



Tashi Choling Dharma Foundation Inc. Newsletter Spring 2011

ZASEP TULKU RINPOCHE



Tashi Choling Dharma Foundation has a long-standing relationship with the Venerable Zasep Tulku Rinpoche, a meditation master of the Gelugpa Tradition of Tibetan Buddhism. Rinpoche received his training under some of the most competent Buddhist masters in Tibet prior to the Chinese invasion of that country. Later on in India he graduated from Varanasi Sanskrit University with an Acharya degree and spent 18 months in Thailand at the request of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. He first came to Australia in 1977 and taught for three years before leaving for Canada. He has established Buddhist centres and taught throughout North America. Rinpoche has also been the Spiritual Director of Dorje Ling Retreat Centre (formerly Illusion Farm) in Tasmania for many years. He is recognized as the 13th incarnation of the great Kagyu teacher Lama Chabdak who lived in the Kham region of Eastern Tibet and founded Zuru Gompa 600 years ago. Rinpoche is known for his gentle compassion and good humoured wisdom.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The temple bell stops

But the sound keeps coming out

Of the flowers (my favourite Basho haiku)

Spring in cool temperate climates has to be about the best there is, suddenly fruit trees are blossoming, bulbs whose whereabouts were forgotten make their appearance – oh there you are! new spring shoots fill the world with a green like no other, bees are everywhere, and bird friends who have the good fortune to move to warmer climates in winter (like some Tasmanians I know) signal their return with distinctive voice - where I live the Pallid Cuckoo is back, as are the tiny red necked stints, and honey eaters everywhere, each aspect a call to appreciative presence and joy, dispelling winter gloom.

The TCDF has been in quiet winter mode with not a lot of activity to report on this time, though the Tuesday and Wednesday night programs have continued all along, providing delightful dharma sharing on even the coldest winter night. Thanks to all those who lead these evenings, keeping the constancy of Tashi Choling alive.

We recently hosted a flying visit by Tarchin Hearn, who squeezed in three nights teaching in Hobart between mainland commitments. These teachings were really well-attended, with a call to all there to use that short opportunity to quickly dive deep into the heart of dharma. Tarchin provided us with five themes for contemplation (which I will try and summarise here):

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Floor 2, 71 Liverpool St, Hobart. All welcome. See inside for further details.



QR
CODE
for
mobile
devices

Causality – that everything and everyone comes into being due to myriad causes and conditions, and that every action affects everything else

Interbeing – Each of us is an interbeing of many dimensions. We are each moved by those who inspire us. We are each an expression of our long genetic and historical inheritances. We are each completely interdependent with the entire ecosystem and with everything which is a part of that.

Individual Activity – Every action of body, communication and mind is a seed for a future result.

Mind and Knowing – Everything that I experience arises in my own knowing. And everyone else is bringing forth a vast world arising in their unique knowing. All the universes of knowing affect and shape each other.

A Matrix of Knowing and Understanding – we relate differently when we see each being as a vast miracle – the question of wholesome relationship involves not only how to not harm others but also how to support each other as well.

Mmmm..... each one of those is vast and full of implication. Somehow these contemplations seem rather more than optional as we all try to live skilfully in these often difficult times.

The TCDF will be holding its annual working bee at Dorje Ling on the long weekend (Show day and the weekend that follows – 20 to 23 October). Please come and join us, it is always a really wonderful time for hanging out with sangha in a beautiful place and doing things which contribute to the ongoing capacity of that place to support people (you and me) in their process of awakening.

We are hoping that Leander Kane will return to do a retreat possibly in November. For other retreats and courses, watch this space.

Best wishes to you all
Sue Willey



TASHI CHOLING MONTHLY PROGRAM

Tuesday evenings, 7.30-8.45 pm Suggested donation: \$5

SEPTEMBER weeks 2 & 3: TBA. Week 4: Tarchin Hearn (see page 4).

OCTOBER: A resonance of emptiness, [sunyata] led by Tony Dix

NOVEMBER: Development of Compassion led by Charles Chadwick

DECEMBER: Individual sessions led by various leaders

Wednesday evenings, 6:30-7:45 pm : Introduction to Meditation Suggested donation: \$5

An opportunity to investigate and practice simple meditation led by experienced practitioners. Learn a way of finding some peace and centredness in an often painful and busy life. Join us for a regular weekly practice to develop awareness and stability in your daily life. This class is open to anyone at any time. You do not need previous experience in meditation to attend, just curiosity and an open mind.

