



Pine Gate

Newsletter of the Pine Gate Sangha

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Pine Gate is the voice of Ottawa's Pine Gate sangha, who practice engaged Buddhism in the tradition of Thich Nhat Hanh. Friends of the sangha also contribute to the newsletter. Submissions are invited, articles of 500 – 700 words, poems and insights that reflect engaged practice and personal experience are appreciated. The Pine Gate sangha has many leaders and the newsletter is an organic outcome of sangha insight. Effortlessly it appears.

Ian Prattis provides dharma talks and teachings that encourage practice through deep non-action, so that engaged practice (action) emerges from understanding and compassion. His wife, Carolyn, teaches a regular Qi-Gong class at Pine Gate Meditation Hall as an introduction to mindfulness practice. The Pine Gate sangha welcomes old and new members to its regular and special activities.

Dharma Detective Investigates Great Personal Difficulty

Ian Prattis

TOOLS:

Centre in Mindfulness
Taking Refuge: Deep Looking/ Deep Listening
Skills to Garden in the Mind

STAGE ONE:

Locate Difficulty in Time & Space
Sangha Eyes: Deep Looking/Deep Listening

STAGE TWO:

Remember Feelings
Use of Teachings & Practice

STAGE THREE:

Deep Looking into Blaming and Complicity
Understanding, Impermanence and Transformation

STAGE FOUR:

Deep Reflection
Learning Curve

In a penetrating dharma talk published in the Fall 2000 edition of the Mindfulness Bell, Thich Nhat Hanh proposes an exercise for us, an inquiry into a time of great personal difficulty and suffering where we learn to operate as a good dharma detective. The tools are not those of intellectual self-analysis where we rationalize our suffering away with false mental gymnastics. To recognize the significant elements of our suffering we need the tools of mindfulness, concentration and insight. Above all else we need to locate in heart consciousness – that still place of calm that is available by first of all stopping and then centring in mindfulness. This is so your mind-state is calm and grounded for the process of investigation.

Your time of great difficulty – locate it. What happened, where and when? What was the time frame? What do you think caused it – was it something in you or were the causal elements also around you? Do your best to establish the nature of the different factors that caused you to suffer at this difficult time in your life. Know also that your perceptions and recollections of the situation may well be skewed, so it is wise to take refuge in sangha eyes, to find out from dharma brothers and sisters just how you were at that time in terms of your actions and reactions (Hanh, 2000:3). In this first step of being a dharma detective there is the importance of being grounded, of deep looking and of relying on sangha eyes to remember clearly.

Stage Two takes the process deeper. You have recognized your suffering but do you remember how you felt at that time? Did you become overwhelmed by it all or did you apply the practices and teachings in any way? Were there dharma friends available to help you or did you not seek help because you had lost faith? Thich Nhat Hanh tells us to have courage with this part of the inquiry, for it leads to the very difficult next stage of looking deeply into how we tend to take refuge in blaming. We have to be a “Hercule Poirot,” truly a dharma detective, for now in Stage Three we list in our notebook how we blamed – the other, the situation, the Buddha, Jesus - even God! How did you lash out during your suffering? How did you try to harm the other, the sangha (Hanh, 2000)? By shutting them out or by running away? Did you seek complicity with someone to help share your hate? We all love our dramas, so much so that we tend to seek out someone to agree with our suffering – but there is no support in that, as only deeper suffering ensues. Were you lucky enough to find true support, someone steady to direct you to a greater understanding of the particular hell you are investigating? Did you come to an understanding that blaming, punishment, shutting off, running away, seeking complicity – none of these are motivated by understanding and compassion? Did you begin to realize that suffering is impermanent and that understanding and compassion illuminates impermanence, that this is the way out? If you have

these realizations then you must know that progress is being made.

The Fourth Stage is a process of deep reflection on what would you do now if faced with a similar situation. From the investigation of your time of great difficulty can you identify a learning curve that will enable you not to repeat the same mistakes? Do you see the value of taking refuge in sangha eyes to guide your perceptions; of taking refuge in the practices, mindfulness trainings and sutras for guidance in order to apply the energy of mindfulness to the energy of suffering. Taking refuge in the Three Gems – Buddha, Dharma and Sangha – enables the practice to come alive as we look deeply as a dharma detective into the suffering caused by a difficult and painful circumstance. From the fruits of practice we hone our skills so that as good dharma detectives we also become excellent gardeners of the mind.

This is an excerpt from the opening chapter of Ian's forthcoming book “The Buddha at the Gate.”

Wage Peace

Mary Oliver

Wage peace with your breath.

Breathe in firemen and rubble, breathe out whole buildings and

flocks of redwing blackbirds.

Breathe in terrorists and breathe out sleeping children and

freshly mown fields.

Breathe in confusion and breathe out maple trees.

