



Newsletter

Manchester Buddhist Centre, June 2010

“It’s the Day after Wesak...”

This month’s reflections from Dayamala

It’s the day after Wesak. I wake up with the Shakyamuni mantra in my head. Actually it feels in my heart as well. Tears prick my eyes. I am very moved. The momentous occasion, over 2500 years ago that is still reverberating through the ages, has happened. Gautama has become the Buddha!

Yesterday during my meditation, I felt slight tremors, as though I was feeling the echoes of the significance of what was about to happen. For a few days I have been feeling awe as I contemplate the Buddha’s Enlightenment. For months my gratitude feels even more open-hearted.

So Wesak is a day uniting us and all other Buddhists across the world. I thought I would give a brief recap of how we celebrated it yesterday and of course, we were combining it this year with the name change ritual.

Arthaketu set the scene of the Buddha’s life which led him to sit under the Bodhi tree. We had a reading about Siddhartha Gautama under the tree, facing Mara’s hordes, Mara’s daughters and eventually calling the Earth to witness his right to be sitting there. We mirrored – to a degree! – what Gautama went through as he sat there, on the verge of Enlightenment.

We acknowledged that:

- We are swimming against the stream
- Society really does not support spiritual practice
- On the basis of commitment, come obstacles
- What the Buddha overcame, we too can overcome

We compared Mara’s hordes to the influences in our lives which seek to destroy us. I gave some examples in my life and then we broke up into groups to ponder some questions. We compared Mara’s daughters to the seductive influences in our lives and again discussed these in groups. We looked at doubt in our lives and how that affects us, in various forms. For example doubting we can do something, or unfavourably comparing ourselves to others.

Finally we meditated, imagining how the Buddha-to-be might have felt as he sat there under the Bodhi tree, having defeated Mara. What would it feel like to sit there open-hearted?

In the evening we reflected on our responses to the Ideal and the efforts we make towards that, and again broke into groups for a short while. We then wrote some of our inspirations on coloured “3 Jewels” shaped paper pieces to offer the shrine later in the ritual.

Then we had our name change ritual – we are now the Triratna Buddhist Order and the Triratna Buddhist Community! I had made a map, which I introduced, showing the Triratna Buddhist Community around the world, showing our centres, groups, retreat centres, and right livelihood businesses. I had been really moved doing it, connecting with others around the world and also seeing how much the Movement has grown and spread in just over 40 years. I spoke about the reasons for and history of the name change.

We did the first two parts of the Threefold Puja, made our offerings, dedicated the new name and recited the refuges and precepts and closing mantras.

Throughout the day and evening there was really positive atmosphere and again I was moved by the large numbers who came to celebrate the Buddha’s Enlightenment and witness the name change.

Another significant event this month was the Marque of Excellence ceremony which I thoroughly enjoyed. I found the Lord Mayor quite delightful in the way she engaged with us all. Our “new” visitors seemed to enjoy the afternoon and were impressed by the Centre. It was an excellent occasion to celebrate the warm welcome we give people and I wanted to emphasise how that is a result of our practice. Thank you to everyone who came, thank you to everyone who helped on the day and beforehand to make the Centre so beautiful and the event so smooth-running, thank you to everyone who helps on our reception, thank you to everyone who is friendly and welcoming to anyone on whatever occasion, and thank you all for practising the Buddhadharmā.

May our practice benefit all beings.

Until next month

Metta, Dayamala



SANGHA NIGHTS

Mondays, 7–9.30pm

Lotus Hall

For regulars at the Centre, who have completed Buddhism level 2 or more, there’s a new set of Sangha nights mapped out right through to September.

Monday 7 June: ‘Changing our Name’

A chance to discuss the recent change from FWBO to Triratna Buddhist Community, to ask your questions and have your say. Led by Dayamala

From Monday 14 June: ‘What is the Sangha’

This 6-week series will be based loosely around Sangharakshita’s book of the same name. Dayamala and I will mark a new era and the start of leading Sangha Night together by ‘going back to basics’, looking at what it means to be a member of the Sangha and giving Sangha Night itself a high profile within that experience. Led by Dayamala and Chandana

From Monday 2 August: ‘101 Things you Never Dared Ask...’

