



GENTLE VOICE

A NEWSLETTER OF SIDDHARTHA'S INTENT

April 2005

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The Wheel Of Life

by Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche

The previous issue of the *Gentle Voice* featured a teaching by Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche on the Wheel of Life, a Buddhist depiction of life painted on the walls of many monasteries. Here is the second half of that talk.

So we have six realms. Loosely, you can say when the perception comes more from aggression, you experience things in a hellish way. When your perception is filtered through attachment, grasping or miserliness, you experience the hungry ghost realm. When your perception is filtered through ignorance, then you experience the animal realm. When you have a lot of pride, you are reborn in the god realm. When you have jealousy, you are reborn in the asura realm. When you have a lot of passion, you are reborn in the human realm.

But the word ‘born’ or ‘reborn’ means a lot. It does not necessarily mean that right now we are all in the human realm and we are not in the other five realms. Depending on what kind of karma we create, we will go to other realms. If the karma to be reborn or to experience the hell realm is the strongest, then you will, I guess, change this form and then with another form you will experience a hellish kind of perception. But according to Mahayana Buddhism the six realms are something that can happen during the course of a day!

For instance, when you wake up in the morning you may be quite dull and kind of stupid or still drowsy. Maybe you are going through the animal realm — a late night out or a sleepless or depressed night. Perhaps after you wake up, someone you dislike calls you and your day is ruined first thing in the morning. Then you really get angry and that’s the hell realm. In order to get out of that hellish situation you watch television. Maybe you happen to watch *Baywatch*. (I’m talking about a man, by the way, a straight man.) You feel a little turned on with all these sights on *Baywatch*. And so, maybe at that time, you go through the human realm. Once you finish watching that, you go for a walk and your next-door neighbour, who is actually quite old and geeky-looking, happens to be walking towards you with a most beautiful girl on his arm. Then you have a little bit of envy or jealousy, ‘My God, of all people — him?’ That’s the asura realm.

After that you go to an anti-war demonstration, but not necessarily with a good intention. It’s more with the

intention of, ‘This is the politically correct thing to do,’ and that’s arrogance, isn’t it? And I guess when you go through that anti-war demonstration, shouting at some of the scapegoats that we have elected with our own choice, that’s what I call the god realm — self-righteousness, a politically correct kind of compassion, a ‘do the right thing’ attitude. That’s so godly, so very, very arrogant. And probably, at some time during the day, you go through a nice time and this nice time you don’t want to share with others. Maybe that is the hungry ghost realm. So when we talk about six realms, actually we are talking about experiences that can come within the course of a day. It’s not a different place.

Now the most important aspect of this wheel of life is this: wherever you are — it doesn’t matter whether you are in hell, heaven, the hungry ghost realm or wherever — you are under one law, under one authority, under one dictator. Who is this? It’s this hideous man; you’re under his claws, under his fangs. Who is this? Time. This monster represents time. And what is so bad about it? Oh, it is, because time means uncertainty, impermanence, change.

Of course, it has its positives, but usually we don’t realise them so much. For example, you could be experiencing the god realm, but it’s changeable. If it doesn’t change today, it will change tomorrow. You could be experiencing the hell realm — changeable! In this case it’s good news. Wherever you are, including experiencing the three poisons (ignorance, passion and aggression), it is impermanent and that’s time. So what is the purpose of our life? To get out of this wheel of life. Liberation is when you get out of this existence.

Q: What is it that is liberated?

R: Good question — this pig. So therefore the snake and the bird also get liberated. Liberated from what? From these six perceptions. Working with perception is actually the main path of Buddhism. It’s all to do with that. And it’s rightfully so, because it’s all your perception that’s dictating your life, isn’t it? For instance, when you love someone it is your perception that is dictating your romance, your relationship. If that perception gets disturbed even slightly, your outlook towards this person is definitely changed. Maybe someone at last tells you that a person you have been dating for twenty years has a tail growing on a certain

full-moon day. And if you can be convinced of that, then your perception of this person who you have been dating for twenty years changes. Next time he calls you, you have to think twice!

These perceptions are very roughly divided into six. That's all it is. Actually, Buddhists themselves say that these are not the only perceptions that we have, but this is the generalisation of the perceptions that we have. Working with perception is really the fundamental foundation of the Buddhist path, especially in the Vajrayana. For instance, in the Sakyapas' teachings on path and fruit, there is a whole segment called Triple Vision and there this is taught so much.

It's very strange, even some cultures are more animal-oriented, some are more god-oriented and some are more human-oriented. Now, although for the sake of communication, we have to divide perceptions into the three lower realms and the three upper realms, we are not necessarily saying that one is better than the other. Buddhists are not judging. Do you know why? Because according to Buddhism, anyone who is in this man's clutches is useless, be it in the god realm or the hell realm. Hierarchy doesn't have much importance here. They are all equally useless, equally unimportant.

