



Issue 5

March, April & May

2012

CONTENTS

Page 1

End of Year Celebrations at DBI

Page 2

DBI Annual General Meeting/ Celebration photos

Page 3

Transcribing from Shamatha Retreat continued

Page 4

Vajrasattva/Medicine Buddha and Hevajra Retreat

Page 5

Upcoming Retreats National & NZ dates Khenpo-la returning celebration

Page 6

Sydney & Blue Mountains Shedra Programme

Page 7

Jamchen Buddhist Society Melbourne Rockhampton Qld.

Page 8

Guided Meditation in Retreat Dharmachakra Gompa

Page 9

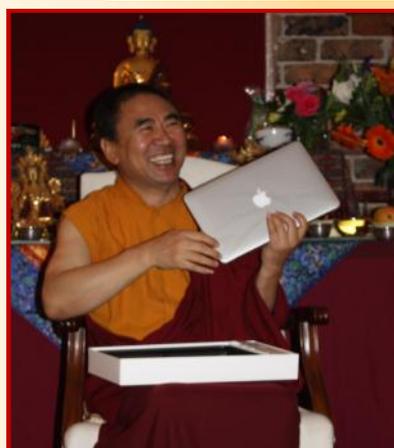
Losar Sharing from Meditation Course, February 2012 DBI Cookbook

www.drogmi.org
+61 (2) 8005 1757
info@drogmi.org

'The Wisdom Age'

Newsletter of Drogmi Buddhist Institute

A Tibetan Buddhist Centre in the Sakya Tradition



End of year celebrations at Drogmi Buddhist Institute 2011

On Sunday 11 December 2011, I visited Drogmi Buddhist Institute's new centre at Ashfield, Sydney. The gompa was quite beautiful and there was a good feeling about the place.

A traditional Long Life Puja of *White Tara* practise was held in honour of our teacher Khenpo Ngawang Dhamchoe. The ceremony included an offering of tea and auspicious rice. A formal mandala offering was made to Khenpo-la, which included traditional sacred objects and presents. I was fortunate to be able to make one of these offerings.

After this precious experience, an enjoyable BBQ lunch was prepared (thanks to the cooks), and was festively shared outside under the back verandah. During this time there was much enjoyment with raffle tickets being given out and numbers drawn out. As each number was drawn, the winner chose a present from a big basket of wrapped prezzies.

It was great to catch up with some of the older students as well as many new ones. Khenpo has touched many people with the Dharma since he first arrived in Australia. During 2011 Khenpo-la has been extremely busy travelling and teaching through Australia and overseas. I was fortunate to have met Khenpo-la, within a few days of his arrival in Australia. He has been gracious enough to work so hard with his teaching and continuously does so. I am personally grateful that he continues to stay in Australia and be the spiritual guide for the growing Drogmi Buddhist Institute.

I look forward to more end of year celebrations and Long Life Pujas for Khenpo-la.

Evelyn

2011 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

On the 11th December 2011 the Drogmi Buddhist Institute (DBI) held its 2nd Annual General Meeting. The meeting commenced with an opening address by Khenpo-la.

Khenpo expressed his appreciation to the outgoing committee for their efforts on behalf of the Centre during the past year. Acknowledging that DBI as an organization is still in the early development stages, and that all efforts made by individuals no matter how small are a fruitful contribution. He encouraged members to help each other and work together with a warm heart and caring spirit. He emphasized that this is the significance of the Teachings. He then said although DBI is a small group at the moment, anything is possible and the group must always look to the future. Khenpo concluded by reminding us that although achievements may seem small on an individual scale, they are great achievements for the community. He thanked all for their support and efforts on his behalf, saying that their contribution is a contribution to all sentient beings, not just to the Centre.

The president, Victoria, thanked Khenpo for his continuing support and guidance to the committee over the past 12 months. Victoria reminded us of how privileged we are to have such a great teacher in our midst and that we should not take this opportunity for granted. An outline of the path ahead for DBI in 2012 was presented:

- ◇ The formalizing of the Sapan Shedra as a teaching vehicle for Drogmi Buddhist Institute;
- ◇ Applications for grants to fund live video broadcast of the teachings and other events;
- ◇ The establishment of a School Building Fund;
- ◇ In the longer term, the vision of a Retreat Centre.