Breathe in the fallen and breathe out lifelong friendships intact.

Wage peace with your listening; hearing sirens, pray loud.

Remember your tools; flower seeds, clothes pins, clean rivers.

Make soup.

Play music, learn the word for thank you in three languages.

Learn to knit and make a hat.

Think of chaos as dancing raspberries,

imagine grief as the outbreath of beauty or the gesture of fish.

Swim for the other side.

Wage peace.

Never has the world seemed so fresh and precious.

Have a cup of tea and rejoice.

Act as if armistice has already arrived.

Don't wait another minute.

Impending War, Impending Peace

Parmatma Leviton

Impending war can put us in a stir. But what about impending peace? How excited can we get about this? What needs to happen before we are motivated to create peace? Last year, the Iraqi war got thousands of people out of their houses to attend vigils and listen to the massed choirs sing about peace on Parliament Hill. This year, we do not have a war blaring out at us on our T.V. sets, encroaching on our political territory, and reminding us of the injustice and suffering in the world. But the need for waging peace remains. It is the infrastructure of social and political justice which keeps us from being vulnerable to waves of fear, greed and so on.

It is very easy to forget what it felt like just a year ago. So, where do we start? We start here, within ourselves of course. But also we start in our homes and in our community. We start small, and then we connect to our community. We carry an elderly person's bags, support the soup kitchens or whatever suits your fancy, we inspire each other with song and dance, and we support others who have long-range strategies. We stay consistent over a long period of time until peace breaks out.

Friends for Peace will hold their second annual Peace Song Circle with massed choirs on Parliament Hill April 17th from 10:00am – 12 noon. This year our support will go towards a multifaith, multiethnic housing project which helps deal with both poverty and racism. Living in an affluent society, it is sometimes more difficult to see the underlying racism. If we have not explored our

own consciousness, we do not know what is underneath. In a sudden economic crisis, we may find that we are more racist than we think. I remember when the popular book "Black Like Me" came out where a white man made to look like a black man traveled through the south. It certainly caught the attention of my generation as far as exploring what is really there.



*Support Peaceful Choices in our Lives, our Families,
our Communities and our World*

**MASSED AREA CHOIRS
SING FOR PEACE ON PARLIAMENT HILL**

Saturday, April 17, 2004

10:00 AM. To 12 Noon

“Vision for Peace” Guest Speakers:

Ed Broadbent

Monia Mazigh

Organized by the Pine Gate Sangha & Friends for Peace, a group of individuals committed to the advancement of peace.
For more information you may contact Ian Prattis, Peace Song Circle Co-ordinator at 726-0881.
www.ianprattis.com/friends/friendsforpeace.htm

It is in the exploration of the unconscious where we will find the lasting peace that we yearn for. GuruCharan Singh, PhD, meditation teacher and healer says, "Action is committed speech, and speech is committed thought, but thought is where all the work is." Meditation is the tried and true way to find out what motivates you, what fears you have, and how to turn attitudes around for the next generation. But meanwhile, as we do the inner work, we're not going to sit back and wait for peace to happen on its own. Working on all levels is an excellent goal and this is the goal of Friends For Peace.

Friends for Peace

Carolyn Hill

The Pine Gate Sangha and Friends for Peace coalition is incorporating as a Non Profit Organisation under the name of Friends for Peace. This enables a clarification of objectives. To raise consciousness and provide public exposure for the good works taking place in Ottawa for peace is one aspect of our mandate. Another aspect is to support specific projects in the city that bring about peace through eradicating injustice.

The objectives of Friends for Peace are to promote, strengthen and maintain peace and justice within our communities and the environment. Friends for Peace will achieve its goals by:

1. supporting specific projects such as Peace Camp Ottawa and multi-Ethnic Affordable Housing that seek to fulfil our objectives;
2. engaging in outreach programs with schools, churches, environmental and other similar groups to educate and expand awareness and acceptance of one another, thereby uniting people from all walks of life regardless of age, political affiliation, faith or ethnic background;
3. support the creation of networks and coalitions so that peace processes are valued and legitimized in our institutions; and
4. building spiritual communities and encouraging all to embrace the pursuit of inner peace through meditation and mindful living as an alternative to conflict.

Annual events such as the Peace Song Circle and Peace Prayer Day will bring individuals together for inspiration, communication, creative collaboration and divine expression through prayer, music and dance to share the experience of oneness and deepen one's spiritual process. The current projects in the city supported by Friends for Peace are the Multi-Faith Housing Initiative of Ottawa's Interfaith Council and Peace Camp Ottawa, which is bringing Palestinian and Israeli teens together.