One can easily say that the war that has been going on in Palestine and Israel shows the asura realm, the demigod realm. And if you see the hunger and starvation of Ethiopia, India or Bangladesh, you can almost say this is the hungry ghost realm. And if you see the endless, insatiable mind that requires all kinds of hideous toys to arouse it, like leather and chains and stuff like that, I think we are experiencing a bit of the animal realm, don't you?

If we talk about hierarchy or if we need to judge the value of these six realms, the Buddhists would say the best realm is the human realm. Why is this the best realm? Because you have a choice. Where does this choice come from? The gods don't have a choice. Why? They're too happy. When you are too happy you have no choice. You become arrogant. The hell realm: no choice, too painful. The human realm: not too happy and also not too painful. When you are not so happy and not in so much pain, what does that mean? A step closer to the normality of mind, remember? When you are really, really excited and in ecstasy, there is no normality of mind. And when you are totally in pain, you don't experience normality of mind either. So someone in the human realm has the best chance of acquiring that normality of mind. And this is why in Buddhist prayers you will always read: ideally may we get out of this place, but if we can't do it within this life, may we be reborn in the human realm, not the others. The human realm is preferable to the god realm.

Q: Mr. Time seems pretty imposing. Is the whole point of this to escape Mr Time, to get out of his grip?

R: Yes, that's liberation. We have to go beyond time. If we liberate ourselves from time and space, then that's it. Then we have done our job. There is no past, there is no present, there is no future. Then there is no Mr Sigmund Freud. We can't brood about our past childhood and all of that!

(The Gentle Voice would like to thank Tom Pengelly and Claire Blaxell for this transcription. For recordings of this teaching phone Anna Vljakovic on 02 9518 1363 or email annavlaj@yahoo.com.au.)



Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche seals the boundary for the three-year retreat, Vajradhara Gonpa, January 2005 (Photo Ianina Munarski)

Dalai Lama At Chökyi Lodrö College Of Dialectics

From Chauntra, India, Noa Jones reports on the inauguration of the new Chökyi Lodrö College of Dialectics.

On the eve of His Holiness the Dalai Lama's arrival at the inauguration of Chökyi Lodrö College of Dialectics, artisans were still painting gold leaf on the face of the main temple's nine-metre Buddha statue. Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche was holding a late-night planning session with the institute's top students and *khenpos*, who were doubling as event coordinators.

Under buzzing fluorescent lights, Rinpoche grilled the officers in charge. Were they prepared to feed seven thousand guests? How would unexpected high lamas be handled? Was the security team coordinating with His Holiness's bodyguards and the Indian police?

Accommodation lists were shuffled, entire roads were swept, a thousand marigolds were draped over the gate and the photocopy machine chugged out programmes in Tibetan, Chinese and English well into the night. We thought that we were as prepared as we could be.

But we were not entirely prepared. We were not prepared for the unimaginable display of devotion, the amazing spectacle of art and culture, the pageantry of the distinguished guests – lamas, *dashos*, *khenpos*, royal representatives, ministers, dignitaries and *rinpoche*s. Forget showers, it was a hurricane of blessings.

The inauguration took place from 19 to 21 November 2004 in Chauntra Tibetan Colony, Himachal Pradesh, India, the new home of what was formerly known as Dzongsar Institute. Now called Chökyi Lodrö College of Dialectics (or CLCD), it is destined to become a major centre of higher learning. Unprecedented support by the international dharma community enabled the construction of CLCD. Under the guidance and support of the venerable Khenpo Kunga Wangchuk, the new monastery comfortably accommodates up to a thousand monks.

The compound is staggering in size, with an impressive three-story dormitory encircling a landscaped courtyard and fountain. There are eleven classrooms, a library, computer and reading rooms, a Tara hall and a Guru hall, everything constructed with meticulous care. Even the water tower is beautiful!

Early on the first day, as the air filled with aromatic smoke and jubilant trumpets sang, His Holiness the Dalai Lama snipped the ribbon to officially open the institute. Khenpo Kunga Wangchuk and Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche took their seats with the other lamas in the main hall, followed by thousands of monks, uniformed school children and foreign guests. Representatives from across the Himalayan range — Bhutan, Sikkim, Himachal Pradesh, Ladakh and, of course, Tibet — came to pay their respects, most wearing colourful traditional dress.

The temple is designed to accommodate four thousand people, but many more squeezed in during each of the three days to receive teachings, hear speeches by the special guests and enjoy cultural presentations. Naresh Mathur, a respected barrister from Delhi's High Court, was the English-speaking master of ceremonies and Khenpo Choying Dorje of the institute did the honours in Tibetan. On day two, His Holiness taught on *The Lamp of Enlightenment* and awarded *khenpo* certificates to a select group of new graduates. On the final day he gave a long-life empowerment to the largest crowd of the three-day event.

