

# LAM RIM



# MANDALA

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YEAR 2002. ISSUE NUMBER 10.

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## EDITORIAL

DEAR ALL

Firstly, I would like to apologise for the long delay in the second Mandala being published this year. You should be receiving them at regular six month intervals but due to my workload this year with 2 new part-time jobs I have been unable to complete the Mandala in time. You should have had this one in August. Thank you for your patience.

Hopefully, now I'm back on track again I will endeavour to have Mandala 11 ready in time for the Tibetan New Year. For this to be possible, I would be very grateful if you could send me articles over the December holidays. Please send your articles to: Lorraine Harris, 100 Moorland Road, Cardiff CF24 2LP or email: hlorraineharris@aol.com. If anyone would like to help me with the production of the Mandala I will be very grateful. I need people to chase up emails for me that I have sent requesting articles, etc., or to phone people and ask for articles.

Thank you once again for the articles that have been sent. It is your articles that make the magazine so readable and enjoyable.

Emma Lawton has sent us an article, The Diamond that Cuts Through Illusion, and it will run over 4 issues of the MANDALA. She has sent me the whole document.

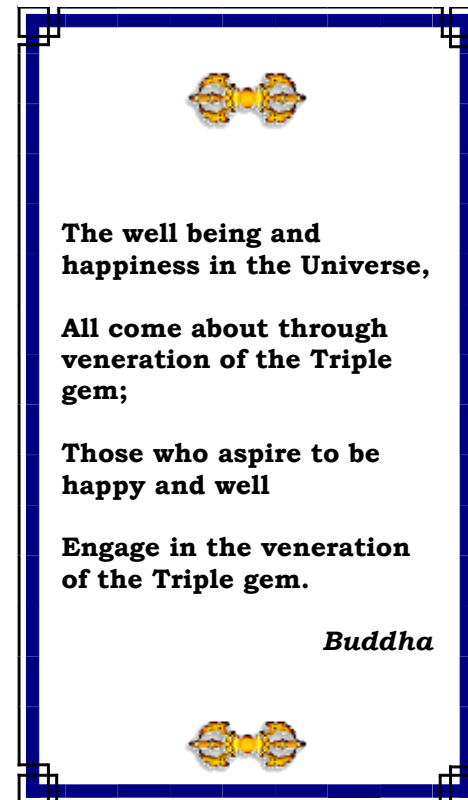
I have only listed 4 sections in this issue due to lack of space; there are 32 in all. Thank you Emma.

Mike Austin has kindly sent me hand mudras for insertion into the Mandala.

Thank you to Ann Davies for proof-reading our Mandala once again.

I hope you enjoy trying out some festive vegetarian recipes that are some of my favourites. May your Christmas be filled with happiness, loving kindness and peace.

best wishes  
Lorraine



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## LETTER FROM GESHE DAMCHO-LA

*Dear Friends*



*I am feeling very tired to write this letter so am not going to write - we have all experienced this feeling. We have to put in a lot of effort into things we do not want to do. Why does it take so much effort? It is because the mind gets stuck, as we experience aversion for things which are difficult. So why is it difficult? The answer is ignorance - because we don't see the purpose - that is ignorance. Then no change. So we continue the same habitual cycles which create so much dissatisfaction in our lives.*

*Let us take the example of food. Good/bad - you do not know until you taste it, then you can tell whether you like it or not. Meditation is like that, if you do not make the effort to practise then, like eating food, you get no benefit. Benefit is long term. For example, if you eat a lot then gradually you will get fatter and fatter, likewise if you eat little, then you get thinner and thinner - the process does not happen instantly.*

*In order to change these habitual cycles of thought you need to study and reflect on the meaningfulness of your own situation and experience, then you can start on the path of changing your mind. Food needs to be eaten first then you can decide. Your mind is like that, otherwise we are always blaming others. Listen to yourself when you are in a difficult situation. You really have to take experience for your own mind as your mind is unique. No-one has a mind the same and happy as yours. Similarly no-one understands your mind as well as you do.*

*Our minds are tricky so this is the plan of action. Firstly we need to watch carefully our mind in action - this is mindfulness. Secondly, we recognise the habits, both good and bad. Thirdly, we rejoice in the good habits - "Well done Damcho", then investigate the bad habits. Now comes the action plan - "I will make great effort to change that habit as it causes me a lot of trouble, making me feel uncomfortable and miserable". Remember, a step at a time, only take one habit at a time for this investigation, then you will be successful.*

*So as you can see - I have now written this letter. Time for lunch.*

*With my love and prayers*

*Geshe Damcho*



## ASPECTS OF DAILY BUDDHIST PRACTICES

by Geshe Palden Drakpa

Translated by Cheme Tsering of Gaden Shartse



A prayer wheel is filled with rolled up pieces of paper on which are written or printed mantras and prayers. By spinning the wheel around we are generating great amounts of virtuous merit as we are in fact activating the enclosed prayers and mantras. Je Gunthangpa states:

According to the tantras of the Early Translation Period there are many benefits of the hand prayer wheel such as providing protection and closing the door of birth in the six realms of cyclic existence. Its benefits far outweigh the merit accumulated through the saying of prayers seeking to purify the defilements of the beings in the three lower realms of existence.

Although the custom of this hand wheel is not explicitly given in the tantras of the New Translation Period, it is used by many eminent, qualified spiritual masters of all the orders of Buddhism in Tibet, and is popular in all the monasteries of Eastern and Central Tibet.

According to another tantric source: Of great benefit is the swift rotation of the syllable wheel; the rotation of wheels of mantras at the heart of the practitioner thus being the original source for the outer hand wheel in which special syllables are written and swirled. The various methods are explained in the numerous works (*beu bum*) pertaining to

### THE PRAYER WHEEL



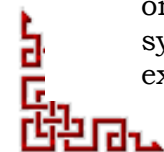
the practices of one's own deities and protectors, for actualising the four transforming powers of these deities and the ways of preparing the wheel of life-energy (*srog 'khor*) etc. are also given in accordance with the state of the realisations of the practitioner.

It happens in real life that epidemics, drought and hail can be checked by rotating a few mantras written on a piece of wood. (Similar to this visible power of these syllables) it is said that there is a far greater merit, beyond imagination, in rotating many potential and unique syllables with unstained motivation, as even great sins are absolved and seeds of liberation thus sowed, simply by being touched by the air coming by the use of these wheels.

As to how to condition the mind during it: Je Gunthangpa continued saying:

(Visualise) rays of light emanate from the sutras and mantras inside the prayer wheel, making offering to all the Buddhas. Thereupon, their transforming powers come together and dissolve into the practitioner.

As the six syllable mantra of Avalokiteswara, the embodiment of all the Buddhas' compassion is the most well known among Tibetans, it is often inserted in the prayer wheels.





## ASPECTS OF DAILY BUDDHIST PRACTICES continued...



According to Je Gungthangpa, **OM MANI PADME HUM**, is explained as follows:



We the inhabitants of the Land of Snows cannot hope to approach liberation from suffering without depending on the Great Compassionate Avalokiteswara. The syllable **Hri** should not be added to the **Mani** syllable, as the addition makes it a mantra of seven syllables, whereas it is the mantra of six syllables which purifies the six realms of migration by means of the six perfections resulting in the attainment of the states of the six lineage Buddhas. These six syllables were formulated by the six lineage Buddhas.

**Mani** and **Padme** are Sanskrit words. **Mani** denotes jewel, while **Padme** or lotus, not being found in Tibet, did not give rise to any new Tibetan term. The elongated sound of 'e' in **Padme** (which is actually **padma**) is a call, sounding like a call of a child for its mother. **Hum**, the symbol of the heart, requests attention. The syllable **om** represents what is being requested, as its components, **a**, **u** and **ma** symbolise the body, speech and mind of a Buddha. Therefore, by the repetition of this mantra we are requesting that the Buddhas bestow upon us an enlightened body, speech and mind.

