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Tuyết Sơn Thiền Tự
Mt Adams Zen Buddhist Temple
雪山禪寺

May 2016 Newsletter



THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU

So many people have added time and efforts to make our temple a success. We want to acknowledge 2 individuals who have helped us with so many things:

Jefferson James who has been our website manager, design manager, and help with all things printed for many many years.

Our new website consultant who is attempting to teach Kozen some Word Press so that he can run a website, is Scott See who has a business in web development but is volunteering his energy to help the temple. You can learn more about his company at www.Hammock.net. Our new website will be up and running by 15 May.

Thank you to both men for supporting the Buddha's Dharma.

Sa Di Minh Thien ("Thay Z")'s monthly column



Since the beginning of 2016, it seems like the media has been reporting more and more about famous people who have died; the passing of David Bowie and Prince are the most recent announcements. I too recently experienced deaths, both personally as well as among many of my friends and acquaintances. I also seem to have a heightened sensitivity to Death as I journey through the end of my six decades of this life.

In Western cultures, it seems Death is a demarcation between the material world of the living and the unknown state associated with whatever occurs after death. This lack of clear understanding about what occurs before, during and after death leads to a great deal of avoidance, denial and unnecessary fear. After my six decades of Christian teachings regarding death, I recognize this fear and uncertainty around this subject. Some call this suffering and certainly that is how I now identify it through the teachings of the Buddha. I abandoned the Christian teachings about the "after life", and I substituted a much more cavalier attitude about Death. It was more akin to what an agnostic or atheist might espouse like, ...it's just part of life and all will experience it at some point... so why worry about it now.

As my Buddhist practice strengthened however, I replaced that attitude with the intention to be more mindful in all ways and to develop a focused awareness in seeing things just as they are. This awareness offers huge benefits for living through releasing fears as well as the associated attachments that creates suffering. This fuller awareness aids us in becoming more compassionate and loving, puts us in touch with a deeper understanding of what is and moves us to be more responsible for our actions. And in actuality, an awareness of Death can bring about a much greater appreciation for Life.

For me, the practice of mindfulness and being as aware as I can be, reduces the fear about whatever cannot be known at this time, and in turn, reduces the suffering associated with that fear.

Fear and anxieties take time away from my practice and this chosen life of learning to better follow the teachings of the Buddha. The old fears about what occurs when the transition from this life actually happens begins to lessen, opening the heart and mind to consider that living right here, right now and making better choices than I did before, reduces suffering.

There are still times when I suffer because I recognize the impermanence of time. I think about the time I wasted, both past and present. I have progressed far enough in my practice to understand that I can do nothing about what is past. Through meditation, I am learning that wasting time becomes less likely when you are aware and living mindfully. I read that in Zen monasteries you can often see an old Chinese poem, written on the *han*, which is a wooden board that is hit to call people to meditation, meals, etc. It goes like this:

***Great is the matter of life and death
Moments go by swiftly and are lost
To squander time is a great shame
Do not waste your life***

Last month, during a retreat, I was reintroduced to a wonderful quote attributed to Dogen Zenji. I think it's a wonderful way to close my thoughts this month and share it with you all. May all be well, happy, know love and peace.

***"Let me respectfully remind you:
Life and Death are of supreme importance
Time passes swiftly, and opportunity is lost;
Each of us should strive to awaken.
Awaken!"***

Namo tassa bhagavato arahato samma sambuddhassa

The first of several thank you letters from Washington State Prisons for Buddhist books.



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
OFFICE OF CORRECTIONAL OPERATIONS
LARCH CORRECTIONS CENTER
15314 N.E. Dole Valley Road • Yacolt, WA 98675-9531

Thank you

4-4-16

Thank you for your donation to our facility
all donations are greatly appreciated and put to
very good use by the men here at this facility.
Once again thank you and we look forward
to any future support.
May the Creator Bless you.

Gratefully;

Chaplain Zilvinas Jakstas

DOC / Larch Corrections Center
15314 NE Dole Valley Rd.
Yacolt, WA 98675-9531
Phone: (360) 260-6300 Ext. 361
Email: zjakstas@doc1.wa.gov

**"The whole purpose of religion is to facilitate love and compassion, patience,
tolerance, humility, and forgiveness."**



"Working Together for SAFE Communities"



Every two years our temple collects Buddhist books from as many sources as possible and distributes them to the prisons in Arizona, Washington, and Oregon. Thank you to all who donated to make the distribution of Buddha's Dharma possible.