The Directors of Friends for Peace are: Chris Fitzgerald, Ian Prattis, Mike MacDonald and Parmatma Leviton. The officers are: Ian Prattis (co-

ordinator), Parmatma Leviton (secretary) and Carolyn Hill (treasurer). Further information is at: <http://www.ianprattis.com/friends/friendsforpeace.htm>

Peace Camp Ottawa

Pine Gate sangha is supporting the initiative of a remarkable seventeen year old teenager – Michelle Divon. She is the daughter of the Israeli ambassador to Canada and has begun a personal campaign for Middle East peace. She and her friends – Palestinian and Israeli - had suffered personal losses in the Middle East conflict, so she decided to organize a ten day peace camp in Ottawa this coming August to bring Palestinian and Israeli teenagers together. The goal is to eliminate the stigma of the unknown through dialogue and encourage the cultivation of understanding and trust so that mutual perceptions of the “other-as-enemy” are changed.

Local businesses and prominent members of the Canadian Senate have pulled together to raise \$100,000.00 to make this endeavour possible. Support has rolled in from all across Canada and the co-ordinating committee is made up of Muslim, Christian and Jewish leaders from business, law and government – with a little bit of help from their Buddhist and Sikh friends! Yet everyone is aware and respectful of the fact that this is a youth project driven by youth. Michelle is very much in the director's chair. She visited the Middle East recently to meet with different organizations and has received over 30 applications from Arab Israelis, Jewish Israelis and Palestinians – all between the ages of 16 – 18. The intent is to transform barriers of suspicion and hatred. The teens will stay at Ashbury College in Ottawa for the ten day peace camp. The Pine Gate sangha is offering skills of mindfulness practice, deep listening and compassionate dialogue to support this venture and help it take root in our city to alleviate the suffering of young people from the Middle East. Thank you Michelle for your vision and radiant energy.



Thich Nhat Hanh at Deer Park, 2004

Teresa Watanabe

When Thich Nhat Hanh arrived at Los Angeles International Airport in January for a three-month retreat at Deer Park monastery he was pulled aside for an hour. Security guards searched his bags, read through his private letters and asked a fellow monk whether he had ever made bombs. "The war on terrorism has forced us to look at everyone as a potential terrorist" Thay said. "When the culture goes like that, it goes wrong, because you don't have much chance to discover the good things in people. In fact, we are trying to look for the negative things ... and that is very depressing."

To help Americans heal their trauma, anger and fear stemming from the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, Thay decided to spend his annual winter retreat in the United States for the first time in what he calls "a peace offering to America." With about 250 fellow monks and nuns also visiting Deer Park, Thay presented a series of public lectures, retreats and other events to share mindfulness training —

how to cultivate peace and calm in daily life through deep breathing, slowing down and living fully in the present.

The frail, soft-spoken monk, now 78, exiled from Vietnam in 1966 will also present two unusual gatherings during his time at Deer Park. From March 19 to March 21, Thay — a poet and writer — will offer a retreat for creative artists on how to work peacefully in the entertainment industry. The retreat stemmed from a request by a Hollywood producer for techniques to deal with the jealousy, anxiety and loneliness in the business. A second retreat scheduled for March 25-27 will offer mindfulness training for ethnic minorities. In addition, the monastics plan an "alms round" procession at Mile Square Park in Fountain Valley. This follows an ancient practice in which monks and nuns travel by foot to give teachings and receive food and other offerings in exchange. "We believe the presence of a community practicing mindfulness and compassion might have a good effect on this land and this people." The monk is no stranger to America. In 1966, in the early years of the Vietnam War, he was in Washington presenting a peace proposal when he learned that he would be banned from returning by South Vietnam. The same peace efforts led Martin Luther King to nominate him for the Nobel Peace Prize.

Last year, he gave a talk at the Library of Congress and led a weekend retreat for members of Congress sponsored by the Faith and Politics Institute in Washington. Rep. Lois Capps (D-Santa Barbara) was among those who attended to seek techniques relieving the crushing pressures of political work. Today, she said, she continues to use the techniques, adding the element of mindfulness to her regular morning walks. "It had an impact on me that is lasting," said Capps, a Lutheran. "We can learn so much from other traditions."

Thay has urged political leaders to seek approaches other than violence to the war on terrorism. The topic seemed to weigh heavily on his mind at Deer Park, a 400-acre sanctuary of rolling hills and oak trees that opened four years ago. In outspoken remarks, Thay said the U.S. war on terrorism and the invasion of Iraq had backfired, creating more

enemies of America; and that evangelical Christian leaders who demonized Islam were contradicting the Gospel's spirit of compassion. He also said U.S. church leaders were not speaking out clearly about the nation's escalating military spending. Sipping tea, the monk said Buddhist teachings encouraged people to reach out to those perceived as enemies with "deep listening and loving speech." Rather than demonize the terrorists, he said, he would like to understand them. "You must have hated us a lot.... Tell us why. Have we tried to destroy you as a people, as a religion, as a culture?" he would ask. "Maybe they have misunderstood us. In that case we can try to correct their perceptions," he said. "To correct their perceptions is much better than to drop bombs on them." If that strikes some as naive, Thay said he had seen miracles from such approaches between sworn enemies.