### WATER OFFERINGS

There is no prescribed limit to the number of water bowls we may offer. In fact the more the containers, the better it is, in terms of accumulating merit as well as eliminating sins and negative mental factors. The seven bowls commonly offered represent crystal clear

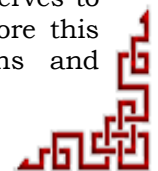
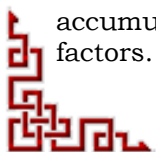
water for cleansing the mouth, water for cleaning the feet, offering of fresh flowers, offering of fragrance, illumination to the eyes, scented water and eatables.

After conscientiously dusting and scrubbing the bowls as well as their stands, we should place them in a straight formation from right to left (from the point of view) of the object of offering. The distance between the two brims of bowls as well as distance from the waters level to the brim should be equal to the size of a barley seed.

As when making the offering (to the Triple Gem) the three seed-syllables of the Buddha should be said. By the inherent power in these, non-humans as well as other unintended beings are prevented from subsisting on the offering. The mantras for the increase and multiplication of the offerings would also be appropriate.

After repeating the above seed-syllables several times we visualise that through the power of this repetition the transforming power of all the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas descend in the form of the three syllables, and dissolve into the water bowls. In this dissolution, the syllable **hum** removes impurities as well as qualities repugnant to the senses; **a** purifies and makes them desirable, and **Om** increases and multiplies the offerings beyond limit. Through such transformations, the devotee should realise that from the point of view of the object of his offerings, these offerings are no longer the mundane sustenance of the ordinary mortals.

There is great benefit in making water bowl offerings as, above all, it is a potential means for developing the perfection of giving. Because water is generally abundant everywhere, the motivation for making this offering is hardly stained by stinginess. It also serves to moisten one's heart with compassion and kindness. The more this habit is cultivated, the more one's mental obscurations and defilements are diminished.





## SAUCES FOR THE FESTIVE SEASON & ALL YEAR

*From the Vegetarian Gourmet by Paul Southey*

### BROWN SAUCE

125g (4 oz) finely chopped onion  
2 tablespoons of olive or sunflower oil  
2 coarsely chopped tomatoes  
1-2 tablespoons wholemeal flour  
300 ml (1/2 pint) brown vegetable stock (marmite etc.)  
A pinch of dried thyme  
Bay leaf  
50 ml (2 fl oz) red wine  
1 teaspoon of yeast extract  
Salt  
Freshly ground pepper

Fry the onion in the oil until golden brown; add the tomatoes and continue cooking, stirring constantly, until all the liquid has evaporated and they have started to brown. Sprinkle over the flour, stir it well, then pour on the stock and bring to the boil, stirring all the time until the sauce thickens. Add the thyme, bay leaf, red wine and yeast extract and simmer the sauce for 20 minutes, stirring occasionally. Strain into a clean pan, adjust the seasoning, reheat and serve.

### MUSHROOM SAUCE

Cook 100g (4oz) finely chopped mushrooms in 2 tablespoons of melted butter until soft and shiny and add them to the brown sauce after straining it. If a smoother textured sauce is required, add the mushrooms before straining the sauce and rub them through the sieve. Season well with pepper and a little cayenne, if desired.



### TOMATO SAUCE

450g (1 lb) coarsely chopped tomatoes  
50 g (2oz) finely chopped onion  
1 tablespoon of olive or sunflower oil  
1 tablespoon of wholemeal flour  
150ml (1/4 pint) water  
1 bay leaf  
1 clove garlic, peeled and finely chopped (optional)  
Salt and freshly ground pepper

Fry the onion in the oil until transparent, stir in the flour, then add the water. Stir well, then put in the tomatoes with the bay leaf and garlic, if used. Bring to the boil, stirring all the time, then simmer for 30 minutes, stirring from time to time. Rub the sauce through a sieve, adjust the seasoning and reheat before serving.  
For a more piquant sauce, add 1 tablespoon of wine or cider vinegar to the water and stir 1/2 tablespoon finely chopped capers into the sauce after straining.

### BIGARADE SAUCE

Add the thinly pared and sliced rind of 2 Seville oranges, with their juice, to the basic Tomato or Brown sauce. If liked, you can add it to a blend of the two.







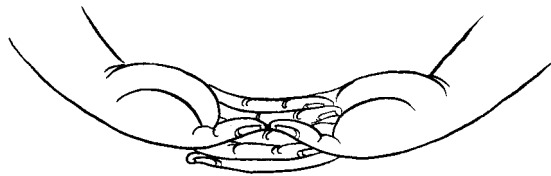
**Sixteen mudras** are presented in this edition of the MANDALA.

## MUDRAS

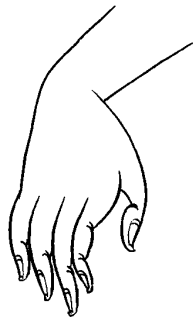
from *Principles of Tibetan Art*, Gega Lama

The basic presentation of the various hand gestures (*phyag.rgya*, Skt. *mudra*), the different fingers are symbolically referred to by the seed syllables of the five buddha families:

- the thumbs as OM,
- the forefingers as HUM,
- the middle fingers as TRAM
- the ring fingers as HRIH
- the small fingers as AH.



the mudra of '**meditative equipoise**' (*mnam.bzhag.phyag.rgya*), involving both hands: left hand below, right above, the OM's (i.e., thumbs) bent.



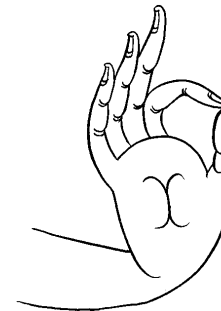
the '**earth-pressing**' mudra, (*sa.gnon*, usually translated as the 'earth-witness' gesture): all five fingers parallel, extended downwards from the knee in a relaxed manner.



the mudra of **equipoise** as depicted above in figure 1, but with only one hand.



the mudra of '**teaching dharma**' (*chos.'chad*): OM and HUM of both hands touching at the tips to form a ring, right palm facing outwards, left inwards.



another variation of the **teaching** mudra.

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# Europe's Right-Wing Politics and the Hands of the Buddha

FAITH & REASON

by John Peacock

There was a striking similarity in the photographs published in recent days of the two extreme right-wing politicians Jean-Marie Le Pen in France and David Edwards of the BNP in Britain. Both were portrayed not just with aggressive visages but also with clenched fists.

The hand is probably considered to be the most distinctive of human organs. It has often been said that it is the hand, with its opposing thumb and forefinger, that separates humankind from other animal species. But sadly the hand is not simply a symbol of achievement and co-operation. The news nowadays is full of images of violence in which the hand is seen pulling the trigger, wielding the machete, hurling a rock or in an enraged clench. Indeed sometimes these images appear to be almost the depiction of truly human "handicraft". From the cold-blooded assassination of a Dutch politician a few days ago to the mass violence between Palestinian and Israeli, the hands of humankind seem to be ever engaged in perpetuating destruction, death and hatred. Rarely do we encounter, through the media, images of hands engaged in acts of kindness or care, wisdom or compassion.

Yet in the everyday world the hand, this most human of organs, can embody our care and concern, make and create, rather than destroy and lay waste. It is to this other possibility that the Chinese Buddha figures currently on display at the Royal Academy of Art in London give testament. These religious images from the sixth century, giving expression to an aesthetic so utterly different from that of Western art, demonstrate what is important for those with traditional Buddhist cultures. They testify to the possibility of a form of embodiment that is not motivated by the almost overwhelming forces of greed, hatred and delusion with their concomitants of violence and aggression.

The peace and serenity of these figures is literally embodied, manifesting itself in the open gestures of the hands and, despite the powerful torsos, the restraint of the body. Within traditional cultures, images such as these were there to help practitioners to "recollect" the qualities that a Buddha possessed and to encourage them to develop those qualities within themselves on their own journey to "awakening", the "*summum bonum*" of the Buddhist path.

