

The Empty Mirror

March-May 2013

Kagyü Thegchen Ling Tibetan Buddhist Meditation Center 26 Gartley Place Honolulu, Hawai'i 96817 (808 595-8989) www.ktlhonolulu.org

BE MINDFUL AND CULTIVATE THE FRUIT OF PRACTICE

A Teaching by Lama Karma Rinchen

While it is important to come and hear teachings, to truly learn and never lose what we have learned, we need to be mindful. Your teachers, your advisors, can all be good, but if you're not mindful, you can lose what you have heard in the teachings. Don't throw it out: Remain mindful.

If you're mindful, then sooner or later, peace of mind, comfort and happiness will come to you, and your partner and family will also feel the same thing. The five or six people in your family will then help their friends, and they in turn will help their friends. Many people can benefit, but if you're not mindful, that will never happen.

There is always a time for mindfulness: Buddha said, "When you're alone, watch your thoughts. When you're in a group, watch your mouth."

When watching your thoughts, watch to see if your thinking is positive or if your thinking is negative. At the end of the day, in the evening before you go to bed, you can check. Ask yourself, "What did I do today?"

If it was positive, enjoy it

and dedicate it to all beings so everyone can experience positive things and be free from suffering. When positive things happen, sooner or later there is peace of mind, compassion arises and there is happiness.

If your thoughts were negative, analyze and recognize them and they will decrease. When you remember the negative things, resolve to be more mindful tomorrow and not repeat those thoughts and actions. Negative things happen when we aren't mindful. If, with body, speech and mind, you are more aware, happier things will occur.



Lama Karma Rinchen

There's no need to understand why you did something negative. When you ask yourself, "Why, why did I do this?" more negative thoughts can come. Just recognize that you did something negative and be more mindful the next day, and negativity will decrease. For example, yesterday I had too much to drink and I argued and fought with my friends. In the beginning, I had shame and I was shy, but when I was drunk, I felt braver, I had power, and shame and shyness were gone, and terrible things happened.

Then I woke up in the morning. The drunkenness was

(cont on pg 2)

Sagadawa Nyungne Retreats with Lama Tempa

Nyungne Retreat during Sagadawa in May (Sagadawa is May 9-27. Positive and negative actions are multiplied 10,000,000 times, so it is a good time for practice.)

Lama Tempa will lead two pairs of Nyungne during May. Cost for the retreat is \$15 for each pair.

Nyungne, a fasting practice of profound purification, is a practice of the 11-faced, 1,000 armed Chenrezig to purify the obscurations of one's body, speech, and mind to gradually eliminate the causes of suffering for oneself and all beings. It is particularly significant for practitioners of the Karma Kagyu lineage because the head of this precious lineage, H. H. the 17th Karmapa, is the continuous incarnation of Chenrezig among us.

Participants will take the Mahayana sojong vows to abstain from harming others and to generate the intention to benefit beings.

The first pair of Nyungne starts on Thursday, May 23 (retreatants arrive in evening). On Friday, May 24, the first day of the first pair, the preliminary day, participants will eat one vegetarian midday meal and may drink fluids during the entire day. The second day, Saturday, May 25, is the day of fasting with no meals or drinks. The participants must also remain silent during this day, except when doing the recitation of the sadhana.

The second pair of Nyungne begins on Sunday, May 26. This is again a day when participants may eat one vegetarian midday meal and may drink fluids the whole day. The second day of the second pair, Monday, May 27, is the day of fasting with no meals and no fluids. This is again a day of silence, except for the recitation of the sadhana.

The Nyungne Retreat ends on Tuesday morning, May 28, at about 7:00 am. Breakfast will be served.

We will be looking for volunteers to prepare lunch on May 24 and 26, and for breakfast on May 28. If you have not experienced serving the retreatants, it is an exceptionally wonderful experience. A registration form for the retreat, and for lunch and breakfast volunteers, will be at the Dharma Center in May, or you may call 808-595-8989 to register. You may register for one pair or both.

Friday July 12 -- Chokhor Duchon positive and negative are multiplied 10,000,000 times.

(Mindful cont)

gone, but I had regrets: "I feel terrible. I will never do that again." But in the afternoon, my friends are drinking and I want to drink again. Without mindfulness, the same thing will happen again and again. With mindfulness, you create more positive karma.

One day of mindfulness or two days of mindfulness, is that enough? No. You have to practice mindfulness your whole life, like a river that never stops. If you practice every day, then fruition comes. The flowers come, then after that the fruit comes.

First, you plant the tree. Sooner or later, it will grow, but it's not enough to just plant it. You have to smooth the ground around it, take out the rocks and weeds. If there are a lot of rocks and weeds, it takes energy away from the tree. The tree won't be strong and it will grow slowly. If you remove the weeds and rocks, give the tree fertilizer, water and heat, the tree will grow fast, it will not be damaged. The leaves will come out, the flowers will bloom and then the fruit will come. One fruit can have a lot of seeds. The seeds can be planted and then there will be many trees.