For the past several years he has brought groups of Israelis and Palestinians to Plum Village for retreats. In the beginning the two groups are usually unable even to look one another in the eye. But, calmed by daily meditation and encouraged to share their stories of suffering without blame, the two groups usually ended up transformed. On other topics, the monk also called for reconciliation within the Vietnamese American community, which is deeply divided over the recent decision by former South Vietnam Premier Nguyen Cao Ky to return for a visit to his homeland. Ky, who lives in Hacienda Heights, has been denounced as a traitor by many in Southern California's staunchly anti-Communist Vietnamese community. But Thay asserts that even Communist Party leaders in Vietnam no longer believe in their ideology.

Thich Nhat Hanh is still waiting to go home. But he has not yet received permission. His books and tapes are still confiscated even though they are freely sold in China and other Communist nations. "It's funny Premier Ky can go home but a monk like me cannot go home," he said. "I can wait. I have a lot of patience."

Los Angeles Times February 21, 2004

Peace Begins With You

Excerpts from an interview with Thay by John Malkin published in Shambhala Sun, July 2003

Engaged Buddhism is just Buddhism. When bombs begin to fall on people, you cannot stay in the meditation hall all of the time. Meditation is about the awareness of what is going on – not only in your body and in your feelings, but all around you.

Buddhism has to do with your daily life, with your suffering and with the suffering of the people around you. You have to learn how to help a wounded child while still practicing mindful breathing. You should not allow yourself to get lost in action. Action should be meditation at the same time..... Non-violence and compassion are the foundations of a peace movement. If you don't have enough peace and understanding and loving kindness within yourself, your actions will not truly be for peace. Everyone knows that peace has to begin with oneself, but not many people know how to do it.

The practice should address suffering; the suffering within yourself and the suffering around you. They are linked to each other. When you go to the mountain and practice alone, you don't have a chance to recognize the anger, jealousy and despair that is in you. That's why it's good that you encounter people – so you know these emotions; so that you can recognize them and try to look into their nature. If you don't know the roots of these afflictions, you cannot see the path leading to their cessation. That's why suffering is very important for our practice..... The practice of deep listening should be directed towards oneself first. If you don't know how to listen to your own suffering, it will be difficult to listen to the suffering of another person or another group of people.

In Buddhist psychology we speak of consciousness in terms of seeds. We have a seed of anger in us. We have a seed of compassion in us. The practice is to help the seed of compassion to grow and the seed of anger to shrink. When you express your anger you think you are getting anger out of your system, but that's not true. When you express your anger, either verbally or with physical violence, you

are feeding the seed of anger and it becomes stronger in you. It's a dangerous practice. That's why recognizing the seed of anger and trying to neutralize it with understanding and compassion is the only way to reduce the anger in us. If you don't understand the cause of your anger, you can never transform it.

A moment of living in mindfulness is already a moment of enlightenment. If you train yourself to live in such a way, happiness and enlightenment will continue to grow. If you know how to maintain enlightenment and happiness, then your sorrow, your fear, your suffering don't have a lot of chance to manifest. If they don't manifest for a long time, then they become weaker and weaker. Then when someone touches the seed of sorrow or fear or anger in you and those things manifest, you will know how to bring back your mindful breathing and your mindful smiling. And then you can embrace your suffering.

I think that the Buddha is already here. If you're mindful enough you can see the Buddha in anything, especially in the sangha. The twentieth century was the century of individualism, but we don't want that anymore. Now we try to live as a community. We want to flow like a river, not a drop of water. The river will surely arrive at the ocean, but a drop of water may evaporate halfway. That's why it is possible for us to recognize the presence of the Buddha is the here and now. I think that every step, every breath, every word that is spoken or done in mindfulness – that is the manifestation of the Buddha. Don't look for the Buddha elsewhere. It is in the art of living mindfully every moment of your life.

There are Many Ways...

Thomas Tegtmeier

Thomas Tegtmeier coordinates the SelfCare Energy Exchange, a monthly community event to share and practise. For more information, you may reach him at 613 769-5575.

With the appropriate intent, any activity can have a meditative quality. Some say there are 360 paths to enlightenment. Others describe taking these paths

as being shorter or longer travelled by oblivious fools, mindful sages and everyone in between...at various energy levels. Some would say the fool takes longer, dances more and generally has more fun! I was told that in a high place in a far away land there is a monastery that has a book that lists the 360 paths...just out of reach....