The qualities that the Buddha is said to have possessed are the complete and utter antithesis of the malign forces that motivate and animate so much of societal and individual action. Thus the images of the Buddha were there to remind the practitioner of the Buddha's wisdom, compassion and generosity – the very antithesis of that delusion, hatred and greed. It was these very qualities that were said to be present in the gestures of the Buddha's hands.

The question today is: can such images recall for us something forgotten, despite the vast gulf of time and culture, or will they remain simply alien artefacts? We appear, in the contemporary world, to live at a juncture when the need for the qualities exhibited by the Chinese Buddhas is urgently required. In the Western world, if not worldwide, societies are seen to be undergoing social fragmentation with the arising of ever increasing forms of violence and criminality. Both governments and judiciary seem powerless in being able to staunch this seemingly ineluctable flow. One sign of this powerlessness is the recourse to ever more desperate forms of legislation in an attempt to correct social ills. This legislation usually takes the form of greater restrictions placed on the individual freedoms of the mass of the populace.

However, the problem does not exist simply at the levels of governance in society but on the individual level. Whilst societies and governments enact gestures of violence, aggression and restriction, to greater and lesser extents world-wide, from the Buddhist perspective, the individual

also embodies and enacts gestures that have their origins in that un-holy trinity of greed, hatred and delusion. Moreover whilst individuals may be critical of what takes place at the level of society and government it is to their own actions that they must turn.

The Buddha taught a path of non-violence towards both human beings and other sentient life forms. In doing so he placed the onus upon the individual to be aware of the "thoughtless" habits of violence and insensitivity that they engage in, thus learning gradually to free themselves from such patterns of behaviour. The Buddhist path could therefore be described as a form of "learning to take care", and life can be seen as a manual skill that needs constant attention - something our education systems generally fail to acknowledge when they remain staunchly unreflective of the need for such skill with its continuing over emphasis on knowledge and information.

The hands on the Chinese Buddhas, however, are reflective of a completely different kind of knowledge and one that calls upon us to ponder and become aware of our own gestures. Are they those of violence and aggression or of kindness and care? This is not an abstract question calling for an intellectual response but a question that is at the very heart of the malaise within our societies and requires us to respond appropriately. The Buddhist response to such questions is that at the very least the future of our societies lies partly within our own hands.

***The images on our television screens tell us we live in a world of greed, hate and delusion. Yet a new exhibition of Chinese art***

A sutra says:

**Of a being fortified in merit,  
Even dreams become real.**

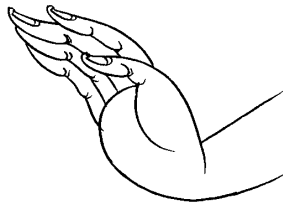




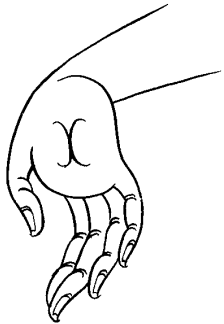
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## MUDRAS

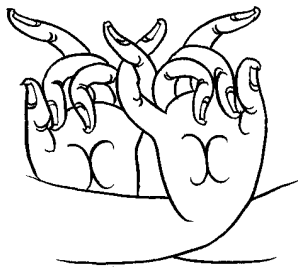
from *Principles of Tibetan Art*, Gega Lama



the mudra of the '**bestowing refuge**' (*skyabs.sbyin*): fingers parallel and extended, palm facing outwards.



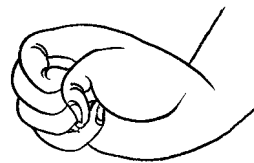
the mudra of '**consummate generosity**' (*mchog.sbyin*): fingers parallel and extended, hand palm up on knee.



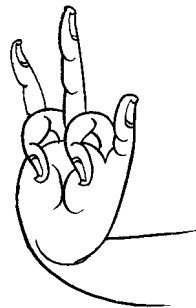
the mudra of '**creating HUM**' (*hum.mdsad*): both AH's linked, both HUM's extended, palms facing outwards.



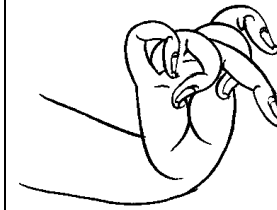
the '**threatening pointer**' (*sdigs.mdsu*): HUM extended stiffly, the other fingers curled.



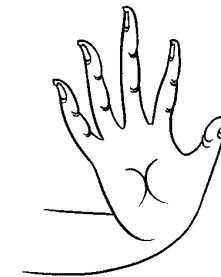
the '**arresting mudra**' (*myog.byed*): all fingers drawn into a fist.



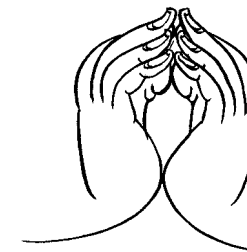
the '**trident**' mudra (*rtse.gsum*): HUM and TRAM both bent, the other three extended.



the '**bull**' mudra (*glang.po'i.phyag.rgya*): OM and AH both bent in, HUM and HRIH pressed together with TRAM extended downwards between them.



the '**flaming**' mudra (*'bar.ba'i.phyag.rgya*): all fingers extended and spread.



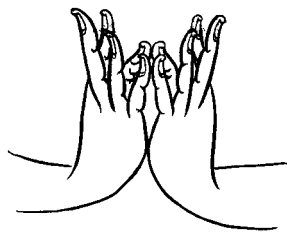
the '**box**' mudra (*sgrom.bu'i.phyag.rgya*) or 'space treasury' (*nam.mkha'.mdsod*): all fingers joined at the tips, palms cupped together to form a hollow between them.

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## MUDRAS



the '**blooming lotus**' mudra (*padma.kha.'bu'i.phyag.rgya*): OM pressed to OM, and AH to AH, with the rest of the fingers raised upwards.



the '**iron hook**' mudra (*lcags.kyu*): HUM crooked in, with the rest drawn into a fist.

**An individual at the end of life,**

**Recalling his (spiritual) master for a fraction of time**

**Is the perfect transference of consciousness**

Ju Mipham Geleg Namgyal



## MUSHROOM NUT FLAN

Simply Delicious by Rose Elliot

1 small onion	1 tbs. Plain flour
2 oz margarine	2 eggs
1 tsp. mixed herbs	1/4 pint milk
4 oz breadcrumbs	8oz grated almonds
1/2 tsp. celery seed	salt & pepper

Chop onion finely and cook gently in the margarine with the herbs and celery seed until soft but not browned, about 10 minutes. Blend in the flour and milk, stir well until thickened. Add rest of ingredients and salt and pepper to taste. Cook for 2 minutes, then allow to cool. Spread into a greased oven to table pie dish, flattening the mixture round the base and sides to resemble pastry. Cook for 20 to 30 minutes in moderate oven at 350 Degrees F, gas mark 4 until golden. Fill with mushroom mixture, and reheat at 350 degrees F, gas mark 4 for 10 mins. The flan part of this dish can be prepared in advance and left in a cool place for filling with mushroom filling

## MUSHROOM FILLING

1 small onion	2 tbs. plain flour
2 oz butter	1/2 pint milk
8 oz mushrooms	salt & pepper
1/2 tsp. marjoram	



Chop onion finely and cook in the butter in the washed and chopped mushrooms and herbs for 10 mins. Add the flour, stir well, add the milk and cook until thickened. Season to taste. Pour in the 'flan' as directed above.

This is an excerpt from  
*Ethics for the New Millenium*

by

His Holiness the Dalai Lama

**May I become at all times, both now and forever:**

**A protector for those without protection**

**A guide for those who have lost their way**

**A ship for those with oceans to cross**

**A sanctuary for those in danger**

**A lamp for those without light**

**A place of refuge for those who lack a shelter**

**And a servant to all in need**





In the still of the warm evening at Drepung, monks are chanting. They are not chanting any particular tune. As they memorise Buddhist texts, each of them seems to chant a different tune, in an improvised harmony. It is very peaceful, free from self-consciousness and exquisitely beautiful.