The entire weekend was subtly infused with the message that Buddha Shakyamuni was an Indian. It was here that Buddhism first took root and where the yogis first wandered. Comparisons between Chökyi Lodrö College of Dialectics and the famous Nalanda University were prevalent. Each evening, as the sun set over the purple hills, the guests crowded around the outdoor stage set up by a top, Delhi-based, professional production company. A perfect half-moon rose above the Ashoka pillar (which inspired the Khyentse Foundation's lion logo). The pillar, which was stage-lit from behind, was a glorious backdrop to the equally glorious music, dance and theatre.

We witnessed Purvadhanashree's flawless *bharatanatyam* (classical Indian dance) performance based on Shantideva's *Bodhicharyavatara*. Every expressive gesture of Purva's body appeared as a *mudra*. Vidya Rao, one of the leading exponents of the classical style of *thumri* singing, struck heart chords with her enchanting vocal performance based on *Manjushri Nama Samgiti*. His Holiness twice sent his *katags* to Vidya in praise of her ethereal voice.

The final Indian offering was “A Flowering Tree”, a spectacular original play commissioned by Khyentse Rinpoche, written by Irpinder Bhatia and directed by Irpinder and Ramesh Batheja. This lively theatre piece was inspired by the Buddha’s *Dhammapada* and a collection of other stories from the Buddhist, Zen, Sufi and Upanishad traditions. Tibetan cultural performances by the local Derge community and the Suja Tibetan Children’s Village School lit up the night with thirty-one dances, two bands, a chorus and one duet.

This feast for the eyes and ears was well matched by the feasts from the kitchen. The in-house catering was put to the test during the inauguration, feeding thousands of guests, both invited and unexpected. Seventy truckloads



Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche greets His Holiness the Dalai Lama (Photo Eva Thomas)

of vegetables were consumed. Hidden from view of the guests, a flurry of round-the-clock chopping was taking place. Most astonishing was that every meal was sumptuous and free of charge. A feeling of abundance permeated the dining hall.

After His Holiness took leave on the final day, we had the opportunity to slow down a bit and spend some time with friends, old and new. Khyentse Foundation Executive Director Cangioli Che, board members Amelia Chow, Phuntsho Tobgyal and Pema Wangchuk, and many others involved in Khyentse Foundation projects had made the long journey to the inauguration. Hundreds of guests

attended the foundation’s presentation in the main hall. As Cangioli shared the vision of the foundation, Sherab Dolma translated into Chinese and Rinpoche himself acted as translator for the Tibetans with hilarious effect.

Although the mood was festive, the message was serious. Here we finally had a chance to impress on people the importance of the Khyentse Foundation’s Endowment for Monastic Education. Now that this magnificent monastery has been constructed, a system needs to be in place for it to operate, for the monks to be fed and clothed, for texts to be made available, for the health and hygiene of students to be addressed. A clear message was sent that the endowment is crucial to the enduring success of this and other Khyentse mandala institutions.



Finishing touches are put to the Buddha statue on the eve of the consecration in Chauntra (Photo Amelia Chow)

From the time of the Buddha until the present day, an unbroken succession of great beings has achieved enlightenment and continues to teach this path to others. The Dzongsar monasteries and institutes carry on this tradition. Monasteries and *shedras* provide an invaluable resource for all practitioners, create the basis for continued study and practice, provide extensive training for lamas and ensure the propagation of these profound teachings worldwide. The endowment ensures that support for this tradition will continue.

(For further information about the Khyentse Foundation and to view a slide show of images from the inauguration, go to www.khyentsefoundation.org.)



Interview - Venerable Tenzin Palmo

In March 2001 Venerable Tenzin Palmo spoke to the *Gentle Voice* as she was starting to establish a Buddhist nunnery in Tashi Jong, India. In this interview with Di Cousens, conducted last year at the Sakyadhita International Buddhist Women's Conference in Seoul, Korea, Venerable Tenzin Palmo describes the progress of the nunnery.

Venerable Tenzin Palmo, what is the progress of your nunnery? A couple of years ago you decided to establish it, you toured the world and raised some money for it and so on. How has it progressed?

It's going along fine. We have twenty-one nuns — girls from Tibet and various Himalayan regions like Ladakh and Spiti and so forth. We have purchased land, a very beautiful piece of land overlooking the Himalayan mountains — or the Himalayan mountains are overlooking us — and we are building. We have a couple of buildings already up and we are now working on the nuns' residences, and then the classrooms and a retreat centre for the nuns. Finally we need to construct the temple. I don't have funds yet for the temple, so I have to go out and scrounge.

So what's the programme there at the moment in terms of teaching and practice?

We have a very nice khenpo from Dzongsar Institute, Khenpo Tsering. The nuns are well and they are studying philosophy. This year they are doing *Madhyamakavatara* by Chandrakirti and next year they will be doing logic and debating. They love studying. Our problem is to stop them studying too much! Recently when they had exams, they requested that lights out should be put forward from ten o'clock to eleven o'clock at night, so they could study an hour extra. They are very keen.