The White Salmon Methodist Church Quilters



The White Salmon Methodist Church as been know as a community service church. They have programs to help those in need regardless of the individual's religious preference. They arrived in April to bring Thay Kozen a beautiful handmade quilt to wish him a speedy recovery from his assault.

As we step outside of our own comfort zone we can experience love and kindness for all beings. These Methodist folks demonstrate the very real loving kindness of their faith.

Meditation and Metta Practice in Vancouver WA



The first Sunday of the month at 3pm
at **Buu Hung Monastery**
17808 NE 18th St. Vancouver WA 98684

Join us for:
Sitting meditation
Walking meditation
Dharma talks
Fellowship
Tea and refreshments afterwards



Meditation & Metta (loving kindness)

Mondays 12 noon - 1 pm

**Trinity Natural Medicine Body Arts Studio 1808 Belmont Ave. Hood River OR 97031
Meditation and Metta led by Reverend Kozen Sampson of Mt. Adams Zen Center**

Physical Benefits of Meditation:

Lowers high blood pressure, lowers levels of blood lactate, reduces anxiety, decreases tension-related pain (such as tension headaches, ulcers, insomnia, and muscle and joint problems), increases serotonin production to improve mood and behavior, improves immune system functioning, boosts energy

Mental Benefits of Meditation:

Decreases anxiety, improves emotional stability, increases creativity, increases happiness, and develops intuition, clarity and peace of mind.

(503) 358-1949 or sweetem@gmail.com for details

Public use of The Abbey

Our Labyrinth is used by people of many faiths. In this photo a Buddhist walking meditation is being done as part of our morning service. We're all bundled up as it has been chilly in the mornings. Please feel free to stop by and walk the labyrinth whenever you can - it is a most wonderful practice.



NCNM (The National College of Natural Medicine) holds a class in the grass on a warm Spring day



**The Abbey is available for groups to rent out for retreats.
Please think about having your next retreat here.**

Just Being Exposed To Buddhist Ideas May Make You Feel More Compassionate, Study Finds

(from http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2015/04/08/buddhism-compassion_n_7011576.html)

Buddhists are known for promoting a philosophy of nonviolence, compassion and the interconnection of all beings. According to provocative [new research](#), simply being exposed to Buddhist terminology may be enough to activate tolerance and compassion among both Buddhists and non-Buddhists.

Researchers from Stanford University, along with scientists from Belgium and Taiwan, found that exposing people of different spiritual backgrounds to Buddhist concepts was effective in not only undercutting prejudice but also in promoting pro-sociality, which includes having a sense of responsibility for others, feelings of compassion and empathy.

The study, which was [published in the April issue](#) of the journal Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, illustrates a phenomenon known as priming. Priming occurs when people are exposed to certain words or images (in this case, Buddhist words) that then subconsciously influence their thinking or behavior.

For the experiment, 355 total study participants were divided based on their backgrounds: Western Christians, Westerners who practiced Buddhism and Taiwanese with a Buddhist/Taoist background. These three groups were broken down even further, with some participants being primed with religious words and others being exposed to nonreligious, yet still positive, words (e.g., "flower," "sun," "freedom"). After this priming, participants took tests designed to reveal any prejudices they may have against different ethnic or religious groups.

Across all groups, people who were exposed to words like "Buddha," "Dharma" and "awakening" in a word puzzle showed fewer negative associations with African and Muslim people than those who were exposed to Christian or nonreligious words.

Participants who were primed with Buddhist words also scored higher on a test measuring pro-social behaviors. These effects were particularly pronounced among people who scored higher on tests measuring open-mindedness. Pro-social behaviors are generally in line with the core values of Buddhism, including tolerance of different ways of thinking, universality and interconnection.

However, the researchers don't mean to suggest that Buddhism is "better" than any other religion. "What we really want to argue is that Buddhist concepts are associated with tolerance, across cultural groups," Magalli Clobert, a post-doctoral student at Stanford and one of the study's authors, told The Huffington Post. "It means that, at least in people's mind, there is a positive vision of Buddhism as a religion of tolerance and compassion."

