



Toowoomba Buddhist Centre

NEWSLETTER OCTOBER 2017

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Toowoomba Qld 4350

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

Dear Friends,

In Buddhism, 'guilt' and 'remorse' are not considered to be the same thing. There is no room for guilt in a Buddhist life. Guilt is classified as an unskilful mental state¹. Remorse is a skilful mental state. How is this so?

We have all probably experienced the uncomfortable feeling of disquiet. When we set high standards for our behaviour, when we feel remorse for what we have done wrong and a need to do something about rectifying the situation, we are experiencing 'ethical disquiet', a wholesome state of mind. But feeling guilty, as such, may be one of two other forms of disquiet, which are unwholesome states of mind. Firstly, false disquiet has some moral dimension and is a feeling of guilt about actions, which really have no moral significance. False disquiet has its roots in social conditioning, being approved of, fear of punishment and the withdrawal of somebody's love. One may feel one is doing the 'right' thing in conforming, by being of 'good' behaviour, but the price to pay for this lack of maturity, of individual conscience, may be one of neurosis and insecurity, even acts of rebellion. Secondly, functional disquiet has no moral dimension at all and is a necessary protective mechanism, e.g. when we have a nagging feeling that we have left our house unlocked. However, when we are too prone to functional disquiet, it can become debilitating, it can become habitual anxiety.² We can fall into a state of chronic guilt for what we think of as our being incompetent, not good enough and so on.

So what can we do to alleviate our disquiet and any guilty feelings? We can analyse our feelings of disquiet in terms of whether they are ethical, false (irrational guilt) or functional. We may then need a long process of getting to know 'ourselves much better through meditation and honest communication with trusted spiritual friends'³. [Viriyaja]

1. Subhadramati, 2013, 'Not About Being Good', p.106, Windhorse Publications, Cambridge
2. Subhuti, 2015, 'Mind in Harmony', pp.98/9, Windhorse Publications, Cambridge
3. ibid p.100

OCTOBER 2017 CALENDAR

(Friends Nights: 7pm - 9pm)

Thu 5th	<u>FRIENDS NIGHT:</u>	Meditation; Skilful Speech: Introduction/ Truthful Speech [V]
Thu 12th	<u>FRIENDS NIGHT:</u>	Meditation; Skilful Speech: Affectionate Speech [R]
Thu 19th	<u>FRIENDS NIGHT:</u>	Meditation; Skilful Speech: Helpful Speech [K]
Thu 26th	<u>FRIENDS NIGHT:</u>	Meditation; Skilful Speech: Harmonious Speech [R]

Saturday, NOVEMBER 4th
SANGHA DAY including a MITRA CEREMONY
10am to approx. 2pm
All welcome; please bring vegetarian lunch to share

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* and *Sexual Relations*. In October we turn our attention to *Skilful Speech*.

***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.

COMING EVENTS:

On Saturday, November 4th 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 from 10am to about 2pm, including lunch – please bring a vegetarian lunch to share. All welcome.

'ENCOUNTERING THE BUDDHA' - a RETREAT from NOVEMBER 24th to 26th:

– 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. We have quite a few bookings already but there are still some places available.

**To make a reservation or for more information, please contact Viryaja
on 0404299573 or vp@toowoombabuddhistcentre.org**

THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH:

*We are what we think.
All that we are arises with our thoughts.
With our thoughts we make the world.
Speak or act with an impure mind
And trouble will follow you
As the wheel follows the ox that draws the
cart.*

*We are what we think.
All that we are arises with our thoughts.
With our thoughts we make the world.
Speak or act with a pure mind
And happiness will follow you
As your shadow, unshakable.
How can a troubled mind
Understand the way?*

*Your worst enemy cannot harm you
As much as your own thoughts, unguarded.*

*But once mastered,
No one can help you as much,
Not even your father or your mother*

from the *Dhammapada*,
translated by Thomas Byrom