One morning, a visitor arrives to see Geshe Damcho-la. They laugh on the terrace outside my room. There is a lot of joy.

Many of my memories of Drepung and Ganden Monasteries are to do with sounds. I had been warned that it would be noisy there, but I had not known how peaceful it would be, for all the noise.

The sounds began at 5.00 am., when people started to cough and spit after getting up. A monk knocked on other monks doors. Often an alarm clock would go off, and sometimes it was left to beep for 5 minutes or more. In the distance the temple bell would be rung, a low note. At Ganden we were near enough to the temple to hear chanting over the loud speakers before we went there.

Within the temple at Ganden we were able to join - as best we could - in chanting the praises of Buddha, Dharma and Sangha and of the lineage, the Heart Sutra, and other prayers. There were something like 12,000 Tibetan monks there, along with maybe 1,000 Tibetan lay-people and 500 non-Tibetans. Among the Sangha were a great many very great teachers. It was wonderful to be part of such an assembly as the Heart Sutra was chanted.

At lunchtime we walked to our lodgings, not far away, where a kind Tibetan layman, a

## Sounds of Drepung and Ganden Monasteries

by Branwen Griffiths

young graduate called Tenzin, had prepared us rice and vegetables and fruit. We walked through a great throng, including many beggars, to get there. While we had lunch and a short rest street performers with a drum and a whip tried my patience. I tried to make the rhythm of the drum into Tara mantra. It wasn't easy.

Back in the temple, His Holiness taught for 10 days. Sometimes he gave advice, sometimes he chanted, and sometimes he read a text to us in very quick Tibetan. We spent many hours listening to him, and to his translator on radio headphones. The teaching sessions lasted 3 hours or more, and we needed to get to the shrine room well before they started. Halfway through each session, tea was served by young monks from huge aluminium teapots, and bread was handed out. Before we ate and drank, we chanted, and the combination of chanting and drinking tea (Tibetan salty tea in the morning and sweet tea in the afternoon) helped us to keep going.

In the cool of the evening many monks chanted and debated. A boy near our room at Ganden chanted to a tune I had not heard before. He has a strong voice, perhaps one day he'll be a chant leader. Often there were pujas. Overtone chanting wasn't a performance, it was just the way that some of the monks chanted. A milk seller came every evening on his bicycle, calling out "milk" in Tibetan and Hindi, 'Oma, oma, dhut!' again and again. Debating is a

noisy activity. Prayers are chanted before hand, very quickly but for quite a long time. While the monks debate they clap and stamp their feet, and crowds gather around them. I used to circumnambulate the temple, saying mantras. It was a lovely thing to do and the exercise helped me. At night we would hear packs of feral dogs running around and barking. They were hungry and many of them were sick, but we were told that, hard as a dog's life in the monasteries is, it is easier than life in the villages.

One morning, after the teachings were over, Geshe-la made offerings at the main Drepung Loseling temple. We went with him and sat on the roof of the temple while the monks chanted their morning prayers, just as monks have chanted every morning since Buddha Shakyamuni's time. A young monk ran to a higher part of the roof and blew a conch shell.

At Gya Khangtsen, towards the end of our visit, we visitors were invited to join about 14 of the monks one evening for Lama Cho-pa, an offering puja. Some of the tunes were just the same as the ones we use and although the way they do it isn't quite the same as the way we do it, we were able to join in with a lot of it. By that time I felt that the monks there were my friends and I felt very fortunate to be able to share practice with them.



**Branwen Griffiths, Bristol**



## SHORT STORIES, POEMS AND SAYINGS

*“Although today I am healthy,  
Well-nourished and unafflicted,  
Life is momentary and deceptive:  
The body is like an object on loan  
but for a minute.”*

SHANTIDEVA

### The DALAI LAMA’S Prayer

The Dalai Lama has a favourite short prayer that gives him “great inspiration and determination.” This can be silently repeated at any time, to remind ourselves why we are practicing Buddhism:

*For as long as space endures,  
And for as long as living beings remain,  
Until then may I, too, abide  
To dispel the misery of the world.*

THE DALAI LAMA

*“There are many different philosophies, but what is of basic importance is compassion, love for others, concern for others’ suffering, and reduction of selfishness. I feel that compassionate thought is the most precious thing there is. It is something that only we human beings can develop. And if we have a good heart, a warm heart, warm feelings, we will be happy and satisfied ourselves, and our friends will experience a friendly and peaceful atmosphere as well. This can be experienced nation to nation, country to country, continent to continent.”*

### THE MOST IMPORTANT THING

*from Buddhist Tales*

*retold by Sherab Chodzin & Alexandra Kohn*

Once a famous Chinese poet wanted to study the wisdom of the Buddha. He travelled a long distance to see a famous teacher and asked him, ‘What is the most important thing in the Buddha’s teaching?’

‘Don’t harm anyone and only do good,’ replied the teacher.



‘This is just too stupid!’ exclaimed the poet. ‘You are supposed to be a great teacher, so I travelled miles and miles to see you. And now is that all you can come up with? Even a three-year-old could say that!’

‘Maybe a three-year-old could say it, but it is very hard to put it into practice, even for a very old man like myself,’ said the teacher.



## SHORT STORIES, POEMS AND SAYINGS

### The Buddha once said:

A meeting with the great even once

In whatever conditions of encounter,

Without effort at acquaintance

Becomes firm forever.

The great are never aloof,

Cultivate the opportunity with reverence -

For, the particles of their greatness

Take hold of you without effort

### AGE

Age is strictly a case of  
mind over matter  
If you don't mind  
it doesn't matter.

*Jack Benny*

**A**n old monk and a young monk were

walking along the road when they came to a rushing stream. It was neither too wide nor too deep and they were about to wade across when a beautiful young woman, who had been waiting on the bank, approached them. She was elegantly dressed and she fluttered her fan and battered her eyelashes, smiling at them with big eyes.

'Oh,' she said, 'the current is so swift, the water is so cold, and if my kimono gets wet, it will spoil the silk.

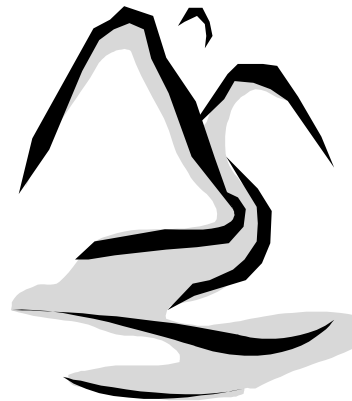
Won't one of you please carry me across the stream?' And she edged invitingly towards the young monk.

Now the young monk thought the woman's behaviour was disgusting. He thought she was spoilt and shameless and ought to be taught a lesson. On top of that, monks are not supposed to have anything to do with women. So he ignored her

## USELESS WORK

*from Buddhist Tales*

*retold by Sherab Chodzin & Alexandra Kohn*



completely and waded across the stream. But the old monk gave a

shrug, picked up the young woman, carried her across the water and set her down on the other side. Then the two monks continued on their way down the road.

Though they walked in silence, the young monk was furious. He thought his companion had done entirely the wrong thing by indulging that spoilt young woman. And even worse, by touching her he had broken the monks' rule. He raved and ranted in his mind as they walked over hills

and through fields. Finally, he could stand it no longer. Shouting loudly, he began scolding his companion for carrying the woman across the stream. He was beside himself with anger and completely red in the face.