On topics as broad as the Order, ritual, devotion and Buddhism in general. Now’s your chance, in this 4-week series that comes immediately after Dharma Day (26 July). Led by Dayamala and Chandana

From 06 September: ‘Work as a Spiritual Practice’

A 6-week series. This will look at how ethics and the principles of Right Livelihood can be applied to our work in a wide range of settings and contexts. Led by Dayamala and Chandana

Further details for all these nights can be found on the website – look under Sangha/Events

There is nothing which remains difficult if it is practised. So, through practice with minor discomforts, even major discomfort becomes bearable.

from The Bodhicaryavatara by Santideva
in the chapter on Forbearance/Patience
(trans K Crosby & A Skilton)

MAGICAL MITRA CEREMONY

by Judy Green



During the weeks leading up to the Mitra ceremony, folks that I know in the Sangha were asking, their faces aglow with experiential knowledge, "Are you excited? Oh you'll love the experience." Eyes sparkling, quietly smiling. To be honest I was feeling nervous and all I kept thinking was "Blimey, they're more excited about it than I am." I felt subdued, a little private really.

I was becoming more concerned about what flower to choose, what dress to wear. Should I wear a dress? Will I trip and fall over, will I panic at the last minute and opt for a smaller celebration? Oh, how I fussed.

I was concerned about my furrowed fussing and the night before the ceremony I sat down and had a word with myself. Am

I really doing this? And I thought, yes, I want to follow the Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha. And Manchester Buddhist Centre is top! To grow, to open up, to relax into the vision of enlightenment, that's it for me. I really like this space here, this field of jewel energy. So I got my flowers, my candles, my incense, my friends and family and, with my frock on, went to be "done" as they say.

The centre was sparkling with warmth, that always present place on Turner Street. I always feel at home here. Here are my friends, people that I love, here the Sangha, the excellent community. My subdued feelings softened and I felt relaxed and happy. Stan, Jo, Jane, Martha, Sarah, John, Issy. We were all there.

The Lotus Hall was packed to the brimful and Arthaketu gave a wonderful description of the ceremony for our friends and families, in his gentle, wholehearted way. He said that the practice is down to us, our efforts and practice, to nurture and raise the Sangha as we aspire to grow and are inspired by the excellent community and the Arya Sangha.

We each went before the shrine and made our offerings. There was no sound, only the brilliant shining presence of communion and the soft resonating of welcoming hearts.

At the close of the ceremony the eight of us sat together, while the blessings of the ceremony permeated us. The Buddha rupa, lit only by candlelight, seemed to smile. It was an intimacy.

We all went home, each with a bag full of open-hearted generosity! Cards, presents, blessings, well wishes. My friend Chris said that our front room looked like Christmas morning!

We went to bed. I couldn't sleep. I got up and I read such generosity. I cried, I felt loved, I felt at peace.

All love and happiness to you Jo and Izzy, Jane and John, Martha and Stan and Sarah.

Sadhu! Sadhu! Sadhu! JUDY

Brian - A Hero

Recently I supported Buddhism and Meditation courses, levels 1 and 2, over a total of twelve weeks. There were two other courses going on the same night which meant large numbers of people at the Centre on those evenings. We were really struggling with insufficient people supporting these classes. This meant that Brian had no one to help him at the tea breaks – with setting up and clearing away. All the classes had their tea breaks at the same time. Brian never complained and took it all in his stride. He also made time to chat with the course members and helped them with any enquires that they had. I, and the rest of the teams, really appreciated Brian's help. Without him I think we would have been in a bit of a mess at break time.

So, a big thank you Brian you are a star.

Sharon

Rejoicing In Merit

I rejoice with delight
In the good done by all beings,
Through which they obtain rest
With the end of suffering.
May those who have suffered be happy!
I rejoice in the release of beings
From the sufferings of the rounds of
existence;
I rejoice in the nature of the Bodhisattva
And the Buddha,
Who are Protectors.
I rejoice in the arising of the Will to
Enlightenment,
And the Teaching:
Those oceans which bring happiness to
all beings,
And are the abode of welfare of all beings.

from the **Triratna Sevenfold Puja**

Bringing Our Practice Into the City

In a joyful and inspiring ceremony on Saturday 15 May the Centre formally received the North West Multi-Faith Tourism Association's (NWMFTA) Marquee of Excellence for our excellent visitor welcome.



The day was a great success, and, as well as Manchester's Lord Mayor, Councillor Alison Firth, presenting the award, we welcomed visitors from the NWMFTA, Visit England and the Northern Quarter Business Association, plus many other friends and acquaintances of the Centre.

Joanna Booth from NWMFTA talked of how impressed she had been - how there was something for everyone here; how she valued the work we do with schools; and how the idea of work as a spiritual practice had helped her to view her own work in a different light.

The Lord Mayor echoed these sentiments and said she was very pleased to present us with the award. In response, Dayamala stressed the Buddhist values and practice that underpin the Centre's success. She talked of how our practice of loving kindness directly results in the warm welcome we give to those who come through our doors.