Our purpose seems to be to identify our suffering, to seek the reasons for it, and to choose the path(s) appropriate to us to cease this suffering through self-liberation. A lot of this appears to have something to do with accepting what "is" and acting appropriately in a given situation. The attitude with which we do this is with awareness that everything facilitates the evolution of the earth and its inhabitants. The process and the destination appear to be the same...to know ourselves, to overcome ourselves, to find balance, to choose to be who we really are...spirit beings from the unified realm of love, compassion and wisdom, intelligence and will. Happiness is "God first" rather than "me first" or from another angle "wanting what you already have" rather than "getting what you want."

An interesting approach to conflict management whether it be for holistic health or for healthy, happy relationships is one where bad experiences cannot be erased. Even after any excess emotional attachment to these experiences is diffused, the experiences remain part of our history. We can find acceptance of what happened in the moment. Furthermore, they can be offset through focus on a whole slew of positive, pleasant experiences. In practice in relationships, for example, this could translate into offsetting each negative remark made to a partner by making five positive remarks in a sincere fashion of course. Studies of happy couples bear this 1:5 ratio in balancing the emotional relationship bank account.

In many cases, achieving harmony involves a process of transformation in perceptions and how we related to each other...sometimes the steps are small, some are big, some have a small outcome, others a big outcome. All are important, and all have a purpose. Some steps may seem like a quick fix, and provide temporary relief from physical pain and internal turmoil. Others may seem like they

have no immediate effect, and others still may bring one to instant self-realization, to a moment of truth, a time where everything fits together and makes sense. Some of the small steps that seem almost meaningless, yet may be an essential part of an underlying launching pad for bigger things to come later. So what may seem initially like a long way around an obstacle (the dance of the fool) may be the most direct path, especially when confronting the obstacle directly would yield no results. Accordingly, all of what we do has an internal dimension to it and is pervasive and profound in the unconscious. Effects may manifest at the conscious, etheric, subconscious, astral, and superconscious levels.

Distances can be deceiving. The play/ book/movie *Six Degrees of Separation* uses a principle akin to chaos theory in business management. The basic idea is that by communicating with up to six individuals linked together through up to six circles of 200 one may contact any other being on the planet. The inference is that life can be very efficient if we need an answer and we ask the right questions of the right people for other information. Yet in life we seem often set to follow the same routines in our western culture of conformity (as noted by de Tocqueville when visiting America in the 19th Century who noted that Americans all dressed the same) and to take a long circuitous route. I see a purpose in that as giving us time to interact with the people we meet so that our souls or spirit beings can re-connect or re-acquaint themselves with each other. In contrast, should we choose we can experience a more direct route...what some indigenous peoples have been able to preserve ... a knowing connection with other tribal members over distances about events and conditions. All this is without technological aids. Western researchers have been calling this phenomenon "remote viewing."

Art is long recognized as a transformative activity. Writing and reading like talking, is a medium of expression that many of us choose for our brains to process, digest and absorb information. What we don't get to process in a given day gets usually shunted over to troves of information for us to review and explore in dreamtime.

Expression can be a mirror of ourselves, our culture and point us to a future that we would like to co-create. Part of what we learn or confirm, how we feel and any action plan we undertake may convey encoded information and symbols for different parts of our brains to process unconsciously. Examples abound such as *The Old Testament*, *The New Testament*, *The Urantia Book*, the *Book of Enoch*, even *Nothing in this Book is True*, yet this is the way things really are..., *Ladies and Gentlemen!* *Daring to live what your soul already knows*. Every time I stumble onto some wisdom in such books, I give thanks that they already have been written.

At the regular meetings of the SelfCare Energy Exchange (SEE), people gather in a positive atmosphere to share stories of personal renewal, to share information and to give referrals, to demonstrate successful strategies and energy-balancing techniques, and to request assistance on matters close to their heart that others may also be working on. In this way we can become mentors for each other. . The whole experience is quite wonderful because as we help others, they help us in growing into bigger circles of awareness. These are open meetings for which participants are requested to donate \$5, the net proceeds of which will go to a registered charity; in 2004 the recipient is the Waldorf-inspired Mulberry School for young children.

The location of the SelfCare Energy Exchange (SEE) is Routhier Community , 172 Guigues Street (at Cumberland Street between St. Patrick and Guigues). Lowertown, Ottawa – in the salon room on the first floor. Upcoming dates are Wednesdays 7-9:30 PM: May 19, June 16 and September 15.

Family Practice

Shelley Welchner

Last fall, my husband Steven and I attended the Sangha's annual retreat at The Barn in Wakefield for the first time. It was a time of reflection and a chance to reconnect with the natural world, which is something I hadn't really done in a long time. I was introduced to mindful eating, noble silence, and a way of living that I found attractive. At the same time I felt it was a way of life that was unattainable

in my own present world, at least until my kids are grown up and on their own. However, I did think about how we could incorporate a sense of some of these practices into our family life. I thought it would help me reconcile something that nags at me once in a while. The way I can't give my children what I had growing up.