What is the long-term goal of the education programme?

During the first six years we are just concentrating on giving the nuns a general overview and introduction into what Buddhism is. The problem is that many of the nuns who arrive don't know Tibetan and they can't read it. For instance, they're from Kinnaur. They might have gone to school and they know some Hindi, English and Kinnauri, of course, but they don't know Tibetan. Girls from Spiti and Ladakh know Tibetan but it's western Tibetan — it's not the Khampa dialect that we use in our institute. So in the first year they have to concentrate on learning Tibetan — how to understand it,

how to read it, how to write it. The Tibetans who come know Tibetan, but they don't know how to read and write, and so the first year for them also is mainly spent in learning how to read the language and not just understand it orally. Then after that they study texts like *The Words of My Perfect Teacher* and Gampopa's *Jewel Ornament* and the *Jewel Garland*, these general overviews of practice. Then gradually they get into more philosophy until this year they are doing Madhyamika and so forth.

In addition, every year they do two months' practice. During those two months they don't speak. If you can imagine a group of teenagers and girls in their early twenties not saying a word — except their chanting — for two months? And this is their choice! Originally I asked them to do two or three weeks of keeping silence and then they could decide if they wanted to remain silent or to have minimal speaking. And after the time, they said they would prefer to keep silence. So they are very dedicated to the practice during that time. For the first two retreats they do their ngöndro and then Vajrayogini practice and so forth. So every year they have the two months of doing strict practice.

After the six years then we will ask them whether they wish to continue with their studies, do further retreat or serve in the nunnery. We hope that some of them will be interested to serve the nunnery in an organisational capacity. Those who wish to continue with their studies will carry on studying with the khenpo and those who want to do retreat will enter into a strict retreat of one year or three years or whatever our meditation teacher recommends.

It amazes me how much the dharma has progressed in the last twenty years that I have had anything to do with it. What are your impressions of the changes over the last forty years?

Well, in some ways things haven't changed so much. In other ways, especially for women, everything has changed. Some of it is not so good. For example, when the Tibetans first came out from Tibet, they were extremely poor, extremely traumatised. They were in a very alien environment in which they didn't speak the language, they didn't know how things operated, and so there was a rather egalitarian feeling there. Even high lamas were going by local bus, like everybody else. Everyone was poor, having been up-rooted, yet there was



Venerable Tenzin Palmo at the Sakyadhita International Buddhist Women's Conference (Photos Di Cousens)

a great purity to it. Now forty years later, having become basically professional refugees, the lamas have become very wealthy and monasteries have become very elaborate and opulent. So again, with so much fertiliser, the weeds have grown up. Not only have the blossoms of the dharma arisen, but also all the weeds that we might have hoped would not arise again have come back up. So you get the tremendous hierarchical structures, along with the corruption and the politics. Somehow in India it seems inappropriate to me to create such enormous Buddha images, huge elaborate monasteries and personal residences for the lamas, dripping with gold, when the people all around are so poor.

It's a wealth display.

It's a power display. So perhaps that's the negative side. The positive side, especially in the last ten years, is the incredible, stunning advancements of the nuns that were inconceivable a few years ago. Now the nuns are all being educated, some of them are very close to taking the highest geshe degrees — that's still controversial, of course, but it will happen. Eventually it's got to happen! And in the meantime the nuns are studying, they are practising, they have so much more sense of their own dignity and worth and their ability to contribute, not only to the dharma but also to society. It's wonderful to see in such a short time how far nuns have advanced in this way.

Also, nowadays, there is a general awareness of Tibetan Buddhism. When I first started, I couldn't believe that anybody but a very few would ever be attracted to Tibetan Buddhism which can seem so esoteric and complicated and in some ways erotic and alien. It's the most alien form of buddhadharma. Also, that the 'middle generation' of lamas who were educated, at least initially, in Tibet, with very formal education and very structured and rigid training — that these lamas should turn out to be the most innovative and accessible of all the dharma teachers! Who would have guessed?

Who are you thinking of in particular?

Well, obviously, the first lama one thinks of is Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche, who led the way. But also there are so many, such as Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche, Tsoknyi Rinpoche, Sogyal Rinpoche and so forth. So many lamas who have taken the dharma and run with it and have a brilliant ability to relate it to the people they are speaking to, in a way that can really transform, where sometimes the traditional methods just don't work.

Is there anything you would like to add?

I think that in the West, although there are undoubtedly many problems in practising the dharma, nonetheless there are also great advantages. First of all, we are all educated, so we can read anything we want. Most people don't understand what it means not to be able to read and yet long to be able to know what is inside a book, to have the whole dharma closed to them, because they cannot read the books. Sometimes they can read them, but they can't understand the words. So we have that education. When the lamas come, we understand what they are talking about, usually.

