



Toowoomba Buddhist Centre

NEWSLETTER NOVEMBER 2018

4-6 Cress Street
Toowoomba Qld 4350

www.toowoombabuddhistcentre.org
<https://thebuddhistcentre.com/toowoomba>

Dear Friends,

It is with great sadness that we must inform you of the death of Ugyen Sangharakshita, founder of the Triratna Buddhist Order and Community. He passed away on 30th October 2018 at approximately 10am GMT in Hereford Hospital, UK.

The Toowoomba Buddhist Centre will be hosting a 2 hour vigil on Wednesday, 31st October, from 3pm. The program for November 1st, the first Friends Night of this month, will be starting at 7pm, and will be dedicated to Bhante Sangharakshita with chanting, meditation, readings and Puja.

Dear Friends,

On Friends Night at the moment we are studying the Eightfold Path. Such a path or journey can only start with the desire to want to change how we are. For this reason The Eightfold Path starts with a Vision; without that the rest of the Path, known as The Path of Transformation, is not possible. Usually the Vision involves some sort of insight into the nature of reality, often that it is unsatisfactory and involves suffering, and the desire to find a way out of this situation. Often we become 'sick of being sick', sick of being a self-destructive self and desire growth and the possibility of becoming a more healthy, happy human being.

Progress is inevitably gradual and requires persistent effort. As the Buddha said "... a pot becomes full by constant drops of water, so little by little do humans fill themselves with good." We put so much effort into being unskilful it is hard to re-direct it into skilful effort. Indeed, it is worth reminding ourselves that if we put a fraction of the effort we put into unskilful activities into skilful ones we would probably all be Enlightened overnight!

All the cliches apply: 'Rome wasn't built in a day' and 'you can't stop an express train with just one application of the brakes'. Gradually we become more mindful and as a result less impulsive and less reactive. At first we are only aware of having acted unskilfully after the event, gradually we become aware as we act unskilfully and, eventually, before we act so that we can prevent it. Gradually we withdraw our neurotic projections onto external objects and thus experience less craving and more contentment. We orientate ourselves more toward satisfying our objective needs for growth instead of satisfying our more subjective likes and dislikes.

Such progress is dependent upon keeping up a regular practice of Ethics and Meditation. We need to make *sustained* effort and if we don't keep it up we do slip back and collapse. If the latter happens (as it inevitably will) the practising Buddhist does not wallow in irrational guilt but realizes that such failures are simply the result of not keeping the right conditions in place and that it is just a matter of re-establishing these conditions as soon as possible and getting on with the practice.

Keeping up a regular practice is itself a sign of progress. More and more we turn our attention to, and organise our lifestyle around, inspiring ideals particularly Going For Refuge to The Three Jewels. As we become more and more integrated we experience more energy, joy and happiness. We feel more composed, confident and guilt-free, in a word we feel 'free'. The Buddha taught that just as the ocean has but one taste, that of salt, so too the Dharma has but one taste, that of freedom. There is a point one can reach in this lifetime, which it is impossible to slip back from. The Law of Conditionality has reached a momentum that it is impossible to reverse. It is a point of no return referred to as Stream Entry. [Roger]

FRIENDS NIGHTS* - Thursdays, 7-9pm:

Friends Nights are open to everyone, whether a beginner or more experienced, a regular or a first time visitor. They are an opportunity for people to come together to meditate, engage in Buddhist practices such as pujas and to learn more about the Buddha's teachings, the Dharma. Most importantly, they are an opportunity to engage in these activities in friendship with other like-minded people. The evening's program always includes

meditation and a social aspect. Each month usually includes devotional practices with a Dharma study/activity component on other evenings. The focus of **study till December** is *'The Buddha's Noble Eightfold Path'* (Perfect Vision, Emotion, Speech, Action, Livelihood, Effort, Awareness, *Samadhi*).

***There is no charge for Friends Nights, but a donation is very much appreciated, since we rely heavily on people's generosity, on their giving (dana), to keep the Toowoomba Buddhist Centre operating.**

NOVEMBER 2018 CALENDAR

* *Friend Nights are from 7 to 9pm*

Thu 1ST **FRIENDS NIGHT:** *Puja for Ugyen Sangharakshita, 26/8/1925 – 30/10/2018* [V]

Thu 8th **FRIENDS NIGHT:** Meditation; **Perfect Effort Ch. 6** [V]

Thu 15th **FRIENDS NIGHT:** Meditation; Welcome Dharmamati and themes from Mitrata seminar on Perfect Effort [R]

Fri 16th to Sun November 18th: *Elemental Archetypes Retreat led by Dharmamati*

Thu 22nd **FRIENDS NIGHT:** Meditation and Threefold Puja [K]

Thu 29th **FRIENDS NIGHT:** Meditation; **Perfect Awareness Ch. 7** [R]

PARKING AT THE CENTRE:

The grassed area in front of the Centre has recovered sufficiently for the resumption of parking there.

ELEMENTAL ARCHETYPES - Fri 16th to Sun November 18th, 2018

A retreat led by Dharmamati at Kelly House, James Byrne Centre, Highfields. Dharmamati is a Triratna Order member from Coffs Harbour, who was ordained in 1979. He was one of the founding members of the Triratna Community in Australia. Dharmamati is also an artist and has previously led two retreats in Toowoomba.

Cost: \$210 full; \$190 partly employed; \$170 concessional

THE BOOKING LIST FOR THIS RETREAT IS STILL OPEN. To make a booking or for more information, please contact: Christine McConnell: 0417 627 544 or healthfactormedia@bigpond.com

RETREATS PLANNED FOR 2019: [themes to be announced]

March 15-17, led by Sudrishti; August 2-4, led by Siladasa; November 8-10, led by Nagasuri.

SANGHA DAY with MITRA CEREMONIES – Saturday December 1st, 10am-2pm

There will be a special Sangha Day celebration on Sat. December 1st from 10am to 2pm, with 3 women becoming Mitras within the Triratna Buddhist Community. There will be introductions, meditation and a Sevenfold Puja followed by lunch. All friends and family welcome, so please mark the date in your diaries. More information later in the month or contact Viryaja on 0404299573.

THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH:

“By sustained effort, earnestness, discipline, and self-control, let the wise man make for himself an island, which no flood overwhelms.”

Dhammapada (Transl. Narada), Ch.2, 25.