Introduction to Meditation – These regular courses extend over several weeks, and are intended to provide participants with an introduction to the Buddhist view, with the main emphasis on being able to try out a range of meditations, and having the opportunity to engage in lively discussion. Four or five of us participate as leaders, with each person taking it in turns to lead one evening, but with all of us participating in the discussion and questioning that follows. More details on times and bookings are through **Adult Education**. The funds raised from this course will be put towards the ongoing improvements at Dorje Ling.

Buddhism for Mothers – An opportunity to take some respite from the challenging path of motherhood. Includes Buddhist meditation practices and teachings to enable us to remain peaceful and kind to ourselves and others. Allowing us to cope with the day to day challenges of motherhood with a good heart. These courses are run from time to time through **Adult Education**. Please contact them for bookings. The funds raised from this course will be put towards the ongoing improvements at Dorje Ling. For more details contact Madhu on 0407369012 or madhulilley@gmail.com

Location – All sessions (except Adult Education sessions) are held at the Tashi Choling rooms, Floor 2, 71 Liverpool St, Hobart. Go down the laneway to the right of the building, then look for the door between the two bamboo pots. Continue upstairs to the second floor. All welcome.

TSOG – Upcoming dates based on dark moon being day 1, Australian calendar: **October: Thurs 6, Fri 21. November: Sat 5, Sun 20. December: Sun 4, Mon 19. January: Tues 3, Wed 18.**

STOP PRESS: Venerable Zasep Tulku Rinpoche will offer Yamantaka Initiations, Commentary on the Teachings, Instruction in the Practice, & Guided Fulfillment Retreat with Fire Puja. To be held at the warm invitation of Paddy Cleanthous to all Rinpoche's students at Vajrabhairava Gompa – Darwin, Australia, April 7th – 30th, 2012. Contact Paddy at: release@exemail.com.au

MOVIE FUNDRAISER

Thanks so much for to all who supported the Dorje Ling Movie Fundraiser "Buddha's Lost Children." The movie raised \$1210.70 for Dorje Ling projects.

I understand that there may have been mixed responses to the movie. Many were moved to tears, and felt the harshness in the "tough love" approach of Phad Kru Bha. Whatever we experienced, it's like life anywhere depending on our view . We may see it from a dualistic view of good and bad, shoulds & shouldn'ts, we can consider cultural differences and all the imperfections of samara. Life isn't always nice. The first noble truth.

For me Phad Kru Bha was an inspiration. A monk, a man, a human with vulnerabilities, strengths, gentleness and harshness. Yes, imperfections just like all of us. But he was one man, making so much difference to so many lives. An inspiration to what one person can achieve.

Madhu Lilley

REVIEWS ...

"It was a great film. I was amazed that instead of shooting the horse that almost got strangled in the night, they saved it even though it made them late. The whole film was really impressive and very interesting. The boys were treated very well, even though it was strict. The children themselves were incredible; it would be a new experience to be one of them, but I wouldn't favour it to my life here. Our cultures are different, and I learnt that people there are kinder to animals and have a better view about life than Western people in general. I was awestruck by the whole thing."

Ben Smith Noble Age 10

"I think the film was fantastic because it is about my home country. The lady reminded me of my carer in Thailand. It was funny when the little boy tried to climb on the dog"

Sanchanon Hesketh 9 years old.

"I liked the film because it was set in Thailand. It was interesting how they built the monastery with the local Thai people"

Thanachot Hesketh 12 years old.

GYUTO MONKS



The Gyuto Monks visited Mawson Pavilion Hobart recently for another packed program, including the wonderful Sand Mandala (this time of Buddha Amitayus), a retreat, and many teachings and meditations.

Gen Lama was unable to come due to illness, however his teaching spot was filled ably by Sonam, and by the monks who shared their Tibetan Tips for Living.

Thanks to Pamela Mears and the local team for their efforts in bringing these amazing monks to visit us regularly, and for keeping us all well supplied with chai and other goodies.