Victoria then expressed her thanks to the committee for their work during the past year and thanked all the volunteers who had assisted throughout the year. This contribution is invaluable to the DBI committee in helping implement Khenpo's vision across Australia.

Special Resolution:

A special resolution was proposed for the amendment to the DBI Constitution to meet the requirements of the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) with regard to DBI's management and disposal of monies, if the ATO were to grant DBI 'Deductible Gift Recipient' status for the DBI School Building Fund. The Special Resolution was carried unanimously.

New Committee For 2012:

The following individuals were nominated by Mark Mulcahy, seconded by Peter Green, and elected unanimously to the 2012 Executive Committee of Management: *Victoria Nesire, Jack Heath, Ann Kelly, Vanessa Howie, Mark Mulcahy, Suzi Walker and Linda McKeone.*

A warm welcome was extended to our new 2012 committee members: Suzi Walker and Linda McKeone. Their contribution will assist in making the DBI committee stronger.

Khenpo advised members that Drogmi Buddhist Institute had now been formally open for two years. During that time Victoria had worked extremely hard for the Centre but now needed to step down due to family and work commitments. At his request, Victoria had agreed to remain for a further three months to ensure continuity and a smooth transition.

As at December 2011, DBI had 32 members. If you are a friend or supporter of DBI we encourage you to become a member. Becoming a member is a great way of showing your support for Khenpo's vision in Australia. Membership forms are available on our website www.drogmi.org...



Continued from pages 8 & 9 Issue 4 - The Wisdom Age...

When we say meditation, it is always important to do the two steps: contemplation first, and then single pointed. First we have to contemplate the value of equanimity, the value of loving kindness, the value of compassion. When you contemplate, then you see the value of equanimity, and from then onward you have to feel everyone as equal, then you stay in that state of mind. When you see the value of loving kindness then you just wish that everyone has happiness and the cause of happiness, and stay in that state of mind. When you see the value of compassion, then you stay in that state for everyone to be free from suffering and the cause of suffering. So contemplation first, then meditation.

When you are beginning meditation, if you do ten minutes, the first eight minutes you should contemplate, then the last two minutes do single pointed meditation. Then with experience reduce the contemplation to seven minutes and increase single pointed to three minutes. Eventually you become an expert and only need to contemplate two minutes, and eight minutes single pointed meditation. That is how to progress.

4. CONVENTIONAL BODHICITTA

Temporary Benefit: If you really maintain Bodhicitta and have the intention to attain Buddhahood for the sake of all sentient beings, in that state of mind there is not room for the self-cherishing mind. Many Kadampa masters who taught about mind training say "*Whatever happens in my life, I am not going to blame anyone out there, the only one to blame is my self-cherishing mind*". This self-cherishing mind is

the creator of all the problems. The only way to remove self-cherishing mind is Bodhicitta: the thought that from now on I'm going to attain Buddhahood for the sake of sentient beings. The self-cherishing is like a bee hive, all the bees come there. The bee is our ego mind, jealous mind, self-cherishing mind, anger mind. All these bees come to the hive, and make poison honey rather than sweet honey. When we develop Bodhicitta there is no hive to attract bees. In this way Bodhicitta stops many negative thoughts like anger, selfish, jealous, stinginess, all these are not going to be there. Bodhicitta is said to be one of the most beautiful ornaments we can have while in ordinary life: when someone has this Bodhicitta mind everyone can see that person is such a beautiful person.

Ultimate Benefit: Bodhicitta is going to make this ordinary person into Buddha. There is no other method to make you a Buddha. The only thing going to make you a Buddha is Bodhicitta mind.

For each of these that we've discussed, it is important to think about the temporary and ultimate benefit more and more, then the more you see the value, it automatically encourages you to practice these things.

5. ABSOLUTE BODHICITTA

Temporary Benefit: Because we see things as real we get attached, then we have disagreements, arguments and conflict. When we talk about absolute Bodhicitta, everything that we see, hear or smell, is just an illusion, it is not real. It's like a dream, a mirage, a magical show. The more we are aware that this is like a dream, a mirage, a magical show, then we're not going to see everything so seriously. We have stress and worry because we take everything so serious, but when we look from an ultimate point of view it's pointless, essence-less. But we fail to be aware of the illusion we are not going to have stress or worry.