The other great advantage, hopefully, is that having been brought up in a fair amount of affluence, and seeing that affluence around us — and how it does not satisfy true inner needs — we are in a position to let that go and devote our lives to our dharma practice on whatever level we find ourselves capable of. After all, the Buddha was a prince. So he knew about all the sensual pleasures and was therefore able to let them go. Knowing that material pleasures didn't give the satisfaction that he wanted allowed him to devote his life in a totally different direction. If we have any sense at all, we can see that all this affluence is just illusion, just as the Buddha said. Really, we are in a position to know that because we have had it. That's an incredible advantage nowadays in the West.

(For the full transcript of this interview go to www.melbournesakya.org.au.)

Bringing Meditation To The Path

by Jakob Leschly

If you were to apply the teachings, the best practitioner would have results in a single day, the average in a month, and it would be impossible even for the lesser practitioner not to have some result in a year. However, to undertake practice, one needs to know how. If one practises and there are no results, this is an indication that one does not know how to practise.

(Patrul Rinpoche)

It is possible to sit on one's cushion and perfectly waste one's time. Sitting motionless does not guarantee the mind is engaged. And without mental engagement we are not really improving our mind. We might be temporarily calm, but we might also just be dull. In that case, a minor circumstance is usually all it takes to prove how shallow our practice is. I know from my own experience as a lifelong beginner. So, based on Buddhist teachings I have heard, I will share some thoughts here on this choice we all face every time we sit down to meditate.

In Tibetan, the word for meditation is *gom*, which means 'familiarisation', meaning to familiarise oneself with what one has understood. Without familiarisation our view or understanding just remains dry knowledge. We need to deeply integrate the truth we recognise in the teachings within our own being. Buddhist meditation has two aspects — *shamatha* and *vipashyana*. Shamatha means to direct and calm the mind, and vipashyana means to clearly see reality. These are practices our teacher the Buddha gave us to remove the confusion that brings us suffering.

To sit in a shrine room, in lotus position, perhaps reading prayers, doing mudras, ringing bells or rattling damarus might look like practice from the outside, but we need to honestly assess what is *really* happening within ourselves. We need to ask ourselves what exactly are we doing and is it improving our mind? Is the practice we are doing actually serving its purpose of integrating our understanding? Are we really getting any calmer? Are we soaking our mind in kindness and compassion? Are we changing our habitual outlook? Is our mind really becoming lighter and more contented? If we are not aware of the answers to these questions, there is a very good chance we are just going through the motions and our mind is being left untouched by our so-called spirituality.



We might think these are intrusive questions. We might feel that one should just trust the wisdom of the teacher and the truth of the path and not pose such rude questions. But we can be honest with ourselves — in fact we do not need to ask these questions of anyone except ourselves. These questions are not directed towards the teacher and the path. They are directed towards the one who is practising, the patient, the one we live with twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, our loyal companion — mind. We can politely ask, 'Are you getting better, mind? Am I treating you properly?'

We might ask, 'Is the path helping you, mind?' But that would be missing the point. Obviously the correct medicine will help, but the patient has to take it, actually ingest it. When we first encounter the teaching, we check whether the teaching is valid, if it will be the appropriate medicine for us. We need to be smart in checking the teaching first in order to accept it. But once that is done, then we need to integrate the dharma within ourselves. At this point, our work is to practise the teaching, not analyse it. But we should at all times analyse the subject, ourselves, to see if we are taking the medicine.

It is a very real process, but it is also normal to be habitually dim in our approach. We need to check ourselves over and over again, be ready to admit failure and carry on. We have nothing to lose except our confusion. Nobody has sold us this trip, making us believe we are something special. If we are using meditation to promote ourselves, to build ourselves up, we have sadly missed the point. Let us remember the Four Noble Truths, and hope that 1) we have acknowledged we have suffering, that 2) we recognise our own confusion is the cause, that 3) there is an end to confusion, and that 4) we are therefore willing to walk the path, to take the medicine.

So what should we in fact then do?

We have to be willing to abandon our haste when we meditate. We need to concern ourselves with our mind. What kind of mind are we cultivating? What kind of mind do we want to deepen? What kind of mind do we want to maintain here on our cushion? The teachings tell us of three states of mind that we have to identify:

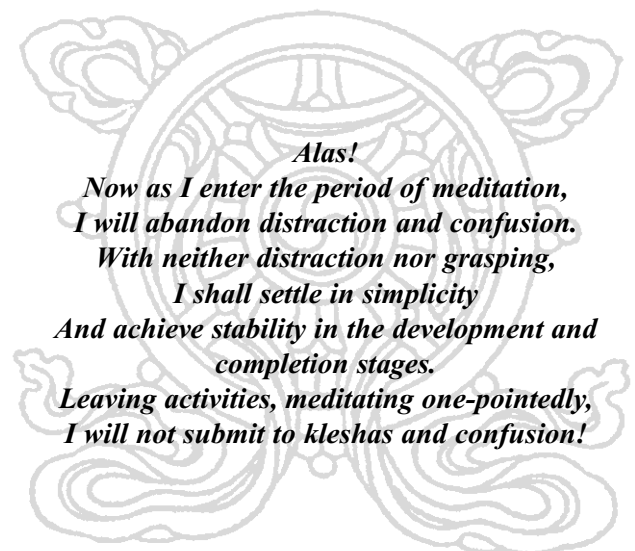
1. *negative mind* — the mind that is caught up in neurotic thought patterns such as hatred, desire and ignorance;
2. *undirected mind* — the neutral mind that is unconscious of itself and its content;
3. *creative mind* — the mind that is light and well, striving for what is beneficial for both oneself and others. It manifests as determination, faith, compassion and devotion.