VAJRA YOGINI RETREAT

7-day retreat in January 2012 at Dorje Ling.

Date – Saturday 21st till Sunday 29th January.

The retreat starts on Saturday morning.

Please arrive on Friday 20th afternoon or evening if possible.

More details available closer to the time.

For more information or to register please contact

Madhu Lilley on 0407369012 or madhulilley@gmail.com.

CREATING SACRED SPACE: THE WHITTLE WARD GETS A ZEN GARDEN

The Whittle Palliative Care Unit is better known in Tasmania as the Whittle Ward. Originally it was part of the Repatriation Hospital complex in Davey Street, Hobart and was named in memory of John Woods Whittle (3 August 1882 – 2 March 1946), a Tasmanian soldier in both the Boer War and World War One. He distinguished himself in World War One by winning the Victoria Cross in 1917. It is now part of the Royal Hobart Hospital and is the major palliative care facility in this state. Sometimes it seems that, in Tasmania, all roads lead to the Whittle Ward. Many people I meet in my daily life, when they hear that I have either the role of chaplain or hospice volunteer, tell me of some friend or close relative who has died in the Whittle Ward.

Although it is a relatively small facility containing ten beds, it has a good reputation in Tasmania for the support it offers to people at the end of their lives. The support may be in the form of being cared for in the last hours, days or weeks of life, the opportunity to adjust medication for the management of pain in the lives of people who are terminally ill or it may provide a carer with periodic respite. It is rare for a patient to remain in the Whittle Ward over a long period of time although that can also happen if the staff decides that the patient's situation warrants it.

The Whittle Ward offers a high level of medical expertise and nursing care. It also offers a range of allied health services including social workers, a music therapist, physiotherapy, hospice volunteers and chaplaincy. While the unit experiences times of real busyness and even crisis, the usual pattern is of efficient order, a deep caring and prompt, thoughtful responses to patient need. Its work is based on an interdisciplinary model mediated by a weekly interdisciplinary meeting.

In June 2010 I arrived in Hobart to commence a Ph D and to continue my training towards supervision in Clinical Pastoral Education. It had been suggested to me in 2007 when I first visited Hobart with an eye to coming here that I might like to work within the Whittle Palliative Care Unit. This appealed to me instantly because I had had the experience of caring for my ageing mother who had had Alzheimer's disease. On August 27th, 2006 my mother died in my arms. I discovered in that experience a desire to be present to death more and more in the hope of making friends with it and because I felt within myself a capacity to be helpful to the one who is dying. I waited, however, until my grief had eased somewhat and I could approach a dying person without the intrusion of my own painful emotions.

I went to the Whittle Ward for a morning orientation with my CPE supervisor. I was shown around the hospice by the nurse unit manager, eventually meeting Professor Michael Ashby, the clinical director of palliative care services within the Department of Health and Human Services in Tasmania. We had a brief



conversation during which he raised the idea of a Zen garden and its potential benefits to patients, staff and visitors to the unit. I filed the idea away until the following Sunday when the Mountains and Rivers Zen group met for its fortnightly meditation meeting. After our meditation sitting, during the time for announcements, I proposed to those interested that we might like to offer as a group some community service in the form of building

a Zen garden at the Whittle Ward. There was an immediate enthusiasm for the idea.

Over the following weeks a number of people in the group came forward, taking the lead in thinking through and undertaking the task. There was an offer of larger lichen covered rocks, a donation of fifty dollars was made and someone undertook to design the garden. I took the responsibility of liaising with the Whittle Ward where the offer of a Zen garden was accepted enthusiastically by the Nurse Unit Manager and other staff. The location was decided upon and so the process began.

Time passed, the question of where we are up to was asked occasionally and patience set in. The person who originally offered to design the garden found that the task was beyond his capability, so another member of the group suggested an artistic designer who would be prepared to offer her services pro bono. In the meantime the family of a Whittle Ward nurse who had died in tragic circumstances offered a large sum of money to the project in her memory. Further I conducted two funerals and the fees from them were also directed towards the project.