Breath

Counting the breaths is useful for those who have never worked with the breath much before. Sit down for meditation and fix your attention on the breath at that point where you most easily notice it. Very consciously watch the sequence of in-and-out breaths. Note the breath as it enters, and note the breath as it leaves, watching the movement of the body - the rise and fall of the abdomen. When you have established your awareness of the breath, begin counting each breath. This can be done in several ways. For this exercise count your inhalations as odd numbers and your exhalations as even numbers - go from 1 to 10 then start over. The counting provides a support for the mind; something a little more tangible to hold. If you aren't sure how far you have counted then you know that your mind has wandered; start the counting over again. Meditation is not about getting anything - and particularly, you don't have to get the breath . Just relax - and observe what you are experiencing.

Following the breath is used after the mind has been calmed somewhat by using counting or ongoing practice. When the mind is able to stay with the in-breathing and out-breathing, the counting can be stopped and replaced by just mentally following the course of the breath. Note the beginning of an in-breath -- hold your attention at the belly and observe the progress of the in-breath -- note the end of the in-breath -- notice the space, or pause at the end of the in-breath -- note the beginning of the out-breath. There is no thought involved here it is merely paying attention to the physical phenomenon of breathing - in detail.

Learning to breathe through your belly

Breath in - your belly should expand - you can feel it "push out".



Breath out - your belly should contract - you can feel it "pull in".



Cheraga Kalama Reuter has been selected to receive the 2016 "Inspired Service and Action" award from Gorge Ecumenical Ministries (GEM). Congratulations Kalama, you deserve this award!

We are a small Thien (Zen) Buddhist Temple practicing "laughing farmer zen" - living our practice, sitting zazen, being here - right now!

Are You or your Sanga part of the Northwest Dharma Association?

if not, it is time to join! If you are a solitary practitioner or without a sanga you can still donate dana (money). They are a clearing house for Buddhist Activity in the Northwest and need our support. Read more about the NWDA at <http://www.northwestdharma.org>

Services & Meditation

Morning Meditation
6:30AM
Monday - Friday

Morning Service

10 Facts That Prove Helping Others Is A Key To Achieving Happiness

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2015/03/20/international-day-of-happiness-helping-_n_6905446.html

When you do good for others, the recipients of your kindness aren't the only ones reaping the benefits. There are a ton of perks in it for you, too.

9 AM
Saturday

Evening Meditation

6:30 PM

Friday

Remote Locations

Hood River, OR
Monday at Noon
Trinity Natural Medicine
1808 Belmont Ave., Hood River

Vancouver WA
first Sunday of the month
at 3pm
Buu Hung Monastery
17808 NE 18th St.
Vancouver WA

Calendar

MAY

1 Buu Hung Monastery 3 pm
6-8 Yoga Retreat -
Please Register +

7 Retreat - Buddha's Birthday -
7am - 4 pm Service at 9am -
Please Register +

13-14 Laurie Vab Cott Yoga Retreat -
Private

14 - Kozen at CRCC Retreat, Connell
WA - Prison Buddha Day

20-22 NCNM Retreat Taiji - *Private*

JUNE

1-July 31 Thay Vinh Minh, Thầy
Thích Nhuận Ân, Sư Cô Thích Nữ
Giới Bửu in residence

4-5 Retreat - 2 day - Metta
Please Register +

5 Buu Hung Monastery 3 pm

18 Summer Solstice - *Druid Event*

26-30 Qigong Retreat - Pam Tindall -
Private

This year's International Day of Happiness falls on March 20. To honor the cheery holiday, we've brought you 10 ways helping others can put a smile on your own face. Check them out below, and perhaps you'll feel inspired to go out and lend a helping hand.

Helping Others Will Actually Make You Feel Great

Giving back has an effect on your body. Studies show that when people donated to charity, the mesolimbic system, the portion of the brain responsible for feelings of reward, was triggered. The brain also releases feel-good chemicals and spurs you to perform more kind acts - something psychologists call "helper's high."