We need to abandon the first two, the undirected and negative states of mind, and we need to cultivate creative mind. This we obviously need to do at any given time, but particularly when we meditate we need to identify what our state of mind is and make sure it is creative mind. In meditation we are less involved with external activity for the time being and, for that reason, what we are cultivating needs to be worthwhile. For this reason, in Tibetan Buddhist meditation, there are preliminary practices to any session of meditation, to enable us to cultivate a fertile ground for our meditation. Session preliminaries may be reflecting on the four thoughts that change the mind, as well as taking refuge, arousing bodhicitta, etc. When these are with us, then our meditation has some substance, some spirit.

What makes the big difference in our practice is the presence of creative mind at the outset of a meditation session. We might be distracted during our sitting, but if we checked and cultivated our motivation at the beginning, there will be a big difference in the quality of the actual session. There are many teachings on how to do this, but what I need to remind myself over and over again is to actually *apply* these teachings.

After teachings people often ask, ‘How does this relate to everyday life?’ or ‘How does this relate to the mind.’ We need to remember that there is not a single one of the infinite teachings of the Buddha that is not directed at the mind and the confused emotions that cause suffering. There are no teachings that are not directed towards everyday life or the mind. Whatever it might be, every single one of the Buddha’s teachings has the single objective of removing mind’s confusion. We must view any teaching like a precious instruction, perfectly appropriate for exactly our very own mind.

We are lucky in that we have this medicine at hand. But this good fortune is not arbitrarily given to us. This comes because in the past we have created the conditions for such fortune. We need to create the conditions in the present moment so that the medicine of the Buddha’s teaching will also be at hand in the future, and we need to continue to actually take the medicine by integrating it in ourselves. This is the purpose of meditating and this is the substance of the path. We know what we need to do, so let’s do it. In Karma Lingpa’s *Root Verses of the Six Bardos*, Guru Padmasambhava says:





A Major Milestone

Khyentse Foundation reached a major milestone by accomplishing its initial fund-raising goal of US\$2.8 million to establish the Endowment Fund for Monastic Education. Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche sends this message of appreciation to the foundation's patrons for Losar, 2132.

Dear Friends,

I am very pleased that you have been inspired to become patrons of Buddhism. Milarepa said that the merit accumulated by the practitioner and the merit accumulated by the sponsor are the same. The endowment guarantees that the monastic tradition at the Dzongsar Institutes will continue and that all the basic needs of at least 700 students will be covered for as long as the endowment exists. I cannot guarantee that all the graduates of the institutes will become egoless, selfless individuals, or that they will conquer all their negative emotions, but I am very sure that at least one of them will become a selfless being. Do not underestimate the value of one such individual. One person can influence millions of beings. His Holiness the Dalai Lama alone has made an impact on so many people. The purpose of

Khyentse Foundation supporting monastic institutions is to produce such individuals — scholars and teachers who positively influence the world.

Your contributions are drops in the ocean that is the endowment. They have a ripple effect. The endowment supports hundreds of practitioners. Out of those hundreds, one emerges. This individual is sent out into the world where, through wisdom and compassion, he or she inspires hundreds and thousands more.

I have an aspiration that Khyentse Foundation follow the footsteps of great patron kings of Buddhism such as Ashoka of India and Trisong Detsen of Tibet. Khyentse Foundation's aim is to become an *on-going* patron of Buddhism. In this sense, the foundation's job is just beginning and there is still very much that needs to be done. It is not something that we will finish within this decade. I don't think our job will ever finish. The progress made by Khyentse Foundation is a group effort. Thank you for being a part of this group. Khyentse Foundation's many beneficiaries and volunteers count on your continued support.

Enjoy the year of the wood rooster.

THE FLIP IT RAP

You know PRIDE is trouble brewing,
You just think there's nothing doing,
But when you turn around the corner,
There's trouble waiting for ya.
So when your hands start to fumble
And your smile starts to crumble,
You've gotta flip the situation.
Flip the situation...

JEALOUSY is such a loser,
It's just waiting to abuse ya,
It'll totally confuse ya,
Make your friends all want to lose ya.
So when it's got you by the throat,
You've gotta use the antidote
And try to flip the situation.
Flip the situation...