A Big Thank You To Sharon

A big thank you to Sharon (Glasby) who has been running the Creativity Group on Tuesdays since last August, which has been most successful. I personally have benefited hugely in that it has encouraged me to have singing lessons and I have recently started taking lessons on the French Horn. Sharon herself is about to take up the saxophone. I have really benefited from the support of the group. I would also like to thank Bob for his inspired choice of readings.

John Warner

EVENING FOR MEN MITRA'S with Ratnaguna

Wednesday 16 June 7–9.30pm

“Whatever you frequently think and ponder upon, that will become the inclination of your mind.” The Buddha

Ratnaguna will lead an evening looking at reflection.



He writes:

‘As you may know, I’ve just finished writing a book on the topic so have quite a lot to say, and have developed some useful exercises to help people to further their reflections. So it will be partly interactive.

Although reflection is a well-known Buddhist practice, as far as I know there is very little in the Buddhist literature about how to actually go about it. On this evening we’ll explore what it actually means to reflect on a topic, and we’ll try some practices to help us to develop our ability to reflect. Everyone reflects, and we all have our own ways of reflecting, but a key skill is to learn to dwell on a topic.

As Marilynne Robinson writes on her novel Gilead: “... there is something I must dwell on, because I know more than I know and must learn it from myself.”

Sounds like a great evening so I hope to see you there.

Arthaketu

Full Moon Puja dedicated to Medicine Buddha

Saturday 26 June, 5.45pm

“You are endowed with an oceanic treasury of qualities and merit; By the blessing of your inconceivable compassion You calm the suffering and torment of sentient beings. I supplicate you, Light of Lapis Lazuli.”



In the centre of the Pure Land Sudarshan (meaning beautiful to behold) sits a palace surrounded by medicinal plants of every variety. In the centre of the palace sits the Medicine Buddha, on a throne of talking jewels that possess the power to remove all obstacles to health and happiness. The Medicine Buddha’s body is deep blue in colour and luminous like a rainbow and reveals his space-like wisdom and impartial love toward all beings. He is the patron deity of Tibetan medicine and is seen as a source of great teachings, blessings and deep healing.

The Full Moon Puja Group are celebrating the qualities of the Medicine Buddha with a puja at the Centre on Saturday 26 June. Anyone is welcome, whatever their experience. We hope to see you there.

Karunavajri

Munisha to Give Keynote Talk

at the

Manchester Buddhist
Conference 2010

Saturday 19 June, 9.30–4.30pm



Munisha, who you may know for her work with Clear Vision, is giving the keynote talk ‘British Buddhism Today’ at the annual Manchester Buddhist Conference.

Munisha is a very experienced and entertaining public speaker. She has lectured to schools and societies around Britain since 1985. For many years she taught school groups at the Tate Gallery, London and since 1998 she has worked for The Clear Vision Trust first as education officer and now as director. She was ordained in 2003. You can find out more about her at

www.munisha.co.uk

The annual conference, organised by our brothers and sisters at the Manchester University Buddhist Society, brings together local Buddhist groups. It is attended by monks and nuns from the various traditions, lay Buddhist practitioners, and meditators and interested people from around the region. There are talks, presentations and workshops from different groups and traditions.

The event is taking place at the

**Fo Guang Shan Temple,
540 Stretford Road,
Manchester, M16 9AF**

NEW SINGING GROUP

Friday 18 June, 7 – 8.30pm

This is one for everyone – the first session of a collaborative chorus, organised by Amitasuri and Taravandana. No experience necessary and you don’t need to be a signed up Buddhist!

Donations welcome but it’s fine to come for free the first time. For more information see the Events page on the MBC website.

TASTER MEDITATION SESSIONS

These one-hour sessions on Tuesdays and Thursdays carry on over the summer even when we’re taking a break from our introductory six-week courses. In each session, led by an experienced meditation teacher, there will be a short, led meditation on the breath, help with meditation posture and a led body-awareness meditation

These taster sessions are suitable for total beginners, but it’s also fine to come as many times as you want.

Tuesdays 6.00–7.00pm

Thursdays 1.00–2.00pm

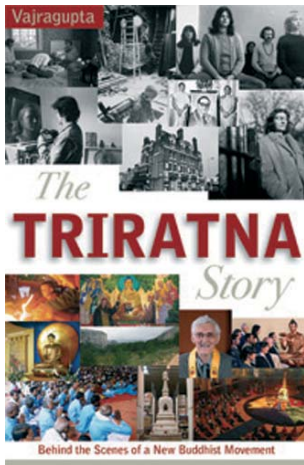
Suggested Donation: £7/£5/£3 (Waged/Low-waged/Concessions)

More information:

www.manchesterbuddhistcentre.org.uk/events

THE TRIRATNA STORY by Vajragupta

Behind the Scenes of a New Buddhist Movement



"An excellent synopsis of the history of an important Buddhist movement"
David Brazier, author of *The New Buddhism*

"...a courageous and important book...it defies all expectations."
Zoketsu Norman Fischer, founder of Everyday Zen Foundation and author of *Sailing Home*

From the author of *Buddhism: Tools for Living Your Life* comes a very timely new book.