Ultimate benefit: Is the same as conventional Bodhicitta: we attain Buddhahood for the sake of all sentient beings. To develop this Ultimate Bodhicitta we have three stages:

- 1) Shamatha
- 2) Vipassana
- 3) Shamatha and Vipassana together.



6. SHAMATHA MEDITATION

Temporary Benefit: Because we are not in Shamatha or single pointed meditation, our mind is like a crazy elephant. This crazy elephant wanders everywhere, rampages and causes a lot of destruction and damage. If we look at what causes us difficulties, it is our mad elephant mind. If you let this mad elephant run around in your mind, it will constantly cause harm. Not only in this life, but life after life. So there are lots of disadvantages to this mad elephant of our mind. If you catch this elephant, and tie it up to the pole, then you're going to stop causing all these troubles. The mind is like the mad elephant, the pole is like the virtues (the object that we meditate on), and the rope is the mindfulness. Mindfulness catches your mind, and ties it up to the pole so it will stop causing destruction. Then you will have much more peace of mind. When you have peace of mind, then whatever you do, even samsaric things, with a clear mind you make less mistakes, and you do things much faster. With a clear mind you know exactly how to do something. If you want to make a cup of tea, it very much depends on your mind. If your mind is very busy or messy, if you think "I want to make a cup of tea" then before you get to the kitchen your mind thinks of something else and you forget to switch the jug on. A few minutes later you think of it again, then get distracted. It can take three hours, then a much bigger thing, such as attaining Buddhahood for the sake of all sentient beings, takes much longer without a clear mind. Once you have a clear mind you do one thing at a time, then the next, so in this way you make progress.

To be continued in Issue 6 of The Wisdom Age due out in June 2012...

Vajrasattva/Medicine Buddha Retreat held 30 / 31 December & 1 January 2012

Echoes of Khenpo's teaching guide us to understand the true nature of the mind arise. We are reminded that the mind constantly craves happiness in external objects. As I discard boxes and bags of possessions which I thought were so precious only a short time ago, I think of how blessed we are to receive teachings and the patience of our teacher. **Katarina**



I was extremely fortunate to attend the Vajrasattva and Medicine Buddha retreat over the recent New Year period. Even with my poor level of skills, I was still able to gain such immense benefit from the retreat. Khenpo's words were refreshing to hear and brought joy to my heart. The essence of the teachings was presented with clarity alongside specifics on how to perform the practices. This clarified many aspects for me and was extremely beneficial for my understanding of the practices.

I was encouraged by Khenpo's caring attitude and his genuine kindness and also by the heartwarming support and peaceful atmosphere provided by all the retreatants. It was a wonderful weekend which left me feeling nourished and heartened, and I could not think of a better way to have started the New Year. I hope that your new year may also be filled with joy and meaningful productivity, and that you have many opportunities to hear the wonderful teachings on the Dharma. **Lan**

I attended my first at the Drogmi Buddhist Centre Ashfield 30 - 31 December/ 1 January 2012, which was Vajrasattva and Medicine Buddha. I feel privileged to have Khenpo as our teacher. I found his teachings easy to understand and as he reviewed what we had learned the following day it both clarified and filled in some things that I missed previously. I met some wonderful people and wish to thank all of those who patiently answered my endless questions. Thank you also to Diedre for the wonderful food. What a truly special way to begin a new year! A nourished body mind and spirit... **Monica**

Thanks for the opportunity to express my gratitude for what I believe has been the most satisfying way to bring in the New Year. I found the retreat most rewarding in being able to look at my approach to life. I have been able to look at others in a different way and I am thus a little more understanding.

To me, Khenpo is a beautiful human being. In my brief and frank discussions with him I found him the most non judgmental person I have met. I aspire to be more like him. Thank you for the experience.

