



Toowoomba Buddhist Centre

NEWSLETTER APRIL 2021

4-6 Cress Street

Toowoomba Qld 4350

www.toowoombabuddhistcentre.org

<https://thebuddhistcentre.com/toowoomba>

Dear Friends,

Basically there are three major traditions in Buddhism named after the geographical regions where they came to predominance: Southeast Asian, Chinese and Tibetan. They are all quite different from each other in many ways. During its evolution in India Buddhism went through three major phases from 500BCE-0 (Hinayana), 0-500 CE (Mahayana), and 500-1000CE (Vajrayana) and the particular trends of each phase influenced the different schools. Hence SE Asian is largely Hinayana; Chinese is Mahayana and Tibetan Vajrayana

The Hinayana translates as the “Lesser Vehicle” and the Mahayana as the “Greater Vehicle”. This is because the former seems to stress individual liberation as the main goal and claims only monks and nuns who devote their whole lives to it can achieve enlightenment. The latter is ‘bigger’ in the sense that it stresses becoming enlightened to help all beings become enlightened (the Bodhisattva ideal) and says that all people, including the laity, have the potential to become enlightened in a single lifetime.

The Vajrayana means “Diamond Vehicle” – a diamond can cut through anything so Vajrayana is about transforming negative energies into positive ones – it came from Tantric Buddhism in India. One reason for the great variety of approaches is that Buddhism has adapted over time to the very diverse cultures of Asia and expressed itself through these cultures, in terms of dress, customs and practices.

Another reason for variety is that some say the Buddha’s teaching is like a hologram – it can be viewed from many different angles. The world of conditionality we are all caught up in, which is causing our suffering, is a very complex one. Past conditions interact with present ones all the time causing all sorts of complicated feedback loops. People are, therefore, at all sorts of different stages and places, and caught up in their own peculiar predicaments. The Buddha taught the Dharma from many different angles and used different approaches to suit different peoples’ circumstances.

Because circumstances can be so complicated and different there is a need for a variety of explanations for people who find themselves involved on different paths. So the Buddha gave different accounts and different formulae in his teachings. Many of these are ways of envisaging the causal factors at work to help people develop the knowledge to gain release from the conditioned realm. Different schools of Buddhism may emphasise different teachings and different practices.

[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 includes meditation and a cuppa and chat followed by some study. Each month usually includes devotional practices with a Dharma study/activity component on other evenings.

Study in April: we will be exploring the ideal of the Bodhisattva.

There are plenty of spots to attend Friends nights so come and join us, you don't need to book in or let us know you are coming.

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

APRIL 2021 CALENDAR - Friends Nights are from 7 to 9pm

Thu 1st FRIENDS NIGHT: Meditation and Study – What is a Bodhisattva?

Thu 8th FRIENDS NIGHT: Meditation and Study – Avalokiteshvara

Thu 15th FRIENDS NIGHT: Meditation and Puja.

Thu 22nd RETREAT: Exploring the Wheel of Life - Padmadakini and Hridayaja

Thu 29th FRIENDS NIGHT: Meditation and Study – The Guide

UPCOMING RETREAT - Thursday 22nd – Sunday 25th April

Hopefully the conditions will continue to come together and we will finally be on residential retreat together at the James Byrne Centre. There are still some spaces available to attend. Padmadakini and Hridayaja will be leading the retreat; the theme is **“Looking into the mirror of our minds: Exploring the 6 Realms of The Wheel of Life”**

Sangharakshita wrote 'The Wheel of life is a magic mirror, even a crystal ball into which we can gaze.' On this retreat we will delve into the 6 realms of The Wheel of Life. Traditionally these are seen as different worlds into which we are reborn, but each is also an expression of a state of mind, so the 6 realms represent psychological states that we experience here and now, in this life.

If you would like to register or have any questions please contact Maree on mareejones59@hotmail.com

TRIRATNA DAY – this Saturday 3rd April

In April 1967 Bhante Sangharakshita founded what was to become the Triratna Buddhist Community. 54 years on, we celebrate this event and all that Bhante has given us, and looking forward to how we continue to unfold his legacy in the future.

Triratna Day celebrations will be held online and broadcast from Adhisthana (UK) and Sydney. Below is the program and link. Everyone is welcome to attend.

A WAVE OF BLESSINGS

1. The Green Stone (60mins) 2.00 pm Qld time

Beginning in New Zealand Shradanitta leads a special, adapted dedication ceremony. Ujjalamati shares her story beginning with meeting Sangharakshita when she was eight, and ending with her recent ordination. Purna and Saddhanandi introduce us to the green stone, its traditional symbolism in Maori culture, and its significance to our teacher.

We end with a ritual placing of the Adhithana green stone, a gift from Bhante, into the hands of the Buddha in the Adhithana shrine room. Hosted by Ratnavyuha.

2. In the Presence of the Buddha (60 mins) 4.00 pm Qld time

Live from the Adhithana Shrine room Yashodeva leads a Buddhonusati meditation, a reflection on the Buddha and his qualities.

**3. Triratna: A Living Tradition (90 mins) 6.30 pm Qld time
(From Adhithana UK and Sydney)**

We head over to Sydney for the 40th anniversary of the founding of the Sydney Buddhist Centre. Ratnajyoti interviews Dharmamati about his and his friends' adventure down under. Keynote speaker Dhammarati presents on the meaning of lineage in our community: our collective project, since the first communication of the Buddha, to liberate beings from suffering. Followed by small, international discussion groups. Hosted by Shubhavyuha.

<https://thebuddhistcentre.com/stories/toolkit/triratna-day-2021/>

A BIG THANK YOU



A willing band of workers braved the heat, ants and bity things to do a fabulous job of cleaning the vegetation behind the building, tidying up the jasmine vines on the western side and viburnums out the front. A grateful thanks to Anna, Bruno, Marici and Gary for all the work they put into to tidying the area and Steve for entrusting his faithful ute to transport the 2 full loads to the tip. We also found a great spot to develop as a shady secluded place under the trees at the back, so watch this space.....Also a shout out to the Lions' Club for mowing over the summer.

By mid-March the premises looked a picture and it was commented on by many.

Our base is small but the motivation and will to make our centre beautiful is gigantic indeed. The call is for anyone who can give a little time at our next working bee, so the dharma can carry on. Karen

THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

We are what we think.

All that we are arises with our thoughts.

With our thoughts, we make the world.

The Buddha