Time passed, the question of where we are up to was asked occasionally and patience began to bear fruit. The artistic designer was unable to continue with the project so a landscape designer with an interest in Zen gardens was suggested as someone who could help with the project. He was contacted. He proposed a design and this was shared with staff, patients, the Zen group and Hospice Volunteers. A meeting was held between the designer, the Whittle Ward, the Zen group, the coordinator of Hospice Volunteers and a donor. We had lift off. Volunteers were contacted for help with labouring, local businesses were contacted for help with donations of raw materials and plants, Zen practitioners went off to the country to collect large rocks and the Landscape Designer told us that to give his skills

and time freely for this project was an honour. The ground work was done and the space was prepared. The patient in the room next to the Zen garden-to-be decided to live until the garden was at least begun while her husband offered his help on the day that the garden was put together.

The big day arrived, we all gathered to do the work of establishing the Zen garden and the patient was herself the official photographer on the day. In the week before the garden was actually finished she went home – discharged from the Whittle Ward but she returned the following Saturday morning for the blessing and dedication of the garden, adding her own blessing:

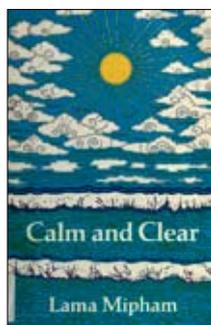
“May life’s journey be contemplated and reflected upon within the tranquillity created by this Zen Garden. May emotions be freely expressed here, senses heightened and love present. May our hearts and minds be open until life’s end. May we live our lives akin to a Zen Garden, constantly sculpting, maintaining and enhancing the overall experience.”

About thirty people attended the blessing and dedication including doctors and donors, nurses and volunteers, Zen practitioners, friends and relatives and a representative of Spiritual Care Australia – Tasmania. We had a lovely time together with most people experiencing Buddhist chanting and liturgy for the first time. The weather was perfect and the morning reached a crescendo with the consumption of two strawberry covered chocolate truffle cakes.

It is my view that this Zen garden was a miracle in the best sense, a marvellous icon of Zen practice. It resulted from the coordinated work of many people from its conception right through. The process required great patience and constant letting go of expectations. Work was done quietly and lovingly. One patient remarked to me that the Zen garden, given as an expression of the goodness of human hearts cooperating, was a true blessing. And on the day, people who had not expected to be so deeply touched by such simple things as water sculpture, lichen on rocks, Tasmanian grasses and Buddhist ritual spoke freely of their experience. Further to this miracle was that it took exactly a year from its conception to its realisation while the whole thing was organised and realised on the basis of volunteer materials and labour.

And so the Whittle Ward has a small patch of sacred space where people might find peace and tranquillity, where they might return to the best in themselves finding the courage to embrace and learn from the challenges accompanying the end of life.

Thích Thông Pháp



BOOK REVIEW: “CALM AND CLEAR” BY TARTHANG TULKU

Zasep Rinpoche once told a group of students at Bream Creek that what we needed to do was to:- “Simplify, practice and teach.” One of my ways of still trying to simplify is to reduce the number of papers and books I have collected over the years.

With Dharma books this can be quite difficult and challenging but I would like to get down to 10 of the most precious books (to me), those which resonate with my life and practice.

One of the books I have kept and used is a book titled “Calm and Clear” by Tarthang Tulku. Published (my copy) in 1973 this book has been with me for at least 30 years and by the state it is in has been well used.

Based on a text by Lama Mipham this small book outlines and encapsulates the path in a comprehensive and enjoyable way.

With a simple definition and guidelines of a three month retreat the book also shines light on the pitfalls and obstacles to meditation practice. Though some people may find the text somewhat intellectual compared to the more modern texts, the book lightens the load with gentle encouragement, insight and pertinent understatement.

Referring to the study of consciousness the text suggests “This examination resulting in the extinction of the belief that reality is anything but a complex process of interacting elements destroys the inclination to grasp at any part of an object, hoping thereby to attain the elixir of life. It permits the mind to relax in tensionless enjoyment”! Lovely stuff!

A piece of the book which always makes me laugh is the description of lust (not sensuality or sexuality) as “The honey coated razorblade, that man (sic) in his ignorance licks”. This reminds me of Shakespeare’s sonnet Lust “ The expense of spirit in a waste of shame is lust in action”. Ha!

The book warns too of the emotional dangers of discovering “with growing certainty of ones selflessness, afraid of the void which one faces, many defences against final acceptance of reality will arise” Ha Ha Ha Ho!