Terry

The retreat was great! Fantastic, satisfying, difficult, painful, arduous, repetitive, spiritual, immensely valuable, confronting, exposing, enlightening, insightful, fun, light, humorous, sad, deep and reflective. The moments I remember most about the retreat are watching my thoughts and getting carried away by them when I should have been listening to Khenpo's precious words of instruction. I also remember writing everything down but not taking anything in. I remember sitting cross-legged in so much pain thinking "Oh Vajrasattva and Medicine Buddha cleanse and purify this pain away"!!! Then thinking "just be one with the pain, it is just another experience, why be so attached to pleasure and averse from pain"! Then thinking "shut up analytical intellectual mind, that's all rubbish, this sucks! I suck! I can't do this! What am I doing??? I want to go surfing! Why am I torturing myself?" Then I sat in the chair and thought "ahhhh this is nice... no its not. I'm far away now and can't hear what Khenpo is saying. I wish those neighbors would stop making such a racket, so disrespectful. I couldn't even sit for a few more minutes could I, so pathetic, call yourself a bodhisattva? Shame on you (me that is)." So I went and sat back on the floor. Then I remember thinking "Oh, I forgot to wear deodorant today... oh oeee "I'm getting a bit smelly. Let's try and sit so I can close my armpits as tight as I can. Do you think she can smell me? Surely not, wait a minute maybe she can... poor thing if she can".

Well that was my retreat, however on a more serious note I benefited immensely from the retreat. Even though it was only for 3 days, during the period my body discharged a lot of tension and some deeply entrenched emotional and physical patterns are beginning to shift. I feel much more connected with the 2 practices and having the philosophical understanding of the aim of the practice, the reasons for each aspect of the practices, the benefits of the practices, the meaning of the Sanskrit mantra, the proper structure and visualization techniques have enriched my understanding of the Buddhadharma and has made me appreciate the kindness of Kenpo to offer his wisdom to a smelly, lazy, uptight, forgetful layabout like myself. I hope that one day I will completely live the teachings and appreciate their true value instead of using mere lip service.

My aspiration of this account is to show you who I really am, not what I appear to be. I pray for our Sangha to have open hearts, accept one another's faults, to be inclusive and to encourage one another to live the teachings as much as possible and to attend Khenpo's teachings, practices and festivities whenever we can! **Peter R**



Recordings of the above retreat are ready! To all who have received the appropriate initiation/transmission of Vajrasattva & / or Medicine Buddha, please contact Lael for enquiries or to place an order at gyanchitta@internode.on.net

Hevajra Retreat was held over 3 days in mid-November 2011 at the Drogmi Buddhist Institute Centre at Ashfield. Left photo: Hollie receives blessings from Khenpo-la and retreatants join Khenpo-la: Jane, Lael, Dorethy, Hollie, Katarina, Andre, Ann, Vanessa and Diedre

Retreats in 2012: make a note in your diaries...

Easter Retreat:

Shamatha & Mindfulness Retreat**When:** 5 April (Thursday) to 8 April (Sunday) 2012**Where:** Ararat Lodge / Upper Colo

Queens Birthday weekend retreat:

Compassion Retreat**When:** 8 June (Friday) to 10 June (Sunday) 2012**Where:** Ararat Lodge / Upper Colo

October Annual Retreat:

Shamatha Retreat**When:** 28 September (Friday) to 6 October (Saturday) 2012**Where:** Ararat Lodge / Upper Colo

The costs of retreats includes accommodation, all meals and Teachings. Please check website, or phone/email for more details.

**National & New Zealand teaching diary****Gympie Qld., Dharmachakra Gomba, Rob & Sandra**

30 March/ 1 April, 22 - 24 June, 3 - 5 August, 24 - 26 August, 2 - 4 October, 14 - 16 December 2012.

Cairns Qld., Khacho Yulo Ling Buddhist Centre, Ani Rinchen

27 - 29 April & 21 - 23 September 2012

Bermagui NSW, Samten Healing Group, Alan & Annie

4 - 6 May & 26 - 28 October 2012

Rangton, Qld., Brisbane Rangton Centre, Venerable Lekshe

11 - 13 May 2012

Milton/Ulladulla NSW, Manjushri Buddhist Centre, Lael

1 - 3 June 2012

Merimbula NSW, Mark

13 - 15 June 2012

Auckland NZ, Nyima Tashi Kagyu Buddhist Centre, Ani Jangchub

3 - 5 August 2012

Christchurch New Zealand, Frank

10 - 12 August 2012

Melbourne Victoria, Sakya Choebar Lhunpo, Genevieve

31 August - 2 September 2012

Dubbo NSW, Diedre

7 - 9 September 2012

Alice Springs N.T., Zara

11 - 15 October 2012

Rockhampton Qld., Dan

16 - 18 November 2012

Melbourne Victoria, Jamchen Buddhist Society Centre, TBA**A TIME TO CELEBRATE !!!**

