pm
- **Dharma Club:** Sunday 20 July, 10.15am
- **Morning meditation:** Every Wednesday, 11am
- **Healing Group:** Thursday 10 & 24 July, 11am
- **Monthly pujas@6pm:** Tara Puja, Thursday 3 July; Guru Puja, Sunday 20 July

## MONDAYS ~ 8pm

### Introduction to Buddhist Meditation

7, 14, 21 & 28 July



with Mark Fernandes

*Transforming our outlook on life*

Internal and external causes and conditions play a large part in what we experience in our lives, and whether we are happy or not.

However, our mental outlook or happiness can be enhanced. This will enable us to accomplish two things:

- More contentment in the present, whatever the situation
- Create the causes for ongoing and future happiness.

Mark will cover these topics and the methods to achieve them, from a Buddhist perspective, over the course of four weeks in July.

There will be plenty of opportunity for discussion, meditation and questions.

Mark, a long-time student of Geshe Doga's and Lama Zopa Rinpoche, has been attending teachings at Tara Institute for close to 40 years.

Sessions run for one hour and include guided meditations, a talk and questions. 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](mailto:spc@tarainstitute.org.au) or phone 03 9596 8900.

## TUESDAYS ~ 7:45pm

### Study Group

1, 8, 15, 22 & 29 July



### Middle Length Lamrim

by Lama Tsong Khapa

with Venerable Geshe Doga

**"Lamrim means the stages of the path, or the means by which we can achieve the awakened state of a buddha.**

"The meaning of the title *jang-chub lamrim* (Stages of the Path to Enlightenment) shows that the Lord Buddha reached the state of enlightenment (*jang-chub*) by following the stages of the path, making progress step-by-step, in a systematic and correct order. By eliminating all the defilements and accomplishing all the excellences, he became an awakened being or a buddha.

"It's important that we really think about the meaning of the words *jang-chub lamrim*, as they provide a good introduction to what our Dharma practice – studying this lamrim and engaging in meditation – is all about."

- Geshe Doga, February 2020

Study Group offers an opportunity to study Buddhism in-depth in a supportive and friendly environment. To attend the study group there are two commitments: to participate in an annual one-day workshop, plus an annual gampa-cleaning working bee. New students are welcome to join at any time. Please note Geshe Doga begins teaching promptly at 7.45pm.

## WEDNESDAYS ~ 8pm

### A Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life

2, 9, 16, 23 & 30 July



with Venerable Geshe  
Lobsang Dorjee

Shantideva's text, *A Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life*, is highly regarded by teachers of all Tibetan Buddhist traditions.

What is a bodhisattva? In a commentary on this text, His Holiness, the Dalai Lama, said:

"*Bodhi* means enlightenment, the state devoid of all defects and endowed with all good qualities. *Sattva* refers to someone who has courage and confidence and who strives to attain enlightenment for the sake of all beings. Those who have this spontaneous, sincere wish to attain enlightenment for the ultimate benefit of all beings are called Bodhisattvas."

(From *For the Benefit of All Beings*, Shambala Classics)

There's no need to register for these teachings. Students are welcome to attend when they're able to do so. For information about any of the teachings, please contact [spc@tarainstitute.org.au](mailto:spc@tarainstitute.org.au) or phone 03 9596 8900.

Thursday 3	Tibetan 8		Tara Puja/Precepts
Saturday 5	Tibetan 10	Tsog	Guru Puja
Thursday 10	Tibetan 15	Full Moon	Precepts
Sunday 20	Tibetan 25	Tsog	Guru Puja
Wednesday 24	Tibetan 30	New Moon	Precepts
Monday 28	Tibetan 4	Lord Buddha's First Teaching: merit-multiplying day	Precepts

## Guru Puja for His Holiness's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday

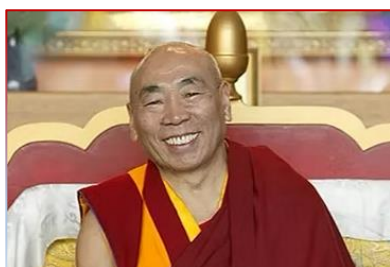
**Saturday 5 July, 10am to 12 noon**

**ALL WELCOME!**

This is a wonderful occasion to join together and pray for the long life of His Holiness, and the fulfilment of his wishes for universal peace. It's also an opportunity to accumulate great merit by making offerings and helping with set-up and clean-up. [CLICK HERE](#) for more information or [REGISTER HERE](#) for this very special event. If you wish to make an offering, please phone the TI Office on 03 9596 8900, or email [spc@tarainstitute.org.au](mailto:spc@tarainstitute.org.au).

