



## Toowoomba Buddhist Centre

# NEWSLETTER NOVEMBER 2017

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Toowoomba Qld 4350

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

Dear Friends,

We have just finished a month of Friends Nights studying the speech precepts. People involved said they found it very interesting and helpful. In the West the traditional division of our nature is mind and body or body, soul and spirit. In Buddhism it is body, speech and mind – the ability to communicate is given an equal place with our physical being and our inner experience. When we bow and touch our forehead, throat, and chest in succession - body, speech and mind - we are offering the whole of ourselves.

Speech connects the head and the heart, intellect and emotion, the conscious and unconscious. Its significance is reflected in the fact that it is the third stage of the Eightfold Path after Perfect Vision and Perfect Emotion. Being mindful of speech is a good way to monitor what is going on in our hearts. Often there is a difference between what we espouse at a conscious level and what we operate from at the unconscious level. We discovered that this makes speech a “tricky” area indeed that can become quite complicated.

Much communication between people is pseudo-communication – communication between mutual projections and leads to many misunderstandings. Because of our lack of integration we are often unaware of what we are feeling at the unconscious level and we may be projecting these unconscious feelings on to people around us. For example, we may say someone “is a difficult person” but actually we are feeling guilty because of how we have treated them. Carefully monitored, mindful speech can therefore help make this unconscious material conscious and thus aid the process of integration.

The speech precepts are not just about being truthful – one’s speech should also be kindly, helpful and promoting harmony and not harsh, unhelpful and divisive – four progressive levels of human communication. First there is the level of simple truthfulness and abstention from false speech. Next there is the level of kindly or affectionate speech and abstention from harsh or aggressive speech. Then there is speech that is useful and speech that promotes harmony. So, as we discovered, there is a lot involved in speaking ethically. [Roger]

### **NOVEMBER 2017 CALENDAR**

*(Friends Nights: 7pm - 9pm)*

Thu 2 <sup>nd</sup>	<b><u>FRIENDS NIGHT:</u></b>	<b>SANGHA DAY Meditation &amp; Refection [V]</b>
Sat 4 <sup>th</sup>	<b><u>FRIENDS NIGHT:</u></b>	<b>SANGHA DAY including a MITRA CEREMONY</b>
Thu 9 <sup>th</sup>	<b><u>FRIENDS NIGHT:</u></b>	Meditation; Ch. 5 Ethics of Views [K]
Thu 16 <sup>th</sup>	<b><u>FRIENDS NIGHT:</u></b>	Meditation; Ch. 5 Ethics of Views [R]
Thu 23 <sup>rd</sup>	<b><u>FRIENDS NIGHT:</u></b>	Meditation; Ch. 5 Ethics of Views [K]
Fri 24 <sup>th</sup> – Sun 26 <sup>th</sup>	<b>‘Encountering the Buddha’ – a retreat led by Siladasa</b>	
Thu 30 <sup>th</sup>	<b><u>FRIENDS NIGHT:</u></b>	Meditation; Ch. 5 Ethics of Views [V]

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

So far this year the study program has included stories from the Pali Canon, teachings from the *Udāna*, 'suffering in the context of everyday life', and the *Heart Sutra*. In July we began an in-depth look at how we might live more ethically, using Sangharakshita's book '*Living Ethically*' and other writings. We have looked at *Friendship, Generosity, Sexual Relations, and Skilful Speech*. In November we turn our attention to the *Ethics of Views*

**\*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.

## **SANGHA DAY and MITRA CEREMONY – Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> November:**

On Saturday, November 4<sup>th</sup> we shall be celebrating our final Buddhist festival of the year - **Sangha Day**, the day of the spiritual community. This will be a very special celebration, since along with meditation and puja it will include a Mitra ceremony. A Mitra is someone who considers themselves a Buddhist, tries to practise the five precepts and who feels that the Triratna Buddhist Community is the main context in which to deepen their Buddhist practice. So put this in your diary. It will be from 10am to about 2pm, including lunch – please bring a vegetarian lunch to share. All welcome.

## **'ENCOUNTERING THE BUDDHA' - a RETREAT from NOVEMBER 24<sup>th</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup>:**

– a weekend retreat led by **Siladasa** from Melbourne, in which we shall be looking at ways we can meet the Buddha, or the transcendental, whether through parable, Dharma, symbols, ritual, or inspiration from the noble qualities and so on. The retreat will be held at the James Byrne Centre and the cost will be a slight increase on the earlier retreat in July, to cover the costs of single accommodation in twin rooms. \$200 fully employed; \$180 part employment; \$160 concessional. The retreat is fully booked but we have a waiting list so if you are interested in attending:

Please contact Viryaja on 0404299573 or [vp@toowoombabuddhistcentre.org](mailto:vp@toowoombabuddhistcentre.org)

## **THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH:**

*When he hears something at one place he does not proclaim it elsewhere to bring about a quarrel between the parties; what he has heard here he does not report there to bring about a quarrel between the parties.*

[Cunda Kammaraputta Sutta: To Cunda the Silversmith AN 10.176]