Come and help us celebrate Khenpo-la's return to Sydney with a 16 Arhat Puja followed by tea on: Sunday 18 March 10:00-11:00am start at the Centre in ASHFIELD

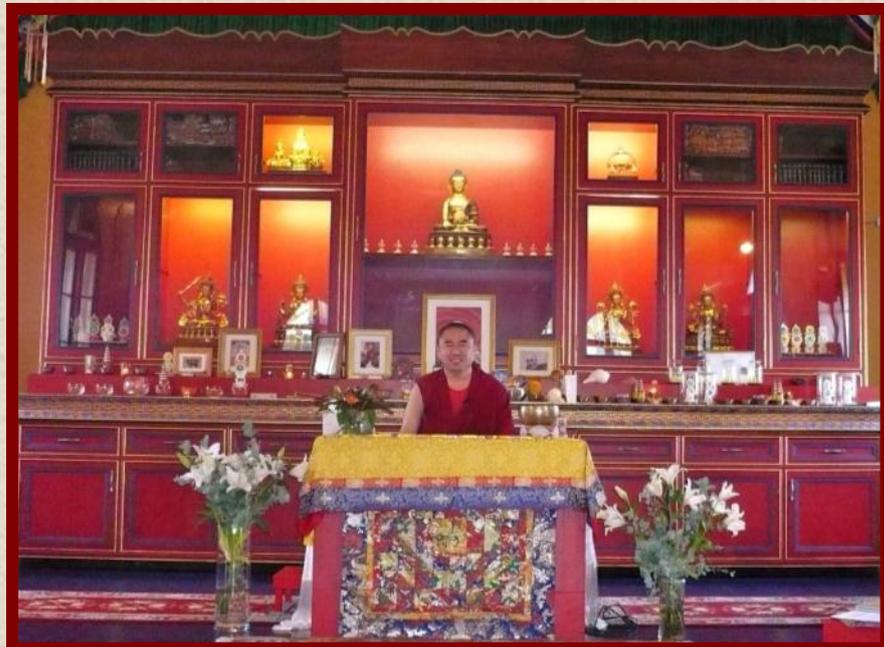
REGULAR MEDITATIONS AT ASHFIELD CENTRE:

- ◆ Regular Sunday morning practices of Shamatha (10:00-11:00am), 1st Sunday of the month Green Tara practice (9:00-10:00am).
- ◆ Regular Tuesday evening practices alternating Chenrezig and Vajrasattva/Medicine Buddha (7:30-9:00pm).

PLEASE NOTE: Khenpo-la will lead Tuesday evenings practices and most Sundays, all welcome!



Details of Khenpo's national and New Zealand teaching schedule, together with the content and the contact details of the event co-ordinators, will be updated throughout the year for your convenience on our website www.drogmi.org.



The DBI Committee would like to thank all those people who took the time and effort to return the Multimedia Survey forms recently. The survey was an attempt by the committee to gauge the level of interest there is in people receiving Khenpo-la's teachings in the upcoming 2012 Shedra programme via live video streaming, delayed recording or other methods. Although the sample results were modest in number, it did show there is an interest within our readership to receive the teachings electronically in some form or another. The committee will now be looking at ways to do this for growing number of students Khenpo-la has all over Australia and overseas.

Sapan Shedra

Commencing from Term 1, 2012 Khenpo-la will teach the *Sapan Shedra* course in three locations, the Sydney Centre, Richmond and Blue Mountains (Lawson), year one of a four year structured Shedra programme. This course has been designed for people who have an interest to study Buddhist philosophy, giving them an opportunity to study these profound teachings. This structured course will be drawing on some of the most fundamental and profound texts in the Mahayana tradition of Tibetan Buddhist philosophy.

"Sapan" was a loving name by which Sakya Pandita (1182-1251 A.D.) was widely and affectionately known and the Drogmi Buddhist Institute Sapan Shedra course is so named in His honour. Sakya Pandita is one of the most important, influential and revered Masters in Tibetan Buddhist history. The Fourth Patriarch of the Sakya School, Sakya Pandita was renowned for His scholastic endeavours and was the author of over 100 works....