'Oh, dear,' said the old monk. 'Are you still carrying that woman? I put her down an hour ago.' He gave a shrug and continued down the





*It was wonderful to be once again in the presence of His Holiness Rinzong Rinpoche and to listen to his teachings. This is a brief summary of my understanding of the teachings on the day. I apologise for any errors I may have made in my understanding of the text. I have tried to recount it as best as possible in the translator's words.*



**HIS HOLINESS  
RIZONG RINPOCHE**  
**Teachings given at Lam Rim**  
**8th July 2002**  
*As recounted by Lorraine Harris*



path. Even though we have desire to practice the path, we tend to get lost in worldly affairs rather than practicing the path and have little time to practice the dharma - the urge is not strong to practice the dharma. Even though we know life is short, we don't feel the urge to practice because of not reflecting on impermanence.

**M**aster Shantideva says that this human birth is hard to find and we must put effort into this life to make it meaningful. We have met with the dharma and teachings which are also difficult to find. We must practice dharma. The verse also says that this human life with leisure and enjoyment is difficult to find, qualified by the ten endowments (freedoms), we are free from eight unfortunate conditions of life. This is an extraordinary rebirth. We must feel delight in being able to practice the dharma. If we care to practice the dharma ourselves in this heartfelt human life, there is an opportunity to achieve our goals in this life. We can practice the dharma and become a fully enlightened being. For us to be able to do this we must have faith and confidence, as well as zeal in practicing the path. We can in fact, achieve enlightenment within this lifetime.

Master Shantideva says that if we do not draw benefit from this life, how will we find benefits in the future. We must strive to make this life meaningful - the long term goal - enlightenment. If we get ourselves lost in short term benefits we must remember we are not going to live forever. We cannot afford to waste this precious human rebirth. The best thing we can do is to engage ourselves in the practice that leads to enlightenment and strive to attain liberation or nirvana. Try and become someone who is free from delusions. Do not feel discouraged. Even if you cannot attain it in this lifetime, maybe you will next lifetime. We must endeavour to bring ourselves to the final goal without making a mistake. We should practice dharma as best we can.

Those who follow certain traditions have the desire for the spiritual

Our way of perceiving our life and reality are not compatible with each other. There is no certainty about the time we are going to die. Even with this knowledge, we hold on to this life as being something permanent. We are sure we are going to die. If you are asked you will say, 'Of course you will die', but you can't say what time, day or date you will die. We think we are not going to die today, tomorrow etc. Because we think we are healthy. We don't reflect on the uncertainty of death and so we indulge ourselves in the activities of this life. We must overcome our adversities or enemies, or activities that affect ourselves because by being lost in temporary mundane activities we are not able to fulfil the long term goal of enlightenment. Since death is uncertain, having gained wealth, property and friends, these will be of no use to us when we die. Whatever virtue we have accumulated in this life such as wholesome activities, these will be of use at the time of death.

There is life after death. For those who do not believe, or have no spiritual traditions, this question might arise in them: 'Where is rebirth?', 'How do you prove it?'. What goes on from life to life is the mental stream of consciousness. If we do not engage ourselves in the practices and have not done anything

to help ourselves for the next life, it will be dangerous. His Holiness Rinzong Rinpoche has observed what happens at the time of death in people who do not believe in rebirth: they have so much fear. They don't believe they will be born in to hell realms, so why do they fear at the time of death? They don't want to leave this life. Because there is so much attachment at the time of death they have fear. There is so much emphasis to reflect on impermanence. Without being able to think about this, we won't feel the need to engage in dharma practice. A person who





has practiced the dharma well, will not have fear or discomfort at the time of death. If the practitioner shows a fear of death, this is a sign that they haven't practiced. After death it is certain that we will take rebirth. This comes about through our karma, actions and deeds. If they are good, they will be born into fortunate realms of existence.

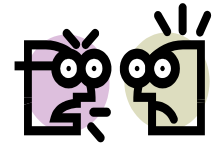
Shakyamuni Buddha said if thoughts and actions are positive, we will have pleasurable conditions in the next life. This is similar to how causality works in the environment. If we want fruit that is sweet, we must first sow the correct seeds. Causality, or Karma is created because of our minds. By harbouring negative thoughts and emotions, we become untamed. So long as we have this untamed mind, we create karma. All our karma and suffering is rooted in our delusions, therefore it is important to understand that we suffer because of karma. There is no-one who wishes to have suffering. So, as long as we are not able to uproot the negative thoughts and actions, there will be suffering, the teaching of the cessation of suffering - Nirvana.

The Hinayana path is only thinking of one's own liberation. The Mahayana path is thinking of liberating all sentient beings. In order to do this we must also know that we cannot fulfil our ultimate goal of liberating all sentient beings from suffering, but we must try to motivate ourselves to becoming enlightened (Bodhicitta). We cannot liberate all other sentient beings from suffering unless we develop Bodhicitta in ourselves first. Think of the suffering of other sentient beings and liberating them from suffering. Engage in the practice of training of Bodhisattvas. Within that is the perfection of patience and tolerance. The 6 perfections sum up the training: morality, giving, zeal, patience & wisdom.

**P**atience is a virtue collected through thousands of aeons. Anger hinders us from cultivating patience. We must realise the negative, anger before we are able to counteract it. Without seeing the faults of anger, we cannot develop patience. The same for the other perfections for example: morality.... negative is immorality, generosity..... and miserliness, etc. The worst negative factor is said to be that of **anger** as it hinders us from developing positive attitudes of Bodhicitta. We have collected positive actions for over a period of a thousand aeons, there is no other factor that is greater than anger that can destroy this. There

are those factors we can see that are not so visible to us.... The negativities of anger..... for example, within the period of a snap of the fingers it can destroy our virtue collected over a thousand aeons. Negativities such as attachment, do not destroy virtues collected previously. There is no evil like hatred and no virtue like patience, therefore one must cultivate, and meditate on patience.

The disadvantages of anger are that they are not always seen by us, or not always obvious to us. What we can see is by making prostrations to the Buddha you pay homage, or when you have a relic or part of a Buddha's robe for example you pay homage, the merit collected by making prostrations to such a relic of the Buddha, would have an affect of being reborn as a universal monarch.



If one bears the pain of anger one will not experience peace of mind. One will not attain joy and bliss. One will not attain sleep. One will feel unsettled. We would not be able to feel happy with oneself. A person will lose peace of mind. Even though you may be very generous to people, if you show much anger towards them, instead of people being grateful to you, they may instead take your life. By your anger, your friends and relatives will not trust you. A person may be kind and generous to other people, but if you are an angry person, people will back away from you. So having shown the disadvantage and faults of anger, whosoever overcomes it, if you see the affects it will have on yourself, and you try to overcome it, you will be more and more happy, not only in this life but your next life time.

**CAUSE OF ANGER** - to overcome anger you need to know what causes it. When you see harm being done to you, or friends and relatives - you don't like it and it provokes anger in yourself and tries to harm your happiness. When something which we don't like and is despised by others happens to us for example, like poverty, we become easily provoked, agitated and angry. When we achieve wealth and fame, etc., we become happy, and we hold on to these attachments. Then there is a strong wish not to have suffering and so forth. Due to our attachments towards these things we become overwhelmed. The mind experiences discomfort. Our mind then finds its food for anger. We must



try to reduce the causes of anger, reduce the attachment and sense of disliking things. Minimise the attachment and desire for such things. Therefore this energy has no other function than to cause harm. Always be aware of becoming angry or becoming provoked. When we are too attached and become too disappointed (extremes) we lose the hidden meaning of mind. Always be alert not to become angry. When something we dislike happens to us we become unhappy because we don't like what causes us to become unhappy. It will not lead us anywhere by staying unhappy, because we become agitated it will destroy our virtue because we become angry.

If you are in a situation where there is no reason at all, then we should not become unhappy. Instead of recovering from the sickness, it will help in no way if you stay unhappy. Even though the sickness may not reduce the pain, you can still have peace of mind due to your composure.