## Venerable Geshe Doga's 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday celebration

**Sunday 13 July, 2.30pm to 4pm, Landcox Hall**



For the 40-plus years in which he has been at Tara Institute, Venerable Geshe-la has inspired, advised and guided students, friends and all who have met him with his immeasurable wisdom, compassion, and tireless dedication to the Dharma and our welfare. This special afternoon tea will not only celebrate Geshe-la's long and meaningful life, but is also an opportunity to recognise and rejoice in the collective support of all who have contributed to the flourishing of Geshe Doga's teachings and the TI community.

Please [REGISTER HERE](#) or phone the Office on 03 9596 8900. If you wish to sponsor flowers, food or decorations, please email [admin@tarainstitute.org.au](mailto:admin@tarainstitute.org.au)

### One-day course

## Vajrasattva practice to purify negativities

**with Venerable Geshe Lobsang Dorjee**

**Sunday 20 July, 9am to 5pm**



*'Purifying negative karma makes it much easier to attain liberation and actualise the path to enlightenment. It also decreases our suffering and any obstacles that might arise. Purifying negative karma with the four powers means we won't have to experience the eons of suffering in the lower realms that result from not purifying even one negative karma, and we won't have to experience, again and again, without end, the four suffering results that arise from each unpurified negative karma.'* (Sourced from [Lama Yeshe Wisdom Archive](#))

In this course, Geshe Lobsang Dorjee will present how to use Vajrasattva practice with emphasis on the following, done with the four powers (refuge, regret, remediation and resolve to abstain in future):

- How to visualise Vajrasattva
- Contemplating the suffering we've accumulated due to past karma
- How to transform these past karmas using Vajrasattva practice

**Event cost: TI Members \$80; Non-members \$100 (a delicious lunch is included in the cost). For more information, please email [spc@tarainstitute.org.au](mailto:spc@tarainstitute.org.au)**

PLEASE [CLICK HERE](#) FOR MORE INFORMATION or [REGISTER ONLINE](#)

## July Calendar

### Week 1

TUESDAY 1

**7.45pm – Study Group**

WEDNESDAY 2

**11am – Morning Meditation**

**8pm – Bodhisattva's Way of Life**

**5pm – Online 21 Taras Meditation**

(Click [here](#) just before 5pm)

THURSDAY 3

**6pm – Tara Puja**

SATURDAY 5

**10am – Guru Puja for His Holiness, the Dalai Lama's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday**

### Week 2

MONDAY 7

**8pm – Intro to Buddhist Meditation**

TUESDAY 8

**7.45pm – Study Group**

WEDNESDAY 9

**11am – Morning Meditation**

**8pm – Bodhisattva's Way of Life**

THURSDAY 10

**11am – Healing Group**

### Week 3

SUNDAY 13

**2.30pm – Geshe Doga's Birthday Afternoon Tea**

MONDAY 14

**8pm – Intro to Buddhist Meditation**

TUESDAY 15

**7.45pm – Study Group**

WEDNESDAY 16

**11am – Morning Meditation**

**8pm – Bodhisattva's Way of Life**

### Week 4

SUNDAY 20

**9am to 5pm – Vajrasattva Practice: one-day course**

**10.15am – Dharma Club**

**6pm – Guru Puja**

MONDAY 21

**8pm – Intro to Buddhist Meditation**

TUESDAY 22

**7.45pm – Study Group**

WEDNESDAY 23

**11am – Morning Meditation**

**8pm – Bodhisattva's Way of Life**

THURSDAY 24

**11am – Healing Group**

### Week 5

MONDAY 28

**Merit-multiplying day**

**8pm – Intro to Buddhist Meditation**

TUESDAY 29

**7.45pm – Study Group**

WEDNESDAY 30

**11am – Morning Meditation**

**8pm – Bodhisattva's Way of Life**

## Having This Life Is Having the Door to Liberation

*At Tuesday Study Group on 3 June, Geshe Doga gave a concise and powerful teaching on taking refuge, why we need to practise Dharma, and why we need to practise Dharma now. Immediately after the teaching, one of the students present, Lobsang Tenzin, was moved to write the following:*

Tonight, I listened to Geshe Lobsang Doga's teaching on *The [Middling] Lamrim*. One sentence struck deeply into my heart: 'You already have this life, which means you are already standing at the door to liberation.'

It's not about waiting for some future time, not about better conditions, fewer afflictions, more concentration, or having more time. It means — we can begin right now.

In this very moment, I have a human body, good health, the opportunity to hear the Dharma, the capacity to contemplate, and the aspiration to walk the bodhisattva path. Geshe-la reminded us that this is already an extremely rare and precious combination of conditions — a precious human rebirth.