This is the story of Triratna (formerly the FWBO), an international Buddhist

movement, from its inception in London to its growth worldwide. It is the story of mistakes made, lessons learnt and how a Buddhist community was built.

Vajragupta has been involved with Triratna since 1990. He was director of the Birmingham Buddhist Centre for 8 years and teaches Buddhism and meditation across the UK.

The book was launched at the FWBO/Triratna International Retreat at the beginning of this month

On sale in the Manchester Buddhist Centre bookshop at a price of £7.99.

DAYAMALA'S International Sangha Retreat Diary

Four hundred Buddhists gathered at Taraloka retreat centre in Shropshire for the international Triratna Sangha retreat from 28 May to 1 June. Dayamala, our woman on the spot, kept a daily diary, here is a short extract:

Saturday afternoon

Arrived in the sunshine yesterday, which was great for those pitching tents and to see Taraloka looking so glorious. Today, rain! Having lived here for five and a half years, and being used to retreats averaging between twenty and forty five people, I am enjoying seeing Taraloka transformed by providing facilities for over four hundred of us! ... There is a large Manchester contingent here which is great, and groups have come over from Paris and Germany – there are even two Americans here, over from USA!

Metta to all, Dayamala

To enjoy more of the diary go to

www.manchesterbuddhistcentre.org.uk/news/international-sangha-retreat-diary.html

And if you were unable to attend and would like to hear the talks from the FWBO/Triratna International Retreat they are now available online thanks to the hard work of the ClearVision team (www.clear-vision.org) whose computers were uploading through the retreat...! Jnanavaca's talk on 'An Essential Matter - the Demon of Materialism' was the first one available. Watch the talks on the embedded video player on the Triratna news website:

www.fwbo-news.blogspot.com

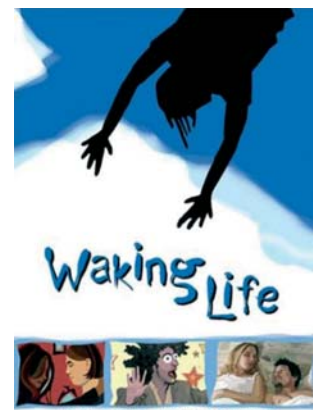
or via VideoSangha at www.videosangha.net



FILM NIGHT AT EARTH CAFE

26 June, 8pm

suggested dana £8, open to everyone



We're going to be showing a really interesting, thought provoking and fun film – WAKING LIFE – so this is a good opportunity to invite friends and family to come along! From the director of *Slacker* and *Dazed and Confused* comes one of the most imaginative animated features ever made.

This funny, ingenious film, explores the fascinating question: "Are we sleep walking through our waking state or wake walking through our dreams?" Join Wiley Wiggins as he searches for answers to life's most important questions in a world that may or may not be reality. Here are a few reviews:

"This is wildly invigorating. Unexpectedly thrilling and even moving film." The Guardian

"Strikingly original...nothing short of amazing." Rolling Stone magazine

There will be drinks and light refreshments available in the cafe.

This will be a dana event: we are in the final stages of fundraising for our shrine hut – we're very nearly there, so your contributions will be very gratefully received.

We look forward to seeing you there!

Jyotivana community

Country walks - could you lead one?

The Sangha walking group organises monthly walks in the countryside around Manchester

Paul usually leads but isn't always available, and also finds that he's running out of ideas for new walks! Does anyone out there in the Sangha want to lead a walk occasionally?

You don't have to be an experienced leader as the walks are quite easy going – more about getting the Sangha together enjoying the countryside and each other's company than marching up and down mountains in record speed.

So if you have a favourite walk, or an idea for one that you'd like to lead, then please let us know. It can be anything from a short four or five mile stroll to a twelve mile hike in the Peak District. The walks are usually on the last weekend of the month, although this is very flexible. Ideally they are accessible by public transport, although again this is not essential.

It would be great to offer walks every month so if you can help please email:

paul@sanghasocial.com

For more information: www.manchesterbuddhistcentre.org.uk/sangha/sangha-social

Of course you're very welcome to come along on the walks without having to lead one!