When we try to practice patience we must know what causes us to be angry. As well as reflecting on different negative effects of anger, also look at the benefits of patience. Always go to the cause of anger. In this way, you can try to develop patience. Without knowing the faults of anger, you cannot practice patience. Reflect on the cause and overcome it. You will not become patient in a short period of time. It has to be a gradual process. There are three types of patience:

1. **Patience of accepting one's suffering**
2. **Patience on understanding the realities of one's nature**
3. **Not begrudging those who cause harm to us.**

The cause of happiness is very rare, but the cause of suffering is great. The causes of happiness... in fact if we look around ourselves, there is so much suffering. Our suffering is very little compared to what is around us. So long as we are in samsara we are bound to undergo suffering. We must accept suffering as something that can naturally happen to us. In the world there are so many advancements in health, science, technology, etc. and although we strive so hard to overcome suffering, the fact is that we have not been able to achieve the goal of happiness, because of the attitude we bear towards our suffering. We must accept suffering and be happy.... this will help our spiritual growth.

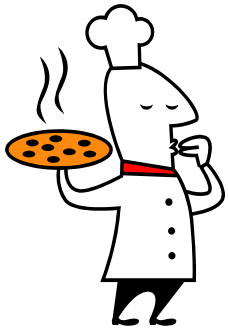
In the past, the Kadampa masters who originated from Atisha said

that people die and people are sick because they have to die, or they have to become sick. When there is suffering, if you can bear the suffering, it will not aggravate you. The fact that we are in samsara, we should accept them and become happy. If you profess you are doing dharma practice, you must practice sincerely to attain the ultimate goals. Don't feel discouraged when you have to endure hardships that come your way towards your spiritual goal. We see people give their life in the name of religion. They may undergo such sufferings and hardships, but in the end they gain little. If you bear suffering that others inflict upon you, your goal in the end is to achieve enlightenment, so bear suffering and practice patience. We waste time and do not gain much. We should invest our effort in practice which leads to enlightenment. In order to reach that goal we must practice the causes which bring about bodhicitta. In the beginning there will be so much hardship, but if we appoint our minds to bodhicitta, the more we train our minds the easier it will become. There will be a time when it will be easier to cultivate compassion and loving kindness etc. In trying to practice patience you must try little things first, then greater provocations for anger..... Patiently accepting greater harms. This way it will be easier to acquaint your mind in practicing patience. Sometimes we see people who strive so much, but what we must do as dharma practitioners is to try and think of showing patience towards these things, otherwise how will we bear the hardships that lie ahead in the practice towards enlightenment.

Some people's bravery increases at the sight of their own blood. For example, people who are used to fighting wars and battles will find that their bravery increases, but there are also those who are cowards. One who is used to seeing blood becomes more brave. When people inflict suffering upon you, show patience towards them. When the wise are suffering they show courage to face the suffering. Our enemies are our afflictive emotions which are within ourselves. It is worth fighting the war against the inner enemy rather than the external one.

Suffering has good qualities. Seeing suffering in ourselves helps us to overcome our arrogance and pride and inspires us to work towards liberation, suffering and its causes.





## AUBERGINE AND CHEESE FRICADELLES

**Preparation & cooking time:** 1hr 15 mins - 1hr 30 mins

350g (12 oz) *peeled chopped aubergine, Salt*  
*Oil for deep or shallow frying*  
 100g (4 oz) *finely chopped red pepper*  
 100g (4oz) *finely chopped onion*  
 2 *tablespoons of olive or sunflower oil*  
 100g (4oz) *soya granules, 2 tablespoons water*

1 *clove garlic, peeled and finely chopped*  
 225g (8oz) *fresh wholemeal breadcrumbs*  
 175g (6oz) *grated Cheddar cheese, 1-2 eggs beaten*  
*Freshly ground pepper*  
 600ml (1 pint) *Brown sauce (recipe page 5)*

**Makes 8, Serves 4**

Place the aubergine in a colander, sprinkle with salt and leave to drain for 30 minutes. Rinse under cold running water and dry well. Fry the aubergine in deep or shallow fat until soft and well browned, then drain and allow to cool. Set the oven at 200° C (400° F) Gas 6. Fry the pepper and onion in the 2 tablespoons of oil until soft but not browned. Add the soya granules and water and cook gently for 5 minutes until all the excess liquid has been absorbed. Be ready to add a little more water if necessary, to prevent the mixture from sticking.

Remove from heat, add the aubergine, garlic, breadcrumbs and cheese and bind with beaten egg. Mix to a firm paste, season with salt and pepper. Shape the mixture into 8 balls, place them in a greased shallow ovenproof dish and flatten them slightly. Bake in the pre-heated oven for 10 minutes, then pour over half of the brown sauce and bake the fricadelles for a further 10 minutes, basting once. Serve with the remaining sauce. Accompaniments: Lyonnaise potatoes, or savoury brown rice and a salad.

**‘Do not rely upon the individual but rely upon the teaching.**

**As far as the teaching goes, do not rely on the words alone, but rely on the meaning that underlies them.**

**Regarding the meaning, do not rely on the provisional meaning alone, but rely upon the definitive meaning.**

**Regarding the definitive meaning, do not rely upon ordinary consciousness but rely upon wisdom awareness.’**

**Emma**

### A Dream Transmission

A deep pink rose bud was presented. A voice spoke:

**“And how would Rinpoche understand its meaning?”**

Another voice spoke, as though from someone listening to the Teachings near by,  
**“To be a perfect Bodhisattva?”**

There was a pause for reflection. A voice spoke.

**“To be of perfect heart?”**

A pause again while listening within. A voice spoke.

**“To be of pure heart?”**

**Emma Lawton**

**‘The Diamond that Cuts through Illusion.’**

**‘The Vajrachedika  
Prajnaparamita Sutra’**

### PART 1

#### 1

*This is what I heard one time when the Buddha was staying in the monastery in Anathapindika's Park in the Jetta Grove near Sravasti a community of 1200 50 bhikhus, fully ordained monks.*

That day, when it was time to make the round for alms, and the the Buddha put on his sanghati robe and, holding his bowl, went into the city of Sravasti to seek alms food, going from house to house. When the arms round was completed, he returned to the monastery to eat the midday meal. Then he put away his sanghati robe and his bowl, washed his feet, arranged his cushion, and sat down.



## 2

At that time, the Venerable Subhuti stood up, bared his right shoulder, put his knee on the ground, and, folding his palms respectively, said to the Buddha, "World Honoured One, it is rare to find someone like you. You always support and show special confidence in the Bodhisattvas.

"World Honoured One, if sons and daughters of good families want to give rise to the highest, most fulfilled, awakened mind, what should they rely on and what should they do to master their thinking?" The Buddha replied, "Well said, Subhuti! What you are said it is absolutely correct. The Tathagata always supports and shows special confidence in the bodhisattvas. Please listen with all your attention and the Tathagata will respond to your question. If daughters and sons of good families want to give rise to the highest, most fulfilled, awakened mind, they should rely on the following to master their thinking in the following way." The Venerable Subhuti said, "Lord, we are so happy to hear your teachings."

## 3

The Buddha said to Subhuti, "This is how the bodhisattva mahasattvas master their thinking. 'However many species of living beings there are—whether born from eggs, from the womb, from moisture, or spontaneously; whether they have form or do not have form; whether they have perceptions or do not have perceptions; we must lead all these beings to the ultimate nirvana so that they can be liberated. And

when this innumerable, this measurable, infinite number of beings has become liberated, we do not, in truth, think that a single being has been liberated.'

"Why is this so? If, Subhuti, a bodhisattva holds on to the idea that a self, a person, a living being, a life span exists, that person is not an authentic bodhisattva."

## 4

"Moreover, Subhuti, when a bodhisattva practices generosity, he or she does not rely on any object - that is to say he or she does not rely on any form, sound, smell, taste, tactile object, or dharma—to practice generosity. That, Subhuti, is the spirit in which a bodhisattva should practice generosity, not relying on signs. Why? If a bodhisattva practices generosity without relying on signs, the happiness that results cannot be conceived of or measured. Subhuti, do you think that the space in the Eastern quarter can be measured?"

