



# Toowoomba Buddhist Centre

## NEWSLETTER FEBRUARY 2018

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Toowoomba Qld 4350

[www.toowoombabuddhistcentre.org](http://www.toowoombabuddhistcentre.org)  
<https://thebuddhistcentre.com/toowoomba>

Dear Friends,

I guess like a lot of people I have been thinking about New Year's resolutions over the last few weeks. Whilst I was doing this, the well-known expression from the poem *Desiderata* (which means something needed or wanted) by Max Ehrmann kept coming to mind - "Beyond a wholesome discipline, be gentle with yourself."<sup>(1)</sup> However, to paraphrase Sangharakshita<sup>(2)</sup>, unfortunately the word *discipline* has negative connotations for many people.

Most of us don't like submitting our unique individuality to someone else's notion of what is good for us. Although it is healthy to resist pressure imposed by others it is also true to say that those of us who can remain positive, inspired, and spontaneous while following our own natural inclinations without the need for any discipline, whether imposed by others or by ourselves, are very rare indeed. Most of us, if we allow ourselves to do what we please, do nothing very constructive, and end up feeling dull, listless, and uninspired. How true!

In a sense it's about energy. If our energies are unintegrated they work against one another. Getting them working in harmony and rousing them, requires some degree of discipline, of imposed order. There is a paradox here – inspiration and spontaneity are produced by discipline and regularity of practice.

Hopefully, eventually, there is a gradual build-up of energy which gains momentum until finally we can break free of all our habits. Then the need for conscious regular practice drops away. When our energies are integrated without the need for discipline to bring them together, when our energies are always immediately available to us – then we can be simply spontaneous. Guess what one of my resolutions is? [Roger]

1. Max Ehrmann, 1927, *Desiderata*, Copyright 1952
2. Sangharakshita 1998, *KNOW YOUR MIND. The Psychological Dimension of Ethics in Buddhism*. Birmingham: Windhorse Publications, p. 29.

### **FEBRUARY 2018 CALENDAR**

Thu 1 <sup>st</sup>	<b><u>FRIENDS NIGHT:</u></b>	Meditation; <i>LIVING ETHICALLY</i> : Ch 6 Mental States [R]
Thu 8 <sup>th</sup>	<b><u>FRIENDS NIGHT:</u></b>	Meditation; <i>LIVING ETHICALLY</i> : Ch 6 Mental States [K]
Thu 15 <sup>th</sup>	<b><u>FRIENDS NIGHT:</u></b>	Meditation; <b><i>PARINIRVANA DAY</i></b> [V]
Thu 22 <sup>nd</sup>	<b><u>FRIENDS NIGHT:</u></b>	Meditation; <i>LIVING ETHICALLY</i> : Ch 6 Mental States [R]

### ***FRIENDS NIGHT PROGRAM\*:***

This study program for February and March will see us completing the in-depth look at Ethics, how we might live more ethically, using Sangharakshita's book '*Living Ethically*'. The study program for the following months is still to be decided – more information in the March newsletter. **Meanwhile, if you there are any particular aspects of the Dharma, which you would like us to look at on Friends Nights, please let us know as soon as possible. You are also welcome to offer a presentation on any aspect of the Dharma, of particular interest to you.** Gary and Peter have done this in previous years. ***Parinirvana Day***, the occasion of the Buddha's physical death, will also be commemorated this month with meditation, readings and puja.

*\*FRIENDS NIGHTS, on Thursdays, 7-9pm, are open to everyone, whether a beginner or more experienced, a regular or a first time visitor. There is no charge for these events, but a donation is very much appreciated, since we rely heavily on people's generosity to keep the Toowoomba Buddhist Centre operating.*

Friends Nights are an opportunity for people to come together to meditate, engage in Buddhist practices, learn more about the Buddha's teachings, the Dharma, but most importantly 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 one or two devotional practices take place and other evenings have a Dharma study/activity component.

### **20 YEARS OF THE TOOWOOMBA BUDDHIST CENTRE:**

Last Thursday we celebrated the Toowoomba Buddhist Centre's 'birthday', which was round about this time 20 years ago – in 1998. It was a well-attended, heart-warming evening with both 'original' and subsequent sangha members telling their stories of beginnings, first encounters, spiritual journeys to the moment and expressions of appreciation. There was a sense of energy and enthusiasm to continue, to step into the next 20 years. Sadhu!



### **NEW ROUND OF EIGHT WEEK COURSES STARTING:**

Registrations are now open for upcoming evening courses: *Traditional Buddhist Meditation and Mindfulness* starting on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> February (7-9pm) and *Introducing Buddhism* on Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> February (7-9pm), details on website. **Contact Roger 45649636 or 0410608791.**

### **RETREATS COMING UP IN 2018:**

The following dates are confirmed for 3 weekend retreats to be held at Kelly House, James Byrne Centre:

- 1. April 27<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> – *Mandala of the Five Buddhas* led by Viryaja and Hridaya.** Bookings are now open for this retreat. Cost \$210 full, \$190 part time, \$170 concessional. Limited to 16 people. More information in the March newsletter. Contact Viryaja on 0404299573 or [vp@toowoombabuddhistcentre.org](mailto:vp@toowoombabuddhistcentre.org) to make a booking.
- 2. July 20<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> – The Vimalakirti Nidesha** led by Nagasuri from Sydney.
- 3. Nov. 16<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> –** led by Siladasa from Melbourne; theme to be announced.

### **BOOKS FOR SALE:**

If you are interested in learning more about the Dharma or the Buddhist path, there are books for sale at the Centre. Titles include 'What is the Dharma?', 'A Guide to the Buddhist Path', 'The Buddha's Noble Eightfold Path' and 'Principles of Buddhism'. We can order other Buddhist books for you if you let Viryaja know what you want.

### **THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH:**

*"When the bhikkhu, thus complete in the Moralities, perceives no fear from any direction, that is, with regard to restraint in morality. It is just as an established Ruler, having settled with his enemies, perceives no fear from any direction with regard to enemies. The bhikkhu, complete in this noble group of Moralities, experiences within himself an unmixed ease. Thus, Maharaja, is the bhikkhu complete in the Moralities."*

[Long Discourse of the Buddha, tr. A. A. A. G. Bennet, Chetana Ltd., Bombay. P.67.]