Getting To Know The Centre Team

In our new regular feature, a member of the centre team is interviewed by Sally Newby about their lives and role at the centre

MEET KEITH GREEN

How long have you been involved with the FWBO/Triratna and what is your current role at the centre?

I first started coming to the centre in 2002, but got more involved about 5 years ago. My job title is Fundraising and Marketing Manager. I oversee fundraising and standing orders, as well as being responsible for publicity and communication.

Where were you born and where do you live now?

I was born in Macclesfield almost 45 years ago and I now live in Levenshulme. I am part of a lesbian and gay family – I have a nine year old daughter who lives with me half of the time and with her two mums the other half.

What do you like best about your job?

I really enjoy exploring work as a spiritual practice, working with ideals and realities – such as “how do you hold on to this ideal with these particular circumstances and resources?” Sometimes it feels like working with koans. I love being part of a team which sees work as practice. One of the most important parts of my practice is generosity, and I feel my role allows me to be in touch with peoples’ generosity to and within the centre which I see as a great gift. I told Sara recently (she helps me with publicity) that doing posters with her was the highlight of my week and she told me to get a life!

How has your journey on the Buddhist path most changed you?

I occupy a much fuller version of myself. I feel less scared, more patient and more generous. I feel in touch with something that feels very truthful – impermanence, insubstantiality, no fixed self, these ideas make sense to me. I feel in touch with a bigger sense of meaning. The teachings offer me tools and a framework to apply the dharma to my life.

Who do you admire?

Sangarashita for all his efforts and what he has tried to/has achieved.



What trait do you most deplore in yourself?

Deplore is a strong word. I would like to be more self-confident. This sometimes holds me back from expressing myself and being fulfilled even though I feel that I live my life with a sense of courage – being a gay man who’s a dad, and also in the past working creatively with people struggling with issues around suicide and self-harm.

Were you excited by the general election? Does it matter who’s in power?

I think politics is important but I’ve never had any illusions about parliamentary politics making any real difference. I used to be part of socialist movements and I had that view then and still have it, so I do vote but I don’t expect it to make a difference. I’m really interested in how disillusioned people are generally with the political system. I used to struggle a lot with feeling any metta for world leaders but I noticed that I felt some for Gordon Brown recently when he made his Rochdale gaff during the election campaign!

What keeps you awake at night?

Energy at the mo. I have lots of it!

If you were to have a breakdown, do you think you would be most likely to commit homicide or suicide?

Suicide probably but I always used to fantasize about smashing up bus shelters and stuff if I ever lost the plot.

How do you relax?

I find it quite hard to relax. I like watching TV – am watching the Six Feet Under series at the moment. I also like world and classical music.

What are you currently listening to on your iPod?

Don’t have one.

What do you consider to be your greatest achievement?

Being an engaged and good dad. Thinking creatively around situations in my life and work.

What does love feel like?

Being open, soft and expansive. Being patient and understanding.

Monogamy or promiscuity?

Don’t know. Both are OK.

What does being part of the Manchester Sangha mean to you?

It’s a gift that I don’t think I always allow myself to see or understand. I can get caught up with day-to-day issues and points of tension. I was reflecting though at Glenn’s funeral recently on how the Sangha is a diverse and glorious community.

What would you like to see change at the centre?

Although I think there are some great things about the centre, I would like to see a shift in the culture so that the Sangha takes a lot more ownership of the centre – which means a deeper dialogue between the centre and the Sangha and a greater sense of openness and transparency. How do we ensure that everyone at the centre feels able to play the role they want to play?

Simplicity, Compassion, Transformation

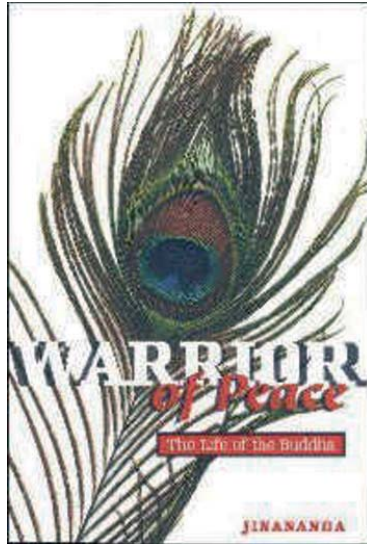
Week long Sangha Retreat 9-16 July, Vajraloka, North Wales

A chance to spend time with Padmarashini, Chandana and Athaketu. It is held at Vajraloka retreat centre in North Wales – a beautiful setting in which to deepen our practice, to be surrounded by the natural environment and to spend time making or being with friends who share your ideals. The theme for the week ‘Simplicity, Compassion, Transformation’ will be an exploration of the three Yanas (Hinayana, Mahayana, Vajrayana). The retreat is suitable for people who have completed Buddhism level 2. Cost: £290, £240, £190 (waged/low waged/concessions). Please book through the centre.