When I was a child, I would spend entire days outside. I would eat breakfast, go out, look to see what kids were outside or knock on a few doors until I could find someone to play with. I would often go into the woods at the end of our street and catch frogs in the pond there, or build forts. I would return, filthy and tanned, only for food and then head right back out again. I would travel miles to go to the community pool, the haunted house, the farm field on the other side of the woods and even to walk to school.

So what do I want my children to have that I can't give them? It is something intangible but perhaps the best way I can describe it is as that sense of freedom and deep connectedness to nature that I developed. This just isn't going to happen for my kids like it did for me. I don't think it can because the world they are growing up in is not the same one I did. At this point my mind can't help but turn to grandparents and how they often reminisce about how times have changed and how they wish their grandchildren... and great-grandchildren had what they had.

Steven's grandmother, 86 years old and born in Hungary, sometimes reminisces about how the world has changed so much. She grew up in a poor farming village with no electricity, televisions, radios, or running water. All of her relatives, grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins lived within a 15-minute horse ride. If assistance was ever needed with childcare, natural disasters, caring for the sick or elderly, help was always down the road. There was a different sense of community. She talks about how difficult it must be now for families who live so far apart, and for her granddaughters who must now work outside the home and then come home and take care of the house and have strangers look after the kids.

My own grandfather was a large, grumbly man who many people feared. He rarely smiled, partly because the corners of his mouth were down-turned to such an extent it was the shape of an upside-down U. However, we grandkids all knew that deep down he was tame as a teddy bear and he loved us although he never uttered those words. At least once during each summer visit he would lament about how 'soft' we kids were, how we didn't know how to properly tie up a boat (although he never showed us), and how we wouldn't survive a week in the bush. While Steven's grandmother valued community, he valued a deep connection to nature and loved his time in the 'bush'.

Well, Steven and I do have a sense of community although it is very different from the one Steven's grandmother speaks of. I also have a deep connectedness to nature, although it is different from the bush survival skills that my grandfather spoke of. Perhaps through our relationships with them, these values were transferred but in a way that was in keeping with our environment. We grew up in a different world and continuing change in this world is inevitable. Perhaps my children will grow with a sense of freedom and connectedness to nature in their own way. We have made some changes since the retreat to encourage and enhance our family relationships. Most of those changes revolve around our evenings together. Where we would once rush through dinner before getting back to whatever we were doing, or dashing off to skating practice, we now plan our meal for a time when we will have nowhere to rush off to. This might mean waiting until 7:15pm when Lauren returns from skating practice.

I didn't realize it, but I used to wait until supper time to bring up negative "issues" that I wanted to address with the family. It made sense because that was the one time during the day when everyone was likely to be together in one place. Now, I speak to individuals privately... or I call a quick family meeting during the day to discuss what is on my mind. We all look forward to supper now... and not just because we are hungry. I make much more of an effort to have a decent meal on the table that will appeal to everyone in an effort to encourage a longer relaxing time together. Unless we have

something specific to talk about, our discussion these days revolves around Harry Potter and quizzing each other about obscure details. My youngest daughter, Lauren (age 6), once smiled at me and said that she knew what she wanted to bring up at our “lively supper-time discussion”.

Most recently we have started a new bed-time routine. After baths and brushing teeth, we all crowd on the big bed upstairs and read a chapter of a book, Harry Potter at the moment. We laugh together at the funny parts and complain together about the villains, and wonder together about what will happen next.

This is what our family practice looks like at the moment. We are now talking about incorporating more nature walks together as a family. I like these new routines. They feel so good. Growing up, my family never had these sorts of deliberate group togetherness times. Perhaps in this way we will pass along our values, our ideas, and incorporate our understanding of Thich Nhat Hahn’s teachings in a way that our kids will bring into the future. I believe it is these times that will enhance our relationships with each other and our interconnectedness with the world. They will receive the gifts that we have to share with them, and even the gifts our grandparents somehow passed along to us.

Lawn Care

Carolyn Hill

We all have a natural instinct to nurture and protect children and animals, yet some adults are still blinded by a manicured lawn. It is children who tumble and play on the grass. It is children who lie on the grass looking up at the sky to see what shapes and forms the clouds have made. It is children who play with their pets on their lawns. And it is God’s numerous creatures living in the soil who provide food for the birds and other insect eating creatures. A number of years ago I started a campaign in my area of the city to educate my neighbours about the benefits of natural lawn care. For those who still use chemicals on their lawns that harm children and animals, I will try a touch of

humour, by giving them a transcript of the following conversation between God and St. Francis.