Giving Can Give You A Self-Esteem Boost

Heard enough from your inner critic? Consider donating some of your time to a cause you're passionate about. People who volunteer have been found to have higher self-esteem and overall well-being. Experts explain that as feelings of social connectedness increase, so does your self-esteem. The benefits of volunteering also depend on your consistency. So, the more regularly you volunteer, the more confidence you'll be able to cultivate.

You'll Have Stronger Friendships

Being a force for good in a friend's life can help build a lasting bond. When you help others, you give off positive vibes, which can rub off on your peers and improve your friendships, according to a study by the National Institutes of Health. Both parties will contribute to maintaining a mutually beneficial dynamic.

You Become A Glass Half-Full Type Person

Having a positive impact on someone else could help you change your own outlook and attitude. Experts say that performing acts of kindness boosts your mood and ultimately makes you more optimistic and positive.

Helping Others Will Make You Feel Like You Can Take On The World

Helping someone out can leave you feeling rewarded and fulfilled. People who participate in volunteer work feel more empowered than those who do not. According to a survey by the United Health Group, 96 percent of people who volunteered over the last 12 months said volunteering enriches their sense of purpose.

You'll Feel A Sense Of Belonging

Whether with a large group of people in a volunteer organization, or just between two friends exchanging words of advice, helping people creates a feeling of community. "Face-to-face activities such as volunteering at a drop-in center can help reduce loneliness and isolation," according to the Mental Health Foundation.

Giving Will Help You Find Your Inner Peace

If you have a lot that's wearing you down, giving back could help clear your head. In a study by United Health Group, 78 percent of people who volunteered over a 12-month period said they felt that their charitable activities lowered their stress. They were also more calm and peaceful than people who didn't participate in volunteer work.

It Will Make You Feel Thankful

Helping others gives you perspective on your own situation, and teaches you to be appreciative of what you have. The Global One Foundation describes volunteering as a way to "promote a deeper sense of gratitude as we recognize more of what is already a blessing/gift/positive in our life."

It Gives You A Sense Of Renewal

JULY

1-5 Zikr Dances of Universal Peace - Private

3 Buu Hung Monastery 3 pm

7-10 Druid retreat

15 Thich Minh Thien Ordination Please Register +

30 Lughnasadh - Druid Event

**Join Us at
Buu Hung Monastery**
the first Sunday of the month
at 3pm
17808 NE 18th St.
Vancouver WA 98684



Walking meditation



After services tea and social time

Buu Hung Monastery is a lovely temple in Vancouver WA. It is about a 1.5 hour drive from Trout Lake, WA

Join Us Sunday May 1, 2016

Helping others can teach you to help yourself. If you've been through a tough experience or just have a case of the blues, the " activism cure" is a great way get back to feeling like yourself, according to research from the University of Texas. "Volunteer work improves access to social and psychological resources, which are known to counter negative moods," the study read.

Finally, Helping Others Will Spur Others To Pay It Forward And Keep The Cycle Of Happiness Going

Kindness is contagious, according to a study by researchers at University of California, Los Angeles, and University of Cambridge and University of Plymouth in the United Kingdom. "When we see someone else help another person it gives us a good feeling," the study states, "Which in turn causes us to go out and do something altruistic ourselves."

The Buddha taught us the Metta Sutra over 2600 years ago. By following loving kindness and Buddhist mindfulness practices, Buddhists seem to be more satisfied with our lives and have a greater sense of peace than some others. Our historical teacher's doctrines are being confirmed by modern science as true ways to find peace in our lives. May all beings be well and happy. May all beings find peace. *Thay Kozen*

"The practice of benefiting others is the total truth, thus it liberates self and others, far and wide. To realize this is to serve friend and enemy equally and to see that even grasses and trees, wind and water, naturally reflect this sacred activity." *Zen Master Dogen*



Congratulations to Ven. Fa Sing Miles and Fa Lang Miles who are fully ordained after their lengthy novitiate training. The ordination took place at The Desert Zen Center (Chua Thien An).

Cascade Mountain School



Cascade Mountain School is a Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) focused educational program for middle and high school students. It is grounded in community and ecological standards. Trout Lake abbey hosted one group here last summer and the experience was wonderful for the kids attending and our staff.
Contact the school at cascademountainschool.org or 541.645.0688

TUYẾT SƠN THIÊN TỰ + MT ADAMS ZEN BUDDHIST TEMPLE + 雪山禅寺

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