WARRIOR OF PEACE The Life of the Buddha by Jinananda

Those of you who attended the afternoon of our Wesak celebrations at the end of May will have heard Arthaketu's excellent reading from this book. I was very moved by the reading, particularly the description of Siddhartha Gotama's vow to remain sitting under the Bodhi tree until he attained complete enlightenment. This part of the Buddha's life includes the fabulous tale of the onslaught of Mara and his hordes. I had not read this book before, but having dipped into it over the weekend I can recommend it wholeheartedly as a refreshing and very moving description of the Buddha's life. There is a short extract from Arthaketu's reading below. If you want to read more, the book is available in the Centre bookshop, priced at a very reasonable £7.99

Sara Inkster, Ed



From chapter 4: The Awakening

“Mara was again baffled, but not finished. His final ploy was aimed at undermining the Bodhisattva's confidence in the face of the literally superhuman task he had set himself. ‘You have done well,’ he said, ‘I see the heavenly hosts are already welcoming you as one of their own. But do you not know,’ said Mara, ‘that the ground you sit on belongs to me? I am the lord of this world, and that place where you sit is mine. How have you earned the right to occupy it? Your illustrious attainments over many years have won you freedom from the sorrows of this world, but no more than that. Surely, you do not think you can challenge my position at the heart of life? Look how many are those who have received the delights of the world at my hands, listen to the cries of pleasure coming from my kingdom. What have you given to win the vajrasana, the diamond throne, the still centre upon which the whole universe turns? Can you not hear the roar of the great host at my back witnessing my claim to that throne? Who is there to bear witness to yours?’

It was true that Gotama could claim no authority for what he was about to do. There was no man nor god – not even Brahma, the god of gods himself – who was qualified to validate him from above, to come down and confer their blessing on his enterprise. What overweening presumption had brought him – a mere human being like any other – to claim he could succeed in opening the path to liberation, where all others had failed? The only authority he could possibly claim lay at his own feet. If he now sat at the pinnacle of humanity, his authority would be found beneath him in layer after layer of individual acts of human kindness, understanding, and generosity.

Without moving from his seat, Gotama reached out to the world he loved, earthing his realization in a gesture at once tender and heroic. As the fingertips of his right hand touched the ground, the whole world shook and thundered, and the goddess of the earth rose up to affirm that she had seen all the comings and goings of beings since the world began, and that Gotama Sakyamuni, the sage of the Sakyans, was indeed ready. Through his practice of kindness and renunciation, of patience, meditation, and wisdom, over many lifetimes, he was fully qualified to take his place, between Buddhas of the past and Buddhas to come, as the rediscoverer of the Way.

Mara's host fled in all directions, his great war-elephant knelt down before the Bodhisattva, and Mara himself withdrew, utterly confounded.”

GOING DEEPER

on Tuesday afternoons 2.00–4.00pm

If you are free any Tuesday afternoon you are very welcome to join us in the Vajra Hall. We attempt to deepen our Mindfulness of Breathing by feeling the breath through the whole body – and remembering the Buddha taught that by the fourth stage one can glimpse a state of contentment. Often we then practice walking meditation, or we discuss statements about the dharma, seeing where we can increase our day to day awareness – and compassion. After that we always practice Metta Bhavana, to help our self-acceptance and our opening to others. If you can only come once a fortnight, that's fine. If you had an absence because of work, or life – that's fine too. If you need to be reminded of the stages during the meditation, that's also fine.

So, do join us any Tuesday, no cost but dana very welcome.

Aryamati

Going Further With Buddhism & Going Deeper With Meditation

Second-level One-Day Courses
Sunday 13 June, 10.30–4.30 pm

If you've completed an introductory course in meditation or in Buddhism and evening classes are a problem for you, Sunday 13 June brings a one-day course in each.

GOING FURTHER WITH BUDDHISM is led by Arthavadin and Chandana and will enable you to learn more about Learn more about the Buddha's teachings and Buddhist meditation.

GOING DEEPER WITH MEDITATION will help you to gain more confidence with your meditation practice.

Cost of each course is £40/£30/£20
(Waged/Low-waged/Concessions)

Book at reception, by phone or online
MBC contact details are on the back page of
this newsletter.

festival: dharma day

Monday 26 July, 2.00–9.30pm,
donations welcome



Dharma day is the annual celebration of the Buddha's teaching on the full moon of July.

Soon after his Enlightenment the Buddha rose from where he had been sitting, went to find his former disciples and shared his experience with them. This event, at a place called Sarnath in northern India, might be called the start of the Buddhist religion and it is this that Dharma Day celebrates.