DESIRE's like a magic potion,
Gets you caught up in the motion.
But you're heading for explosion,
So analyse the notion:

We're not free, we're in this ocean!
So try some cool devotion
And flip the situation.
Flip the situation...

Sometimes thoughts are television
And you're losing all precision;
Gotta make a firm decision
To widen up your vision.
Why not try some dedication
And take the medication.
You've gotta flip the situation.
Flip the situation...

When ANGER has you all infected
And you're losin' all objective,
Try to put it in perspective,
It's not single, it's collective.
Don't get so damn invective!
Be a little introspective
And flip the situation
Flip the situation...

So find yourself a real Lama
And don't worry, he won't harm ya.

He may even be a charmer,
But don't let that alarm ya.
He'll just purify your karma
And make you do the dharma;
He'll help you flip the situation.
Flip the situation...

No one said it would be easy,
Don't expect it to be breezy.
You need more than one quick fix,
It takes heavy-duty tricks!
So when you're feeling dark and
gloomy,
Just make your mind more roomy,
And flip the situation.
Flip the situation...

No need for irritation, man.
Just flip the situation!
Flip the situation...
Just flip it.

*(Lyrics courtesy of Dolma Gunther
and Donna Pillay)*



Dharma Dates

VAJRADHARA GONPA NOW THREE-YEAR RETREAT CENTRE

Vajradhara Gonpa is now operating exclusively as Australia's first three-year retreat centre, where twenty-eight retreatants are intensively practising the dharma under the direction of Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche. Even though the gonpa is now closed to all visitors until 2008, many gonpa members have renewed their membership and many new members have joined as a way of supporting the strenuous, on-going dharma practice involved in the three-year retreat. The committee would like to thank all our gonpa members and sponsors who have generously given much effort and funds to support this first three-year retreat.

There are a variety of ways to make an auspicious link with Vajradhara Gonpa and the three-year retreat. The gonpa has a tax-deductible building fund that is applied towards the building, expansion and renovation of teaching facilities. It is also possible to make donations directly in support of the activities of the three-year retreat: supporting retreatants, sponsoring tsok and lamp offerings, sponsoring texts and so on. Please contact Kathie Chodron, administrative director, Vajradhara Gonpa, P.O. Box 345, Kyogle, NSW, 2474, or email vajradharagonpa@siddharthasintent.org. Enquiries concerning participation in the next-three year retreat, expected to commence in 2009, may be emailed to the retreat master cabs@siddharthasintent.org.

ESTABLISHING KHYENTSE LINEAGE IN CANADA

Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche conducted Gesar and Tara pujas on the first day of the Year of the Wood Bird at Sea to Sky Retreat Centre. This auspicious day marked the completion of three years of "meditation in action" that saw the facilities at SSRC increase from six to twelve structures. Between on-going meditation programmes, periods of intense building activity were accomplished with surprising harmony that inspired tremendous contributions by many dedicated volunteers. This harmony seemed to fulfill Rinpoche's vision as it was expressed soon after purchasing the SSRC land. Rinpoche defined the purpose of SSRC as a place in which a connection could be made with Khyentse lineage by innumerable means. Whether Rinpoche has been physically present or not, SSRC has provided people with an opportunity to make a link with the blessings of the Khyentse lineage. From gasfitters with a love of English football to yoga programme participants and volunteer labourers of all types, many have come to appreciate SSRC as a jewel in the coastal mountains of British Columbia. Now SSRC is fully occupied with meditators practising in the traditional Buddhist way. To find out more about SSRC go to www.siddharthasintent.org.

LOTUS OUTREACH — PUTTING COMPASSION INTO ACTION

For over ten years Lotus Outreach has been working to help educate children and build sustainable programmes in underprivileged communities in India and Bhutan. Through the generous support of sponsors in Australia and around the world, Lotus Outreach has provided educational opportunities and vocational training for hundreds of children in need. Responding to the alarming growth in child trafficking in the region, Lotus Outreach is now extending its programmes to Cambodia, one of the world's poorest countries, where more and more children, especially girls, are at risk of exploitation and exposure to AIDS.

You can support Lotus Outreach's work by: sponsoring a child (\$A320 a year provides for the full educational needs of one child in India or Bhutan); making a one-time gift at any time to fund the wider work of Lotus Outreach; becoming a Lotus Outreach Australia member for \$A20 a year and help our application for Deductible Gift Recipient status, which will enable us to offer tax deductibility to our donors and contribute to new programme development; supporting our fund-raising programme, which includes film and food affairs and Lotus Outreach gift items. For more information, contact our membership co-ordinators Anna Vljakovic at annavlaj@yahoo.com or Meg Hart at megahart@optusnet.com.au, write to Lotus Outreach Australia, P.O. Box 1934, North Sydney, NSW, 2059 or go to www.lotusoutreach.org.