Please feel free to contact us by either email or phone, or research further on the DBI website to make any enquiries about this phenomenal opportunity offered by Khenpo Ngawang Dhamchoe and DBI.

Venue	Term 1 Evenings / Dates	Term 2 Evenings / Dates	Times	Teaching
Richmond Community Centre	Monday nights 26 March - 12 April and 16 April - 7 May 2012	Monday nights 28 May - 4 June and 18 June - 23 July	7:30 - 9:00 pm	Introduction to Meditation
Lawson Mountains Community Resource Centre	Wednesday nights 21 - 28 March and 11 April - 9 May 9	Wednesday nights 30 May - 25 July	7:00 - 8:30pm	Introduction to Meditation
Ashfield Centre	Tuesday nights March 22-29 / 12 April - 8 May	Tuesday nights 31 May - 26 July	7:30 - 9:30 pm	<i>Kamalashila's</i> "Stages of Meditation"

REGULAR MEDITATIONS AT THE ASHFIELD CENTRE:

Regular Sunday morning practices of *Shamatha* (10:00 - 11:00am) the 1st Sunday of the month with *Green Tara* practice (9:00 - 10:00am).

Regular Tuesday evening practices alternating with *Chenrezig* and *Vajrasattva/Medicine Buddha* (7:30 - 9:00pm).

Tuesday evenings and most Sunday practices will be led by Khenpo-la.



Khenpo Ngawang Dhamchoe visited Jamchen Buddhist Centre in Balwyn Victoria on the weekend of 16 - 18 December 2011. He gave a public talk entitled *"All About Karma"* followed by 2 days of teachings on Jetsun Drakpa Gyaltsen's mind training teaching of *"Parting From the Four Attachments"*. As co-ordinator for this visit, it was my pleasure to work with Khenpo-la and experience closely his gentle generosity and co-operation in bringing us these teachings. In the spirit of the previous Zimwock Rinpoches who were honoured *Rime* (non-sectarian) masters, Zimwock Rinpoche has opened his centre to the wisdom that other teachers can bring through a new visiting speaker series. Khenpo-la was only the second teacher to be invited for this series.

The public talk was held at the Abbotsford Convent in the Salon, a large open room where the Catholic nuns used to meet their families. It was a warm summers evening and people of all ages turned up to listen and learn! Karma tends to be treated as a negative in contemporary usage, so it was good to hear Khenpo-la placing an emphasis on the positive aspects first. The audience was most appreciative of his clear and thorough explanation. *"Parting From the Four Attachments"* is a short text, yet very comprehensive. Khenpo-la impressed me with his systematic dissection of the verses and wise elucidation of their intent. One of the messages that came through to me were about the importance of integrating intellectual knowledge into our daily experience, the need to have a good understanding of the suffering of the six realms and the knowledge that if you run away from samsara then you will not find nirvana. We all need to work on loving kindness and understanding others. Khenpo-la's teaching gave us great help in this. He is a true friend in the Dharma, we wish him long life and good health for many teachings to come.

Pauline (Melbourne)



Khenpo-la visited the Jamchen Buddhist Society Centre in Balwyn Victoria at the request of His Eminence Zimwock Rinpoche, the 6th Reincarnation of the Mahasiddha Dakpo Tashi Namgyal (1511 -1587) .

It was my great pleasure to attend the public talk and two days of teachings with Khenpo Ngawang Dhamchoe.

I found Khenpo-la's teachings to be lucid and informative. In two days a great many questions I had about the interpretations of Dharma were answered. Khenpo-la is a gifted communicator and clearly a very kind and gentle person. I was also deeply interested in the detail of the history of the Sakya lineage. This information is not easy to come by, and was for me to hear of the history and its history that I have embraced.

Andrew (Melbourne)



I have been a member of the Rockhampton Meditation Society of Central Queensland for seven years. Our centre felt blessed when we found out that other centres in Queensland had been visited by a highly qualified teacher of the Sakya lineage from Sydney. This teacher being Khenpo Ngawang Dhamchoe of the Drogmi Buddhist Institute. The first time Khenpo-la visited Rockhampton in August 2010 he held a weekend retreat on *"Love & Compassion"*. This past November 2011, Khenpo-la put aside time in his busy national and international schedule to re-visit offering a public talk titled *"My Religion is Kindness"* and conducted another weekend retreat from the 8th century Buddhist Master *Shantideva* *"A Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life"*.