On Dharma day there are often readings from the Buddhist scriptures and a chance to reflect deeply on their contents.

Above all, on Dharma day Buddhists feel profoundly grateful for the teachings they have received, and how they have enriched and transformed their lives.

For further details please see next month's newsletter, or visit the MBC website.

Bodywise News

NEW PROGRAMME

Help yourself to our lovely new programme (Autumn/Winter 2010) from the ground floor or Bodywise reception. If you don't want printed material, why not sign up for our monthly email newsletter? Just go to our home page: www.bodywisenaturalhealth.co.uk and click on the 'sign up for our newsletter' button on the top right of the screen.

YOGA WORKSHOP WITH MANJUNAGA

It's not in the current programme but Manjunaga's leading a yoga workshop on Saturday 5 June. Just to keep you on your toes, it's 2pm-5pm rather than our usual Saturday mornings and it's suitable for people with at least 3 months yoga experience. The theme is "Dynamic Flow – Exploring movement on and off our mat." Cost £25/£20.

COUNSELLING AT BODYWISE

Both Alastair and Katy are offering the first session with new clients free of charge at the moment. So if you've considered having counselling, you may want to take advantage of this opportunity to experience working with them.

ONE DAY MASSAGE COURSE

Saturday 12 June 10am-4pm. Jutika will teach you basic massage techniques. Spend a fun relaxing day giving and receiving massage. Cost £46/£36.

All workshops need to be booked in advance. Ring Bodywise on 0161 833 2528

Breathworks News

Breathworks' mindfulness-based *Living Well with Pain and Illness* courses in the Wigan Borough, funded via a grant from the governments Working Neighbourhoods Fund (WNF) over 2009-2010, have now been completed. Although take-up was not as high as hoped, participants were extremely appreciative of the opportunity to take part in the courses.

One participant, who has been taking maximum doses of pain killers and anti-depressants to manage neuropathic pain wrote: "I have learned to accept my pain and see it as only a small aspect of a much greater life experience. I don't get angry if the pain suddenly gets worse or things go wrong. I see a future and I am in control of my life again. It has been a real "eureka moment" for me. I now have the tools to deal with my problems."

Another participant suffering from continuous nerve pain wrote: "It has totally changed the way I view my situation and my pain. It has not cured my pain, which I stress to say was pointed out to us at the beginning, but it has taught me to accept it, and try to deal with it differently. I no longer wake up in panic in the middle of the night, wondering if things are going to change for me. I am calmer than I have ever been about my situation and I put it down totally to the different practices we have learned."

We are applying for a similar contract later in the year, and hope to bring these approaches to more people who do not currently have the opportunity to take part in a mindfulness programme.

The summer Breathworks courses at the MBC are underway, and the *Living Well with Pain and Illness* programme will be followed by a day retreat open to all graduates of previous courses. This takes place on June 30th and is an excellent opportunity for a refreshing day of mindfulness practice, as well as to meet with other graduates of the programme.

Also for graduates of the *Living Well with Pain and Illness* programme, the very popular annual *Graduates Retreat* will be held at Taraloka Retreat Centre from August 22-27. This is a chance to take your mindfulness practice deeper in a beautiful countryside setting, with the help of senior Breathworks trainers, as well as to meet other practitioners working with this approach.

www.breathworks-mindfulness.org.uk 0161 834 1110 info@breathworks.co.uk

Hunger is the worst disease, conditioned existence the worst suffering. Knowing this as it really is (one realizes that) Nirvana is the highest happiness.

Health is the highest gain, contentment the greatest riches. The trustworthy are the best kinsmen, Nirvana is the supreme happiness.

Having enjoyed the flavour of solitude and tranquillity, free from sorrow and free from sin, one enjoys the rapturous flavour of the Truth (dhamma).

Dhammapada verses 7-9 in chapter 15 – Happiness (trans. Sangharakshita)

FOR WOMEN...

Buddhafield North Womens' Camping Weekend

Friday 11–Sunday 13 June

There is still time to book. We will be camping on a lovely site – Fell Edge Farm – by Ilkley Moor. The retreat is being led by Padmaradhini, Tejapushpa and Taravandana.

Our theme is 'Radical Sincerity and The Path To Freedom' – exploring how to listen deeply to ourselves and discover what makes us truly alive. The weekend will include meditation, talks, discussion, being in nature, camp fires, invoking the dakini and whatever else emerges for us both individually and collectively. It is a great opportunity to come together with women from the sangha in the north of England.

All you need to bring is your camping gear and, if you can, meditation cushions (though we also have some). Cost is £80/£65/£50 waged/low waged/concessions).