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The Real Meaning of Going for Refuge

His Holiness the 17th Gyalwang Karmapa

Because it is said that once we have gone for refuge to the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha we should not go for refuge to anyone else, there can be confusion. If you're sick, can you visit a doctor or not? Actually, this is not what taking refuge means. Nor is refuge a plea for help from a position of helplessness or powerlessness.

The real refuge is a deep understanding that until and unless I myself have actualized myself as Buddha, or reached enlightenment, I cannot completely be free from the sufferings or fear or dangers of samsara.... Therefore it is not about just praying to somebody, seeking somebody's help or kindness. It's to attain it for ourselves, knowing that we ourselves can attain this power; this state where there is no suffering...it's an inner refuge.

The Gyalwang Karmapa explained,

The true meaning of taking refuge and going for refuge is that it's myself, I need to go to for refuge, I want to actualize that state of Buddhahood and I need to do something about that and I need to work towards that. That's taking refuge.

Of course there is an outer refuge – Buddha, Dharma and Sangha- because of its existence we can study and practise the Dharma. Ultimately, however, it is the inner refuge to which we need to go for refuge; we need to assume responsibility for ourselves. Some people give away all personal responsibility to the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha or to their lama and say “I have faith and devotion, so now it's all up to you,” then they do as they want. But if we commit negative deeds, we will inevitably suffer negative consequences; there is nothing that the lama can do to stop that happening.

This attitude is not to be confused with genuine faith and devotion to a lama. The lama or spiritual friend is essential on the path to liberation. He or she gives us instructions and guidance:

When you say rely on the teacher, have complete trust in the teacher, that means that, yes, I have trust in the teacher, I rely on the teacher, so therefore I do what the teacher asks me to do and I follow the guidance of the teacher. Thereby I assume my responsibilities.

Milarepa completely relied on Marpa, and gave everything to his teacher, but he did whatever he was told to do. He acted diligently exactly according to the teacher's instructions. Likewise we have to take responsibility, not give all the responsibility to the teacher.

The Gyalwang Karmapa gave the reading transmission and commentary from The Torch of Certainty by Jamgön Kongtrul at the 30th Kagyu Mönlam in Bodhgaya in commemoration of the Jamgön Kongtrul lineage at this year's Mönlam. Given on January 1, 2013 and translated by Ringu Tulku, the Karmapa explained in this teaching, the true meaning of Refuge in a concise way.

The Torch of Certainty is a translation of the Tibetan meditation manual by Jamgön Kongtrul (1813-1899) which explains the basic practices of the Kagyu lineage: the “Four Ordinary Foundations” and the “Four Special Foundations,” a study text recommended for students at Kagyu Thegchen Ling by Kyabje Kalu Rinpoche, its founder.

For the complete set of these 2013 Mönlam teachings online, go to: the17thkarmapa.blogspot.tw





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MEDITATION AND PUJA SCHEDULES

DAILY MEDITATION

6:00-7:00 am Tara Puja
 5:30-6:00 pm Mahakala Puja

WEEKLY MEDITATION

Sun 10 am Chenrezig Puja
 Mon 7 pm Four Thoughts; short Chenrezig, collecting Manis
 Tue 7 pm Silent Meditation
 Thu 7 pm Basic Meditation

MONTHLY PUJA SCHEDULE

April

Thu 25 Amitabha Buddha Puja

May

Sat 4 Milarepa Tsok
 Sun 5 Fire Puja after Chenrezig Puja
 Thu 9 Tara Puja
 Sat 18 Medicine Buddha Puja
 Mon 20 Guru Rinpoche Tsok
 Sat 25 Amitabha Buddha Puja

June

Mon 3 Milarepa Tsok
 Sat 8 Tara Puja
 Sun 9 Fire Puja after Chenrezig
 Sun 16 Medicine Buddha Puja
 Tue 18 Guru Rinpoche Tsok
 Sun 23 Amitabha Buddha Puja
 Wed 26 HH Karmapa's birthday

July

Tue 2 Milarepa Tsok
 Sun 7 Fire Puja after Chenrezig
 Mon 8 Tara Puja
 Fri 12 Chokhor Duchon positive and negative are multiplied 10,000,000 times
 Tue 16 Medicine Buddha Puja
 Thu 18 Guru Rinpoche Tsok
 Mon 22 Amitabha Buddha Puja

August

Thu 1 Milarepa Tsok
 Sun 4 Fire Puja after Chenrezig
 Tue 6 Tara Puja
 Wed 14 Medicine Buddha Puja
 Fri 16 Guru Rinpoche Tsok
 Wed 21 Amitabha Buddha Puja
 Sat 31 Milarepa Tsok

Special Events

Please see page two for Nyungne Retreat information. You may also call the Center at 595-8989 or visit the website: www.ktlhonolulu.org

"You live in illusion and in the appearance of things. There is a reality. You are the reality. If you wake up to that reality, you will know that you are nothing, and being nothing, you are everything."

-Kalu Rinpoche