With a cover illustrating a beautiful sun in a blue and cloudy heaven this book is a good companion. While encouraging finding a good teacher. The book encourages us to get there! Here!

The introduction to the second part of the book suggests “A peaceful and clear mind is the point of departure into the rarefied space of compassion which is the ultimate aspiration of the Bodhisattva”.

The book has fallen apart over the years as I can open it anywhere and smile at its directness and simple description of the path.

Tony Dix

FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO ATTEND COURSES AND RETREATS

While we always try to keep our costs for activities as low as possible, covering costs and generating some funds to support future activities, there are still occasions when cost prevents someone from attending a retreat. To assist people to benefit from teachings and retreats on offer, we are setting up two separate funds, based on the Wangapeka Retreat centre model, as follows:

Sangha Support

The Sangha Support Fund will be available for anyone needing financial assistance in attending courses and retreats at Dorje Ling.

Applications for Sangha Support

If you are keen to participate in a course or retreat, but have limited funds, we urge you firstly to be creative in finding other avenues of support for yourself. It is amazing what support can appear if you are truly committed in your desire to attend a retreat. It is also important to make personal effort to generate the funds where at all possible. Sangha Support will help with accommodation costs only, not food costs.

If you need to apply for Sangha Support to support your retreat, you should do so in writing to TCDF Committee, PO Box 593, North Hobart 7002, at least four weeks prior to the course you wish to attend. You may also email this to committee@tashicholing.net

Please state your situation, and how much you are able to contribute yourself, either before or after the retreat.

Scholarship Fund

The Scholarship fund is a limited amount of money that will be made available to help people who need more support than is possible through Sangha Support. This fund will cover both accommodation and food costs. Applicants for a scholarship need to be people who already have a past history of involvement with Tashi Choling and Dorje Ling and have shown themselves to be dedicated practitioners who are profoundly committed to the dharma for the benefit of both themselves and all beings.

Applications for Scholarship Support

Applicants should apply in writing to TCDF Committee, PO Box 593, North Hobart 7002 at least four weeks prior to the course you wish to attend. You may also email this to committee@tashicholing.net. Please state your situation and

how much you are able to contribute yourself.

Both Sangha Support and Scholarship funds will only be available to the extent that others have made donations specifically for that purpose. If we have had no donations for these funds, we will not be able to provide support to those who request it.

Requests for financial support made at the time of arriving at the actual course or retreat will not be considered. If you wish to have support you will need to be organised about requesting it beforehand.

Please Consider Donating to Support Others

Any donation you can make, no matter how small, dedicated to supporting others, through these funds, to participate in dharma courses and retreats, will of course bring manifold benefit for all. If you would like to contribute in this way, you can do so by making regular contributions (bank details can be found on our website (www.tashicholing.net – go to the Contacts tab and look under Membership – please mark your contribution with your name and sangha support or scholarship), or by simply paying an amount additional to your retreat or course fees. Our registration forms will from now on have a space for you to indicate how much you would like to contribute to the support of others.

Many thanks and warm wishes
Sue Willey

ONLINE SURVEY

Please fill in our online survey! It will help us to plan for the future, and will give you an opportunity to share your thoughts. You can find the online survey at: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/DRT9XLT>. We have nearly 40 filled in already, and every new one helps. Thanks from your committee!

MEMBERSHIP

Please consider becoming a member of Tashi Choling Dharma Foundation. You will receive the knowledge that you are supporting the Dharma in Tasmania, plus free access to our Dharma library, and discounts at retreats. A membership form is included in this issue.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The next TCDF AGM will be held on Tues December 13 at 7.30 pm at the TCDF meditation centre. Please consider joining our active inspiring compassionate hardworking committee. We would like an indication of who would be willing before the day as much as possible.



Even if you don't want to be on our committee please still come to our AGM. We won't rope you in unless you really want to be a part of our team!

REFLECTIONS OF A SOLO RETREATANT

Almost a year of planning and finally the date arrived for my 9 day retreat at Dorje Ling. After a beautiful drive I was comfortably housed in the recently renovated "Beyond". I chose Beyond because it was small and cosy and I hoped it would be more exposed to sun. It was and I have wonderful memories of sitting in a camp chair with tea, reading Pema Chodron, Vajra Yogini texts and enjoying the wildlife and nature.