Attending His Holiness the Dalai Lama's teachings in Melbourne on this very same precious text, I was especially appreciative to have such a remarkable teacher in Khenpo-la to learn more from this text and how to live a useful life for the benefit of all beings.

We are all profoundly grateful to have such a remarkable teacher such as Khenpo-la visit and bring the Dharma to Rockhampton! I sincerely hope that Khenpo-la will continue to visit and share his great knowledge of the Mahayana teachings as I am just beginning to learn the questions I need to ask myself.

Rhonda (Rockhampton)

An excerpt of a guided meditation during Retreat

A continued excerpt from Issue 4 of Khenpo-la leading a guided meditation during the Shamatha Retreat 2011, teachings on Kamalashila's "Stages of Meditation"...

Once we have awareness of the five obstacles and know the eight antidotes this will make our meditation successful. With this awareness let us focus on our posture imaging we sit in the seven pointed Vairocana posture, and briefly focus on our breath in to help us calm, relax and centre our mind. Firstly we start with the breathing exercise of breathing in 21 times, this being a way to improve our awareness expressing mindfulness, because when we get so distracted it can be very hard to remember things, so here we need to remember counting the breath each time, 21 times. We cannot remember if the mind is wandering somewhere else, we need to be concentrated, so counting to 21 is a method to improve our mindfulness mind. In this way we count now to ourselves 21 times, inhale then exhale 1 times, inhale then exhale 2 times, from there to 21 times.

Once we have completed this breathing exercise, now it is important to find a way to move towards the Vipassana, very important to have the wisdom mind. To be aware not just of oneself of everyone. So the awareness here is of all sentient beings, all having the same needs no different than us, whether they are your loved one, your enemy or stranger whether they are human or non human, whether they are desire realm being, form realm being or formless realms, we must find a way that everyone needs the same wish of happiness and free from suffering. If you have this awareness it is then much easier to meditate on equanimity. So you cannot force yourself to meditate equanimity towards all beings, only comes when you have awareness.

Now secondly, to improve our awareness then we do deeper meditation which is loving kindness. So again it is not just a belief when you practice loving kindness, you must have happiness either to be aware that when you have this mind that wish all beings to have happiness and the cause of happiness, that very mind is absent of the poison mind, absence of selfish mind, absence of jealous mind, virtually absence of deluded negative emotion. Because of this reason that mind is the cause of happiness. So the more we maintain that state of mind, we definitely will have much greater happiness. So here again we need to be logically aware not to just simply believe in loving kindness is going to bring happiness, it doesn't work. So in this way whenever we meditate it is important to combine in conjunction with wisdom mind. The more you meditate with the wisdom you will increase the wisdom mind. So with awareness the meditation is more effective, more valid and more powerful than without awareness and other form of meditation. So in this way whether you meditate on one person as limited, if you extend more limitless, if you then wish to everyone there is immense positive mind. Now spend a little bit of time to wish all beings have happiness and the cause of happiness.

Then we move onto the third stages of meditation which is compassion. Again when someone is suffering or someone is creating causes of suffering and then you feel compassion that is not good enough. We need to find out the reason, like to start with oneself. For example every one of us, due to this trap of delusion of ignorance mind we have a strong and firm and stubborn idea that this self exists. Based on that we have so much attachment to animate and inanimate objects and while we are doing so many things we get exhausted mentally, physically and emotionally. Not only that, at the same time we have this concept that we are so attached to one's self that anyone intentionally or unintentionally, whether they are doing something directly or indirect, whatever we perceive as threatening or causing some kind of interference, we get upset we get angry, again we are traumatised and then based on this we carry out so many negative deeds. So think about all of this that we are doing in the name of just one's own happiness, but the reality is that everything we do is harming oneself. So long as we are really aware what we are doing for oneself you cannot stop harming oneself. Therefore oneself is the object of compassion. Then in the same way if you think each and every other beings, and samsaric beings are doing exactly the same as what we are doing. The more you realise this, naturally the powerful genuine compassion will come. So compassion is not just when you see someone who is sad or to feel sorry rather it is a realisation. The more you develop this awareness of self and others it brings more greater compassion. The more greater compassion arises it will stop us or discourage us for attachment to arise for oneself, aversion towards others and ignorance between others has no difference. So in this way the more we increase our awareness then this delusion will naturally decrease. That is how it works, compassion frees our self and all beings from suffering and the cause of suffering.