One day God asked St. Francis:

God: Frank, you know all about gardens and nature, what in the world is going on down there in North America? What happened to the dandelions, violets, thistles and all the other stuff I started eons ago? I had a perfect no-maintenance garden plan. Those plants grow in any type of soil, withstand draught and multiply with abandon. The nectar from the long lasting blooms attracts butterflies, honeybees and flocks of songbirds. I expected to see a vast garden of colour by now. All I see are patches of green.

St. Francis: It’s the tribes that settled there Lord. They are called Suburbanites. They started calling your flowers “weeds” and went to great lengths to kill them and replace them with grass.

God: Grass? But grass is so boring, it’s not colourful. It doesn’t attract birds, butterflies or bees, only grubs and sod worms. It’s temperamental with temperatures. Do these Suburbanites want grass growing there?

St. Francis: Apparently so Lord. They go to great pains to grow it and keep it green. They begin each Spring by fertilizing it and poisoning any other plant that crops up in the lawn.

God: The Spring rains and warm weather probably make the grass grow really fast. That must make the Suburbanites very happy.

St. Francis: Apparently not Lord. As soon as it has grown a little, they cut it – sometimes two times a week.

God: They cut it? Do they bale it like hay?

St. Francis: Not exactly Lord. Most of them rake it up and put it in bags.

God: They bag it? Why? Is it a cash crop? Do they sell it?

St. Francis: No sir, just the opposite. They pay to throw it away.

God: Now let me get this straight. They fertilize it to make it grow and then when it does grow, they cut it off and pay to throw it away.

St. Francis: Yes Sir.

God: These Suburbanites must be relieved in the summer when we cut back on the rain and turn up the heat. That surely slows the growth and saves them a lot of work.

St. Francis: You aren't going to believe this Lord. When the grass stops growing so fast, they drag out hoses and pay more money to water it so they can continue to mow it and pay to get rid of it.

God: What nonsense. At least they kept some of the trees. That was a sheer stroke of genius, if I do say so myself. The trees grow leaves in the Spring to provide beauty and shade in the summer. In the Autumn they fall to the ground and form a natural blanket to keep the moisture in the soil and protect the trees and bushes. Plus, as they rot, the leaves become compost to enhance the soil. It's a natural circle of life.

St. Francis: You'd better sit down Lord. Instead, the Suburbanites rake the leaves into great piles and pay to have them hauled away.

God: No way! What do they do to protect the shrubs and tree roots in the winter, to keep the soil moist and loose?

St. Francis: After throwing the leaves away they buy something called mulch. They haul it home and spread it around in place of the leaves.

God: And where do they get this mulch?

St. Francis: They cut down trees and grind them up to make mulch.

God: Enough!!! I don't want to think about this anymore. St. Catherine, you're in charge of the Arts. What movie is scheduled for us tonight?

St. Catherine: "Dumb and Dumber". It's a real stupid movie about

God: Never mind, play it – I think I just heard the whole story from St. Francis!!!

Dharma Discussion Groups

Murray Corke

These guidelines were put together by Murray Corke of the UK Order of Interbeing to assist facilitators at the St Andrew's retreat in Scotland with Thay last June, 2003. They provide valuable

parameters for all participants in dharma discussion

Dharma Discussion groups are an important opportunity to share in a small stable group, within the context of a large number of people on the retreat. The following suggestions and guidelines may help you.

- Allow people to introduce themselves at the first meeting.
- Explain some basic rules of interaction and stick to them, as this helps people to feel safe. e.g. inviting a handbell at the beginning and end of each meeting to bring everyone back to their breath and the present moment. e.g. if someone wishes to speak they can join their palms and bow and everyone, if they wish, can bow in return. That person is not interrupted until they bow again to indicate that they have finished.
- Encourage the practice of listening. It is crucial that people experience being heard.
- People should be encouraged to speak from their own experience and own what they say, e.g. 'I feel that the Dharma is great because....' rather than 'The Dharma is great.' This encourages specificity and responsibility, rather than the recycling of generalisations or others' opinions from books, etc.
- Periods of silence are fine, don't feel you have to jump in and fill them. If the group has genuinely exhausted a topic you could ask for, or suggest another. Subjects for discussion are usually brought up by that morning's Dharma talk. They may even suggest a topic during the talk. Your group will meet several times and part of the last meeting will probably be focussed on practical ways of Sangha building. There may also be a Tea Meditation in Dharma Discussion groups, so you may like to consult the section on Tea Meditation in the Manual of Practice.
- Don't have fixed ideas about how the group will be. If someone wants to talk about their mother dying that's fine as long as no-one is attached to talking about something else. A monk or nun

from the Plum Village party may be in your group and may take the role of facilitator, please be flexible about this.