WORLD PEACE VASE PROJECT — OCEANIA

Kate Miller and her team have done an incredible amount of work in previous years, placing 90 vases in Australia and New Zealand. Now these areas are all but finished. The next phase will be to complete the remaining 116 vases across the countries and islands of the Pacific and Indian Oceans and Micronesia. The countries that comprise Oceania are the Cook Islands, Fiji, French Polynesia, Guam, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Norfolk Islands, Niue Palau, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Samoa, Tonga, Tokelau, Tuvalu, Vanuatu, Wallis and Futuna Islands.

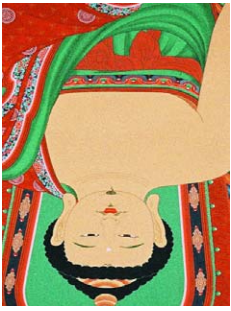
His Holiness Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche has said it is important that a lot of people become involved in the project as the cumulative intention to create conditions for peace is a very powerful part of it. If people are interested in helping with this extremely important project for peace, please contact Kate Miller on kate@siddharthasintent.org to form a working committee to build contacts — Kate has done so much, but has other commitments and needs to hand this job over. For inspiration go to our vase journeys on the Peace Vases website <http://www.siddharthasintent.org/peace/journeys.html>.

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INTENT
OF SIDDHARTHA'S
A NEWSLETTER

GENTLE
VOICE



SIDDHARTHA'S SCHOOL CHILDREN'S DAYS UNDENIABLY INCREDIBLE HEROES

In 2005 Siddhartha's School looks at some of the world's greatest women and men – those who are a shining example to all humanity. We will explore their lives and achievements through art, drama, song, dance, games and many other fun and fantastic activities. The programme is suitable for children aged four to twelve and runs one day per month in Kyogle. We are a non-profit organisation based on the Buddhist principles of compassion and non-violence. For more information, or to be added to our mailing list, contact Ari on 02 6621 2193 or ari_danapati@yahoo.com.au, and Eva on 02 6633 1257 or evasimon@dnet.aunz.com.

THE GREAT ART RAFFLE RESULTS

On behalf of Vajradhara Gonpa Committee, Simon Thomas sends congratulations to all the winners of the wonderful prizes in the Vajradhara Gonpa Great Art Raffle. "Thank you to the donors of those beautiful artworks and to everyone who purchased tickets, too. The raffle raised over \$4,000 for the three-year retreat and, amazingly, the only costs were \$90 for the framing of the first and second prizes. This shows how the

generosity of the sangha can really bring tangible benefits in assisting Rinpoche's many projects. The raffle was drawn at the recent Madhyamika teaching in Sydney and quite a few of the winners were there to collect their prizes on the spot. Thanks, also, to all the organisers, especially Pam Croci for arranging the prizes and John Allan for printing the tickets."

The prizes and winners are: 1. Calligraphy by Rinpoche, Tom Gwinn; 2. Calligraphy by Ani Lodro, Arantxa; 3. Calligraphy by May Gu, Skye; 4. Artwork by Joan Ross, Michael Rider; 5. Painting by Raphael Zimmerman, Ruthie Toothie; 6. Statue by Tineka Adolphus, Debbie Smith; 7. Painting by Beth Norling, Heidi Kennesy; 8. Landscape by Ray Dargin, Tineka Adolphus; 9. Print by Martin Sharp, Louise Rodel; 10. Ceramic by Ian Godfrey, Tineka Adolphus; 11. Scarf by Jenny Kee, Kay Whelan; 12. Jewellery by Anita Delliou, Ani Dianne; 13. Scarf by Julie St Aubyn, Debbie Smith; 14. Tibetan jewellery, Jane Bathgate; 15. Photo book by Alan Kozlowski, Sonia Davis; 16. Tibetan prayer wheel, Gerd Kuhlmann; 17. Painting donated by Harvey and Linda Feldstein, Jill Robinson; 18. Photo book by Alan Kozlowski, Kim Rickard.

PRACTICE DETAILS

To find out about practices in your area, please contact:

Sydney — Chris Conlon on 02 9360 1304 or Hugo Croci on 0402 894 871 for shamatha meditation, and Jill Robinson on 02 9420 1340 for Tsasum Drildrup on Guru Rinpoche Day;

Blue Mountains — Pamela and Hugo Croci on 02 4757 1352, 02 4757 2339 (after hours), 0402 894 871 or flux@optusnet.com.au;

Adelaide — Tineka Adolphus on 08 8362 7553;

Byron Bay Buddhists — 02 6685 1646 or byronbay@siddharthasintent.org, and Christina Peebles on 02 6688 2055 for Longchen Nyingthik ngöndro;

Buddha Down Under in Auckland, New Zealand — 09 424 3334 or buddhadownunder@ihug.co.nz

PLEASE NOTE:

Because of its sacred content, please treat this newsletter with respect. Should you need to dispose of it, please burn it, rather than throwing it away.