"No, World Honoured One."

"Subhuti, can space in the Western, Southern, And Northern Quarters, above and below be measured?"

"No, World Honoured One"

"Subhuti, if a bodhisattva does not rely on any concept when practicing generosity, then the happiness that results from that virtuous act is as great as space. It cannot be measured. 'Subhuti, the bodhisattva should let their minds dwell in the teachings I have just given.'

**May these words inspire and benefit all who read them.**

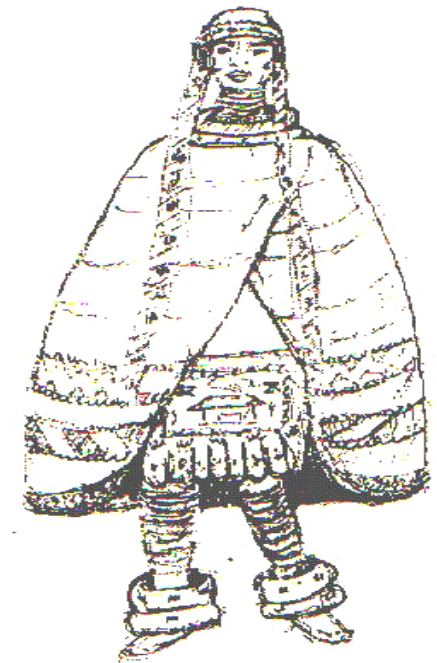
**Metta  
Emma**

## News from our Friends in South Africa

This trip was probably my 6<sup>th</sup> time to India, and I am still learning to deal with the different emotions one experiences – highs and lows abound as you travel and see such beauty and such abject poverty and desperation....

The SAA flight from Johannesburg to Bombay is only 8 hours, so it isn't too tiring, but the moment you get off the plane the *fun* begins! As I was on my own and the plane arrived at 2.00am, it was best to take a pre-paid taxi (they are checked out before they leave the airport, so you can regard them as fairly 'safe'). You pay your 350 rupees and get a receipt.... I was asked to pay an extra 30 rupees for my luggage, which I duly did – but when I looked at the receipt later it only reflected the 350 rupees, so the cashier at the desk had pocketed the 30 – not a train smash, but this is how it is from day one until you leave! And then the taxi driver decides to be clever and says that the receipt doesn't reflect the area where my hotel is situated – he stops the car and wants more money (at 3am in the morning!) – well, I have never given baksheesh and I wasn't going to do it either – So after a heated debate and idle threats, he decides to take me to the hotel.

I stayed at the Chateau Windsor Guest House – it is central Bombay and extremely safe, tidy and CLEAN!



(Not the cheapest, but well worth the extra just to get to some decent accommodation). And the owner Mr Munshi is a lovely person, who has owned the Guest House since the 1950's – his son Taarun is slowly taking over the business and doing a good job. They are really a friendly bunch and you feel welcome as soon as you arrive at the door – if any of you are in Bombay I'll pass on their details – you can book over the internet/email. After a few hours sleep – oh yes, you have to get used





to sleeping in the most 'difficult' situations – in India, you spend many many hours waiting – either waiting for your ticket, waiting for a bus, waiting for a train (which could be anything up to 5 hours late)... Well, with 1 billion people you have to take your turn..... so sometimes it is a matter of sleeping on an overnight bus, on trains, at the side of the road, in taxis!!!

The afternoon I arrived, I contacted Friends of Tibet (India) who has a Tibetan representative in Bombay. There are few Tibetans living in Bombay, but Tenzin Tsundue has decided to take up the Tibet-cause there and he, together with other members are doing a great job. At least three of them work full-time on the Tibet-cause and if you received my recent World Tibet News email you'll see that Tenzin was the one who climbed 13 odd storeys up on the outside of President Zhu's hotel to fly a Tibet flag – this is the sort of energy which Tenzin has for a FREE TIBET. He is a poet and has some wonderful poems published and is presently writing a book on Tibetans in Exile. He and Mr Kallianpur, a lovely person too, looked after me the whole day and made sure that I caught my 14-hour bus trip to Hubli (South of Goa) that evening without any problems. I had a privilege of hearing Tenzin recite his poetry at a university campus and he is VERY PASSIONATE about Tibet. It is the first time I've met the Tibetan youth and listened to their side of the liberation struggle – it was

very thought provoking and in consultation with the Parliament-in-exile they have put together a workshop programme to motivate and stimulate the Tibetan people to become more proactive in their freedom struggle. Tenzin (as well as many others) feel that many of the Tibetans have become complacent about their freedom, and it is for this reason that they are focusing on the workshops. I was unable to meet the Chairperson on Friends of Tibet, Sethu Das, but I met up with him briefly in Delhi – he is a highly respected member of their organisation and one can see that he has depth of character and is obviously passionate about the Tibet-cause too.

Because of the cost of the internal flights in India (tourists have to pay a US dollar rate – eek!), I usually travel by bus or train. My first stop was the Tibetan Settlement in Mundgod, which is south of Goa (close to a town called Hubli). South India is lovely – quieter than the north and the people seem gentler. His Holiness the Dalai Lama was scheduled to give 2-weeks of Buddhist Teachings at Ganden, one of the main Tibetan Buddhist Monastic Universities situated at the Tibetan Settlement in Mundgod and the Drepung monastery is also close by. I was to meet up with Geshe Damcho (my Tibetan Teacher who has a Centre in Wales and Bristol in the UK) and 8 friends from these centres. Geshe-la has a 'house' at Drepung called Gya Khangtsen,

headed up by a lovely monk called Geshe Thinley, who has excelled in his Geshe studies. Because the UK students of Geshe Damcho have supported and still support many of the monks at Gya Khangtsen, we were all treated like royalty. The monks couldn't do enough for us all in making our stay as comfortable and as meaningful as possible. They showed boundless kindness and concern for our well-being.

One gets used to 14-hour bus trips in India, and you are probably lucky if you get a decent kip or a decent bus for that matter, but I must say the transport situation seems to be improving. But sometimes you get buses with video facilities and these can be quite annoying as they usually show the Bollywood movies, which are really strange, over-the-top tear-jerking stories of lust, dance, song, violence..... you name it – real samsara stuff! Other buses play loud squeaky Indian music and if you enjoy it, then hey, that's OK, otherwise it is patience-practice for many hours into the night!! The other downside of bus trips are the stops where you can get something to eat (usually 11pm. and a chance to relieve yourself) – now the toilet-situation in most parts of India isn't too encouraging – many a time I've lost 'the urge' when I see the condition of the toilet or try and find the toilet amongst all the mess!! – so "when in Rome" I've often ended up in a field. Another tip take toilet paper with you, unless you don't

mind using the water/hand option, or hand/leaf option, which can be the case in the open field! The buses are usually fun though, despite the 'down-sides' (all of which I haven't mentioned!) because you connect with the locals (but be careful) and see the vast, and most interesting countryside!

India is an experience of a lifetime and I would recommend anyone to experience her at least once in your lifetime. You cannot escape the raw emotions you'll feel as soon as you arrive. There are times of ecstasy and times of deep depression and loathing... India for me is a love/hate relationship, which one cannot describe and which a friend of mine recently said, "You cannot prepare yourself for India – it is something you just have to experience to believe", and of course the most wonderful and mind-boggling 'coincidences' occur....

When I arrived in Hubli (the following morning at about 9.00 a.m.) I needed to get to where the Tibetans operate a taxi service to the Tibetan Settlement. (There is a local bus for a couple of rupees, but by this time you just want to get to your destination). Whenever you arrive at a destination you are bombarded by taxi-men wanting to rip you off by charging at least 3 times the amount, unless you insist on a meter, which many of them say isn't working! And this was also the case in Hubli .... Eventually I arrived at the 'Tibetan-area' and when I was getting out of



the 3-wheeler taxi I saw a friend Sue, who used to be a nun Ani Dechen, and who visited South Africa in the early 90's – she was with a nun who I knew from my previous visit to Spiti in 2000 – so we linked up together for our drive to Drepung.