Dharmachakra Gompa, Gympie Qld.

Khenpo Ngawang Dhamchoe / Spiritual Director

"Three Levels of Spiritual Perception" was Khenpo's last teaching in Qld for 2011. It is certainly a most fitting teaching at anytime, but of particular use to Westerners just before Christmas when stress levels are elevated. As usual very well condensed in just two short days by Khenpo-la's knowledge of the very special teaching. It certainly helped us to realise this teaching is thoroughly worthwhile to study and meditate on. It is the true path to Buddhahood. Thank you Khenpo for 2011 and we look forward to this year... **Rob**



The Tibetan Lunar New Year of 2139 is the Year of the Water Dragon which in the west is celebrated on February 22nd 2012.

Losar is a time for new beginnings and this time Tibetans and monasteries spend their time cleaning up and attending to housework duties with vigour. Traditionally for Tibetans the lead up to Losar is just as important as the day itself. Before Tibetans celebrate the coming year, they complete unfinished business, purify any unhappy memories, clear out what we've outgrown, pass along what is no longer needed and make space for what is meaningful to us, now. On the 29th day of the last month in the old year (western calendar), this year being the 20th February, there is a festival called *Gutor*, in which everyone whitewashes and cleans their houses. On the last day of the year, monasteries are cleaned and elaborately decorated. In homes cakes, candies, breads, fruits and drink are offered on family alters. As with all New Year celebrations around the world there is much revelry, but it is also a time to visit stupas and monasteries to offer prayers and to pay respect to the Budhhas and the ordained sangha. This is carried out also in the month following.

Left and below left are images from the light offerings being made at the Drogmi Buddhist Institute at the centre in Ashfield.

A group of DBI members and friends gathered for Losar at the DBI centre in Ashfield. We practiced White Tara Puja together and made light offerings and offered prayers in practicing to the happiness of all beings. We made specific dedication to all the monks, nuns and lay practitioners in Tibet who are experiencing great sufferings and persecutions at this time and that the Dharma teachings continue to prevail.

It was wonderful to share this night with sangha, a very positive start to the Year of the Water Dragon.



Introduction to Buddhism Course
facilitated by Hollie

As we approach our fourth and sadly, our final week of the 'Introduction to Meditation Course' being held at DBI Ashfield, I would like to write a few lines describing our shared experience, by way of thanking our instructor Hollie Driscoll, as well as everyone else who has participated. The course is offered "to people of all levels of experience in meditation" and that is exactly what we have had, with people from many walks of life coming together to learn and to share. In Hollie we have a warm, open, knowledgeable and humble guide, she creates the sort of welcoming and comfortable atmosphere that facilitates non-judgemental and honest exchange of our ideas and hopes. The evenings have been a mixture of yoga and Dharma: we have been looking at the *Four Common Foundations* and we are also learning and practising yoga poses that calm our minds and relax our bodies, allowing us to develop the correct sitting posture for meditation and to maintain it comfortably. As Robert wrote in the last newsletter, quoting Khenpo-la, "Always enjoy yourself. A joyful path leads you to joyful place". The last three Thursday evenings have been enjoyable and enriching, thank you all.

Mary-Ann

Original vegetarian recipes requested for DBI cookbook



One of Drogmi Buddhist Institutes members, Magda has suggested and generously offered on behalf of DBI to collate a number of original vegetarian recipes and look at publishing a cookbook. All proceeds would go to the centre. We are looking for **original** recipes that you may have that would be suitable for this book. We are looking for recipes that are vegetarian and healthy. We could even look at recipes without onion and garlic for those in retreat!

Could you please forward what you have to Magda at m_orchid@papermagnolia.com

Magda will be driving this for the committee so if you have any questions feel free to contact her. If you know of anyone else who would like to contribute please forward Magda's email to them... m_orchid@papermagnolia.com **Many thanks.**