Jack & Evelin the Caretakers did just that. They took so much care. From the kind considered emails and arranging local produce to their willingness to change their day to day life, to keep a low profile and not use noisy tools all helped to make my experience all the more reflective. Thanks Jack & Evelin.

It took a couple of days to stop being drawn to my mobile phone and all it represents that was sitting in my car.

My decided daily routine was both disciplined and reflective. I would do meditation before breakfast and I noticed an ease with being able to lengthen this sit after a couple of days. After breakfast I studied Vajrayogini texts followed by prostrations in the Gompa and Yoga on the Gompa deck before lunch. Amazingly the sun always came out for Yoga on the Gompa deck. It was so lovely. After lunch I did Walking Meditation and a more strenuous walk if I was up to it or an afternoon nap. Before dinner I did Mahmudra meditation and after dinner more Vajrayogini meditation. I also did 3 days of silence, which was challenging as it really turned up the mind chatter.

Each day would bring subtle changes in the external environment, which was so beautiful, supportive, reflective and restorative. My inner environment was quite noisy initially and at times the machinations of my mind made me feel somewhat crazy in the stillness of the place. It was such an opportunity to experience myself in an expansive way and to remember and truly know I am not my thought and feelings and to be in touch with the spaciousness that exists along side those aspects which we so often identify as who we are. To experience the non-dual reality of "isness" even if for fleeting moments was such a delight.

I can highly recommend taking advantage of the wonderful pristine environment and facilities at Dorje Ling. I hope to make my solo retreats there a bi-annual event. "Karma willing", of course. I can set the intention though and take the steps.

It's available to all. What a blessing.

Thankyou Tashi Choling Committee and Community for continuing to support and maintain this wonderful place. I will definitely be back.

Madhu Lilley



DHARMA YATRA-NIGHTCAP NATIONAL PARK NSW

Imagine walking silently through beautiful forest for 8 days, arriving at the night's camp to freshly brewed tea followed by a delicious dinner, and completing the day with meditation and a dharma talk by fire light. This is the experience of the dharma yatra.

The ancient tradition of the dharma yatra has been run by Buddhists in Northern N.S.W. over the past 6 years. From September 17th-24th 2011, 35 of us, ranging in age from 16 to 65, gathered at Cloud Mountain Homeland, near Uki, nestled on beneath the cliffs of Mt Jerusalem. Our walking route travelled on small tracks and old fire trails through Rumney Park, Minyon Falls, Protestors Falls (near the Channon), through Dharmananda Community to the Forest Meditation Centre and back through the Nightcap Ranges to Cloud Mountain Homeland. Days began with yoga at 6am and meditation at 7am, followed by breakfast and packing up camp. Walking began at 9am and finished around 4pm at the next campsite, after covering 15-18kms. All walking was in silence and although talking was allowed at lunch stops, a stillness often permeated the group and the few quiet gentle voices blended in with the landscape.

By evening we became a chatty bunch and a celebration of arriving was shared as we pitched tents. Our conversation allowed for rich informal discussions of our life experiences, challenges and learnings.

Although some walking days included challenging uphill stretches there were ample rest spots and some swimming holes to welcome us. A few participants with sprained ankles or sore hips travelled for a day in the support vehicle, which would reunite with us late afternoon carrying our heavy packs and tents, which allowed the luxury of only a day pack to be carried during the walking.

Yoga classes were led by Ronny Hickel and Dharma talks were given by Buddhist teachers Victor von der Heyde and Carol Perry. On the 6th day we stayed for 2 nights at the Forest Meditation Centre and followed a 1 day and night traditional retreat schedule including 8 sitting sessions, 2 dharma talks and observing full silence. I loved being back in the "meditation hall without walls" and feeling supported by the forest, which had grown taller and grander since my first retreat there 17 years ago.

Another highlight for many of us was dusk at Protestors Falls: hundreds and hundreds of brilliant blue tiny lights (glow worms) lit up an embankment across the river and reflected in a still pool before us. We stood silently mesmerised, as if looking into a sea of stars, an experience I will never forget.