It was great meeting up with Geshe-la again – some of you have met him during his visits to South Africa – and after his illness last year he has fully recovered and looks very well. He sends his love to everyone in South Africa and hopes to see us soon.

As mentioned, Geshe-la's house is at Drepung, but the Teachings were at Ganden, about 1 hour walk, so arrangements had been made for us to stay at Ganden. The place where we stayed was just across the street from the College where His Holiness would be Teaching – so convenient and we were very fortunate. The monks transported all the cooking facilities, food, linen etc over to our new accommodation and although very basic, we were so well looked after.

I was last in this area 11 years ago and the change I saw this time was unbelievable – the whole area had mushroomed with lots of lush trees, which are needed so much, especially during the very hot summer months. The monastery complex had also grown and the whole place looked like a multi-coloured city. In some ways it was a little disappointing, as I really liked the 'old' Mundgod I once knew, but I

guess one must be open to change.

Each of the Monastic Universities have two main 'houses' attached to them, and Ganden, where the Teachings were being held, was commemorating the opening of their one college called Jangtse (the other being Shartse). Although this was only part of the Jangste College the building was huge and very mod – in fact larger than the main temple. The donations for the building had come from the Taiwanese community, and in fact His Holiness on more than one occasion commented on and showed his disappointment regarding the grandeur of the complex. The size of his throne was so large, He said that he could sleep on it! Unlike many Teachings you receive in India with His Holiness – this was 5-star! Inside an ornate temple, with fans and a cool breeze throughout the day – comfortable cushions to sit on and a good radio reception to listen to the simultaneous translation into English..... what comfort! Not like our Spiti visit where we were sitting under the heat of the sun for more than 6 hours a day, no cushions, just rocks under your bum and squashed together.

We received 12 days of Teachings from His Holiness on Lama Tsong Khapa's Great Exposition of Tantra (i.e. Stages of the Tantric Path), and His Holiness gave the relevant initiation after each of the 4 stages – His Holiness' enthusiasm and attention to detail is phenomenal. He gave 6 hours of Teachings for the 12-days, plus He needed to prepare

Himself for the initiations for many hours beforehand, and on top of that the appointments He had with the local community! And now He is in BodhaGaya for another 2-week Teaching programme, plus conferring the Kalachakra Initiation – with an estimated 250 000 attending!

His Holiness gave a little 'pep-talk' every morning, mainly directed toward the monks' discipline and study, but one time he asked that Westerners should approach the Teachings more from the heart, and not from a merely intellectual point of view. He also encouraged us to stick to the basics and although he was giving Tantric Teachings, the foundation practices of the Four Noble Truths, Six Perfections, Renunciation, developing compassion and an understanding of emptiness, together with relevant Lam Rim practices/meditations were very very important.

After the Teachings I reluctantly left the rest of the folk at the monastery and proceeded to go 'up north'. My reason for doing this was to meet up with Prof Samdhong Rinpoche, the newly, and first democratically elected, Chairman of the Central Tibetan Administration. Rinpoche had stayed with me during a visit to Durban in 1996 and so I was keen to meet up with him again and to also discuss Tibet Society work. We eventually met in Delhi (there are so many 'long stories' in-between, but I think I need to spare you the detail). We spoke about many Tibet issues and also Buddhist

practice, and we hope to be sending out some good news very shortly.

After my meeting with Rinpoche I went into an office to look at some literature. Whilst there I spoke to a young Indian chap who was waiting to see Rinpoche. Then another Indian chap walked in and it was someone who I had met at a peace conference in Durban a few years ago and we had corresponded by email. In fact I had only been thinking about Ramu that morning, wondering how I could get hold of him, and then he walked into the office .... another coincidence??? The young Indian chap introduced himself as a member of Friends of Tibet who was going to meet me in Bombay the day I arrived. Needless to say we had plenty to talk about and the following day arranged to meet other Delhi members of Friends of Tibet at my hotel, including Sethu Das the founder of the organisation..... we had a great lunch together and they were discussing the forthcoming visit of Zhu to India in 2-days time... hence some of my Tibet News emails to you.

Another coincidence.... on the way to Delhi, I stayed in Bombay a day and contacted my friends at Friends of Tibet – I just caught Mr Kallianpur leaving for Bombay airport for an audience with His Holiness and he asked me to join them. So I quickly jumped into a cab and I was able to join the Friends of Tibet members (8 of us) for a 40 min audience with His Holiness, which was really great.





The Tibet Society this year will work closely with Office of Tibet, especially on the upcoming World Summit, which will be held in Johannesburg in September this year. TSSA will also focus on a School Project, where we will be encouraging certain schools to take Tibet as a project for this year. My luggage was 20kg overweight because of the books I had been given/purchased during my visit, and which we will be handed over to selected schools. If you have any interest in this we would love to hear from you.

Well, perhaps five pages are enough to digest for the time being, but I'd love to share more experiences with you if you want to look at the photos (not particularly brilliant, but good enough to get an idea).

Needless to say travelling in India can be exhausting and it is always good to try and keep your health and energy levels high – don't take chances with 'suspect' food – and unless you enjoy spices, garlic, chillies etc, keep to basic food-stuffs, otherwise, you'll regret it – it isn't worth taking a chance and ending up being miserable on a journey, which if handled correctly, can most certainly be an experience of a lifetime!

**With love**

**Elizabeth**

In February we returned from our pilgrimage in India both tired and inspired. Such effort needs to be made if you are visiting holy sites and we were so fortunate to receive such loving care and kindness from all the monks at Gya Khangtsen, at Drepung Loseling Monastery.

We learnt of the passing of old friends and the arrival of newly-born friends. That is how it is. So with a certain reluctance from our part, the courses and teachings started again.



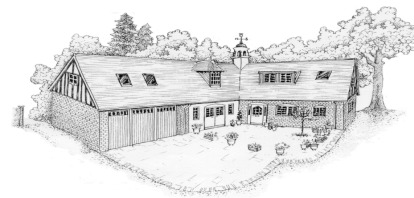
On Losar - Tibetan New Year- the new victory banner was hoisted and the new prayer flags hung. Many thanks to Roy from Bristol Lam Rim Centre and his team of nimble fingers for making it all possible. Ven.Lobsang Dhonden was still with us and Ven Geshe Lobsang Thinley arrived for his first visit to the UK and to study English Language full-time, whilst residing at Lam Rim Bristol Centre. In March Ven. Lobsang Dhonden returned to Gya Khangtsen with all our thanks and best wishes.



## Notes from Lam Rim



After a successful Easter Retreat we started to prepare for the visit of Jangtse Choeje Rizong Rinpoche in June. There is a very satisfying feeling when we are helping each other to prepare for the visit of a very special teacher. We were also blessed with the arrival of two Theravadin nuns - Sr. Anandabodhi and Sr. Thitamedha who stayed to welcome Rinpoche, before continuing with their walk-about pilgrimage.



We tasted wonderful teachings due to the clarity of the translator, Ven. Tenzin Tsepag who travelled over from Dharamsala, India, to be with us.

We also would like to say a Big Thank-You to DJ Les Paul

and his son Josh for offering the loan of the sound system together with installing and dismantling it.

Rinpoche looked tired when he arrived from the USA, 3 weeks later he looked relaxed and very well, That is the medicine of Lam Rim Buddhist Centre. Thank you all, because it is through your efforts of support that we are able to make such offerings to such precious teachers.

**MARGARET**

**Whosoever venerates  
either a living Buddha**

**Or the remains of a  
Buddha long since past,**

**With a mind clear and  
undisturbed,**

**In merit, there is little  
difference.**

**Buddha**



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**Spiritual Director and Resident Teacher**  
**The Venerable Geshe Damcho Yonten**