To get more information or to book – go to the website:

www.buddhafieldnorth.org.uk

'Mapping Worlds' A day for women mitras

Saturday 19 June 10–4.00pm
led by Dharmottara

Traditional mandalas are diagrams or models of a perfected universe. They show how the elements of a world are related to each other, to the whole and to the centre.

We can adapt the structures of a mandala to map our own worlds and lives. Doing this can be a great help in gaining perspective, and finding out if we need to rebalance elements of our day-to-day lives in the interests of our practice. It is also an invitation to honesty about what we are doing with our time!

During the day we'll 'read' the structures and details of some traditional mandalas, and let this stimulate us to make our own personal mandalas. Please note, no drawing skills will be assumed.

£25/£18/£15 (waged/low-waged/concessions)
book online, by phone or at reception

BOOKS TO SPARE?

We are looking for good quality books for our second-hand section in the shop. The income raised makes an important contribution to our funds. Dharma books sell very well, but any contributions very welcome. Please bring your donations to reception.

CHANGING OUR NAME

Monday 7 June, 7–9.30pm
with Dayamala and Chandana

A chance to discuss the recent change from FWBO to Triratna Buddhist Community, to hear more about the history of this, reasons for doing it, ask your questions and have your say.

JUNE		
Saturday 5th	2.00 – 5.00pm	Bodywise Yoga Workshop – Dynamic Flow – with Manjunaga
Sunday 6th	10.00 – 5.00pm	Carers Break (see page 6)
Monday 7th	7.00 – 9.30pm	Sangha Night: Changing our Name to Triratna Buddhist Community
Saturday 12th	10.00 – 4.00pm	Bodywise One day massage course – Jukita
Sunday 13th	10.00 – 4.30pm	Going Deeper with Meditation – one-day course
Sunday 13th	10.00 – 4.30pm	Going Further with Buddhism – one-day course
Monday 14th	7.00 – 9.30pm	Sangha Night: ‘What is the Sangha?’ start of a 6-part series
Wednesday 16th	7.00 – 9.30pm	An evening of practice and discussion for men mitras
Friday 18th	7.00 – 8.30pm	Singing Group - see April newsletter or contact amitashuri@gmail.com
Saturday 19th	10.00 – 4.00pm	Women’s mitra day with Dharmottara
Monday 21st	7.00 – 9.30pm	Sangha Night: What is the Sangha?’ – 2nd night of the 6-part series
Saturday 26th	5.45 – 6.45pm	Full Moon Puja to Medicine Buddha
Monday 28th	7.00 – 9.30pm	Sangha Night: What is the Sangha?’ – 3rd night of the 6-part series
Tuesday 29th	7.00 – 9.30pm	Going Further with Buddhism – 6 week course starts
Tuesday 29th	7.00 – 9.30pm	Buddhism Level Three – 6 week course starts
Wednesday 30th	7.00 – 9.30pm	Going Deeper with Meditation – 6 week course starts
Wednesday 30th	10.00 – 4.00pm	Breathworks: Living Well with Pain and Illness day retreat
JULY		
Friday 2nd	7.00 – 9.30pm	Singing group – Second session of a budding choir...
Monday 5th	7.00 – 9.30pm	Sangha Night: What is the Sangha?’ – 4th night of the 6-part series
Friday 9th to Friday 16th	starts 6pm on Friday 9th	Sangha retreat @ Vajraloka retreat centre in North Wales
Saturday 10th	10.00 – 1.00pm	Bodywise Yoga – Opening the hips – Christine
Monday 12th	7.00 – 9.30pm	Sangha Night: What is the Sangha?’ – 5th night of the 6-part series
Saturday 17th & Sunday 18th	10.00 – 4.30pm	A weekend for women who have asked for ordination
Monday 19th	7.00 – 9.30pm	Sangha Night: What is the Sangha?’ – concluding night of the 6-part series
Sunday 25th	10.30 – 4.30pm	A day of practice, discussion and friendship for men mitras
Monday 26th	2.00 – 9.30pm	DHARMA DAY: The annual celebration of the Buddha’s teaching

This newsletter and previous editions are available online at
www.manchesterbuddhistcentre.org.uk Sign up on the site to get news emails too

Next Newsletter

The deadline for items for next month’s newsletter is 21 June
Please email any items you want to include to mbcnewsletter@gmail.com
You can also leave items at reception marked for the attention of Sara Inkster

Please note the views and opinions expressed in the Newsletter are those of the individual contributors and are not necessarily those held by the trustees of Manchester Buddhist Centre or by the Triratana Buddhist Community/Triratna Buddhist Order in general.

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