Realising this, I felt both ashamed and inspired. All this time, I had thought I was 'not ready', but in truth, I've long been standing at the door — I just haven't pushed it open.

This life is not merely about the daily routines of work and living. It may be the most powerful opportunity I have in this entire cycle of samsara...

- ✿ An opportunity to abandon non-virtue and cultivate virtue
- ✿ An opportunity to vow to take on the suffering of all sentient beings
- ✿ An opportunity to gradually break free from the prison of ignorance through listening, contemplation, and meditation on the Dharma.

When Geshe-la speaks of 'cherishing this human life', it's not just about gratitude or good fortune. It's a call to give rise to a sense of responsibility and the determination to practice. Like a traveller who finally receives the key to a long-sought door, how could one not try to open it?

The door to liberation is not far away, nor is it somewhere in the distant future. It lies in the subtle shift of mind in this very life, in this moment's awareness and choice.

Listening to the strong and resonant voice of 90-year-old Geshe Lobsang Doga, my heart was filled with Dharma joy and deep gratitude that I could hear such a profound and beautiful teaching tonight.



### Saka Dawa offerings to Sacred Heart

Thanks to all those who donated cash offerings and non-perishable grocery items to Sacred Heart Mission as part of Saka Dawa. Your thoughtful generosity was greatly appreciated!



### TI joins City's Open House Weekend

Open House Melbourne Weekend on 26 & 27 July enables the public to access historic buildings across the city. As part of the program, TI will showcase historic rooms in the building, formerly called Landcox House, a local landmark, which has had a succession of fascinating owners and occupants. Adair Bunnett has documented the history of the building and environs, starting with the First Nations' Boonwurrung people, to the 1980s. Adair and Cynthia Karena have briefed volunteer guides for the weekend. If you know anyone interested, bookings are strictly **by ticket only (NOT through the TI Office!)**, booked through the [Open House Melbourne Weekend](#) website. Thanks to Adair, Cynthia and all volunteers involved – it's a wonderful opportunity for the wider community to find out more about local history and Buddhism.



# Remembering the kindness of Geshe Doga



*Staying an astonishing four decades-plus at one FPMT centre is an extraordinary accomplishment for any geshe. We at Tara Institute are so grateful to Geshe Doga for his priceless teachings, constant kindness, encouragement, guidance, holding us in his mandala, and putting up with our delusions and petty squabbles for four decades.*

In 1980, Lama Yeshe ‘poached’ Geshe Doga from Sera Je monastery in South India, initially to teach young monks in Kopan. Geshe Doga and Lama Yeshe had first met under the harsh conditions of the Buxa Duar Tibetan refugee camp in India, after escaping Chinese occupied Tibet in 1959.

When Lama Yeshe then asked Geshe Doga to leave Kopan to teach in the West, Geshe-la at first refused. However, he eventually came to Australia on 1 January 1983, first teaching at Atisha Centre in Bendigo, then becoming Tara Institute’s resident teacher in late 1983.

Uprooted from his culture a second time – first, when he escaped Tibet – away from friends and monastic traditions, Geshe-la has steadfastly remained with us for all these years.

Geshe Doga’s first, and current, translator at Tara Institute, Sandup Tsering, says Geshe Doga’s friendship with both the late lamas – Lama Yeshe and Lama Zopa Rinpoche – is ‘...very deep, personal and goes a long way.’

‘Both the lamas had shown special affection for Geshe-la, and wanted and trusted Geshe-la in their work for flourishing Dharma and benefiting migrating beings through FPMT. Geshe-la has never made any fuss, demands or complaints about his personal needs but wholeheartedly dedicated himself to the success of the Centre and the FPMT. Geshe Doga was well-known in the monasteries in his time as a great debater and a scholar.’

Over the decades, TI has grown enormously, thanks to Geshe-la’s teachings, kindness and patient guidance. Every time Lama Zopa Rinpoche visited Tara Institute, he would ask us to treasure Geshe Doga and heed his advice. In fact, Lama Zopa specifically instructed us to do five long life pujas for Geshe Doga, and we’ve just kept going, doing them each year for the past 25 years, increasing the number of flower garlands and tables with offerings – at least 500 offering bowls resplendent with saffron water, incense, flowers, candles, etc.

Ross Moore, a former TI director, teacher and long-time student of Geshe-la’s, remembers visiting Geshe Doga’s teacher, Geshe Ngawang Dhargyey, in Sydney in 1985. After asking Ross who his teacher is, Geshe Dhargyey whispered words Ross has never forgotten: ‘The kindest teacher of all is the one who lives amongst you.’