Ronny Hinkel, the main organiser of the Yatra, is travelling to Tasmania in January 2012 to scope out the possibility of a Dharma Yatra on this fair isle. If you have any ideas please let me know, and I will pass them on. Dharma Yatras are currently run 3 times a year and include a South Coast N.S.W. journey- next one April 2012 and a Men's Yatra. Moreton Island is the proposed location for September 2012. All are run on a non-profit basis, with Dana offered for teachers. (cost is approx. \$400 for 8 days). See www.yatra.org.au or www.dharma.org.au for photos and more information.

Nitya Ellemor-Rolfe

TARCHIN HEARN'S RECENT VISIT

"This is a record visit!", exclaimed Tarchin, meaning this was his shortest stay in Tasmania since he began his teaching visits circa 1997. This visit was the first leg of an Australian journey that will take Tarchin and Mary to Alice Springs, the Simpson Desert, teachings in Melbourne and Shoreham, Victoria, Perth and Balingup, Western Australia.



For Tarchin to be here, for all of Tarchin to be here, before he began this series of three evening classes at Weeroona Yoga Studio, North Hobart, it was essential to walk in the bush. It was essential to feel the ground, to see the trees, the bushes, to hear the bird life, the sound of mountain streams ... and to smell, to smell smells that evoked memory of being here ... before. Experiencing the living matrix of being in this place with all its myriad life forms resting in their own place.

The classes were well attended, particularly the first evening, and I trust those present were able to receive great benefit from these classes, even if only a seed, or seeds, were planted.

Personally, I find the teachings challenging, or, perhaps, more to the point, I find myself challenged by Life - and what do I do, in the midst of moments of self-doubt and anxiety, to respond in a way that is life enhancing for other as well as for myself? What do I do now?

Some lines we chant in the Zen group, from Joko Beck's Practice Principles, that point to a way of practice, of relaxing into each moment, as it is, are,

"... Life as it is, the only teacher,
being just this moment, compassions way."

On the first night Tarchin presented to us The View: radical wholeness, being rooted in wholeness, fully enlivened. In the next breath, in a humourous vein, he mentioned radishes. I thought about radishes a little over the next few days. They germinate fairly quickly and when sown with carrot seed the radish shoots come through first, breaking open the ground, preparing the way for that which follows.

Then, The Meditation: a series of five themes to contemplate, a series of templates to work with, to help take us towards an understanding of The View. These five themes are, Causality, Interbeing, Individual Activity, Mind and Knowing, and A Matrix of Knowing and Understanding.

And last, The Action: I've forgotten what Tarchin said on this but could it be something like this? To carry radical wholeness forth, embedded in our own bodies, our own lives, living to carry this forth into the living worlds, to be who we are, deeply rooted in our own goodness, holding to our true selves, bathed in beauty, supporting and being supported by sentient and non-sentient beings.

On the afternoon before the second class a number of us gathered to view "Monte Grande", a DVD on the life and the work of Francisco Varela, a Chilean neurobiologist. Franz Reichle, the film maker, states on his website that Varela devoted his life to the question, "how is it possible for body and mind to exist as an integrated whole?" Tarchin frequently refers to the work of Varela in his teachings. An interesting and wonderful DVD, containing many interviews with eminent worthies, including HH the Dalai Lama, interspliced with footage of Varela's life, and worth viewing.

Ross Coward

From Tarchin:

Intuitive Understanding:

"In the natural flow of pristine simplicity,
in faith and trust and wonderment, we
give ourselves to this suchness;
this seamless mystery of living and
dying.

Spacious, loving, with feet solid in the
earth,
we nurture the hints of blessedness;
the myriad faces of god.

Moving in this flow of compassion and
deepening enquiry;
we engage with all beings in ways that
support the integrity,
the stability and the beauty of the
entire biotic community."

Essential Practice:

"Within the flow of whatever is
occurring, cultivate a continuity of
profoundly nourishing ease, suffused
with serene alertness and vivid
discernment.
Whether sitting, standing, lying down
or walking,
let everything relax in its own place."

TARCHIN'S BOOKS

Tarchin has just visited us and there are many books written by him to help you continue to explore his teaching. Sale of the books supports continuing publication.

'Natural Awakening' \$20

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Margaret Steadman holds the bookshop in a box under her spare bed so if you want a book email her steadmanma@gmail.com or phone 0427 355 951.