Ross explains that ‘this was clearly a reference to Geshe Doga whom I had first met during Kyabje Zopa Rinpoche’s visit to Atisha Centre in 1983, and who was Geshe Ngawang Dhargyey’s own close student. ‘It is a truly remarkable fact that Geshe Doga is not only the longest serving geshe in the FPMT organisation but has stayed with us.’

In 2018, Kyabje Zopa Rinpoche advised TI students to recite the Golden Light Sutra 3000 times to remove any obstacles to the Venerable Geshe Doga’s long life. Rinpoche explained this sutra recitation practice is especially effective if done by Venerable Geshe Doga’s own students. We rejoice this target was met in May this year.

As the target of reciting the Sutra of Golden Light 3000 times was nearing completion, students began to wonder what would happen next. So, on behalf of Geshe Doga’s students, TI reached out to His Holiness the Dalai Lama to seek advice on a practice that would ensure the continued health and long life of both His Holiness and Venerable Geshe Doga. On the 16 June, two days before a group recitation of the Golden Light Sutra, His Holiness sent this response: ‘As per a ritual analysis requested by the students of the faithful Geshe Doga, the outcome is continuing with the long life White Tara practice will do [ie to clear away the obstacles].’

Tara Institute students will now discuss with Venerable Geshe Doga as to how the White Tara practice will be completed – for example, practice days and mantra recitations.

We at Tara Institute remain devoted and forever grateful to Geshe Doga and resonate with the words shared by Allys Andrews, a long-time student: ‘I pray that I will never be separated from him in this and all future lives until enlightenment. Geshe Doga makes awakening seem possible.’ We are so blessed. Please stay tuned for more details about White Tara practices for the long-life of Geshe-la and His Holiness.

*(This is an edited and amended version of an article written by Cynthia Karena and first published in [FPMT Community News](#), November 2024. Reproduced with permission.)*

## Don't miss this! His Eminence Ling Rinpoche to visit TI

Tuesday 12 August, 10.30–11.30am & 3–5pm



In August, Tara Institute will be honoured with a visit by the 7th Kyabjé Yongzin Ling Rinpoche, who will offer advice to students at a morning session, and bestow Green Tara *jenang* (which means 'permission to practice') in the afternoon.

The morning session is a rare opportunity to receive direct guidance from a highly realised teacher in the lineage of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Students are encouraged to attend with a sincere mind and open heart, ready to absorb the blessings of the teachings.

In the afternoon, His Eminence will bestow the Green Tara *jenang*. It's an incredible blessing to receive this empowerment from such a highly realised and authentic lineage master, the reincarnation of His Holiness's senior tutor, the 6<sup>th</sup> Ling Rinpoche. Green Tara, the swift and compassionate mother of all the buddhas, is especially known for protecting us from fears and obstacles, and bestowing swift blessings of wisdom, courage, and liberation.

A delicious vegetarian lunch, available from Café Bliss, can be booked with your registration at a cost of \$15.00. To book for one or both of these unmissable events [please click here](#) or phone the TI Office on 03 9596 8900. If you would like to support this event through making a donation, [please click here](#).

### Good news for the future of our Centre's home

Tara Institute has received endorsement as a Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) by the Australian Taxation Office (ATO), enabling it to set up a School Building Fund. The endorsement recognises the Centre's status as an institution established to teach Buddhism and meditation. Any donation of \$2 or more to the Fund can now be claimed as a tax deduction on an Australian tax return. (Please note, tax deductibility applies only to donations made to our School Building Fund account.)

This endorsement comes at a particularly important time. Maintaining and improving our buildings is essential to ensure a safe, welcoming, enduring and inspiring space for everyone who comes to learn, practise, and connect.

We are in the process of updating our website to enable donations via credit card to the School Building Fund. In the meantime, you can transfer funds directly to our **School Building Fund bank account**:

**Account Name:** Tara Centre for Wisdom Culture Inc.

**Bank:** Bendigo Bank

**BSB:** 633000

**Account No:** 231250366

After making a donation, please email the office at [admin@tarainstitute.org.au](mailto:admin@tarainstitute.org.au) to request a receipt, providing your name, donation amount and email address.

While we warmly encourage donations to the School Building Fund, we'd also like to remind everyone that Tara Institute still needs general donations to fund its day-to-day operations. If tax deductibility is less important to you, please consider making a general donation that we can direct to wherever it's most needed at the time.

Both types of donations are vital for the health and vibrancy of our community.

***Thank you for your continued support, generosity, and commitment to Tara Institute.***

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