- Be respectful of people's time. If the discussion is building and the time to end is approaching give the group the option to stop. If some wish to leave and others continue that is fine, but make a formal break (e.g. invite the bell). You are free to leave or continue as you wish. Always allow people enough time to arrive calmly at the next activity.
- If you are asked a question that you cannot answer you could ask for relevant experience from the group, refer them to a Dharma teacher or to someone you think has experience in that area. Your role is to facilitate the group dynamic not to lead, teach or advise any more than anyone else.
- Each group will contain a wide range of experience from the freshness of beginners mind to the stability of long-term practitioners.
- If the same people are always speaking you could invite contributions from those who have not yet spoken especially towards the last third of the allocated time.

These guidelines only set the scene. The unique nature of your group and your awareness and experience, will inspire what actually happens.

Questions and Answers

The Insight program on Christian Cable TV recently interviewed Ian. Here are some of the Questions and Answers.

Q. 1: Does your religion believe in the devil? If so, does the devil have power over people and how much?

A. Buddhism takes the view that we have everything stored deep in our consciousness and that certainly includes the devil. So the very worst and the very best attributes are there, stored as seeds of potential deep in consciousness. So the seed of the devil is there, along with the seeds of hatred, violence and discrimination. But also in our consciousness lie the seeds of Jesus, of the Buddha,

of love, compassion and wisdom. If we encourage the seed of the devil, or if our life circumstances and experience fosters the seeds of hatred and violence then devil-like qualities will likely manifest in our thoughts, attitudes and behaviour. On the other hand if we consciously nurture the qualities of love, compassion and kindness within us, then we manifest Christ like qualities, or Buddha like qualities in our thoughts, attitudes and behaviours. Both Heaven and Hell are there in our consciousness as attributes of mind. It just depends on what attributes we feed.

Q. 2: What impact has Mel Gibson's film – The Passion of the Christ - had on North America?

A. Mel Gibson's film has certainly had a big impact on North America – not only at the box office. What is encouraging is the amount of dialogue taking place between Jewish and Christian faiths as a result. In Chicago as well as in Ottawa and other cities, rabbis, priests and ministers went together to see this film and discussed it in forums afterwards. Many felt repulsed by the unrelenting violence yet here lies something very significant. We have grown accustomed to violence and become somewhat numbed by the extent of violence in modern society. Yet this film demands a re-examination of violence within ourselves, and within our society. Because it is the negativity within us all that ends up killing the Christ. So a film that produces dialogue between faiths and reflects on our violence is grist for the mill of re-examining how we then choose to behave. The film is also something of a surprise as it is based on poor theology. In the Christian tradition you cannot really focus only on the suffering of the crucifixion – there is also Christ's forgiveness and the resurrection to complete the total picture. This is also important from a Buddhist perspective, where there is the recognition of suffering, an examination of its causes, a realization that suffering is impermanent, and that there is a way out of suffering.

(continued on page 14)

Transformation At The Base: Verse Six

David Geary

David is studying Pilgrimage and Consciousness for his Ph.D. degree in anthropology at the University of British Columbia. His artistic and graphic talent is applied to Thay's 50 verses.

∞ SIX

The Quality of the Seeds

The quality of our life
Depends on the quality
Of our seeds
That lie deep in our consciousness

"To understand someone, we have to be aware of the quality of the seeds in his or her store consciousness"

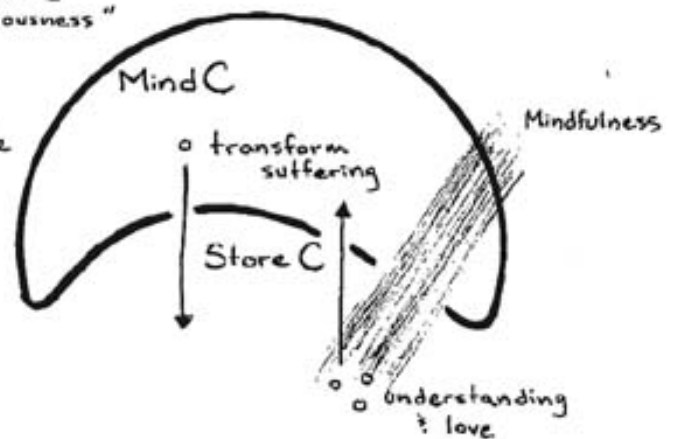
- observe the circumstances, by looking & listening deeply.

↳ he or she is not solely responsible for those seeds.

3 kinds of action

(held in eighth consciousness, Store "C")

- ① Mind Action (thoughts)
 - ② Speech Action
 - ③ Bodily Action
- ↳ precedes



"My actions are my own true belongings. I cannot escape the consequences of my actions. My actions are the ground on which I stand."

4 Practices Associated with 'Right Effort'

(noble eightfold path)

- ① Prevent the unwholesome seeds that have not yet manifested from manifesting.
- ② Help the unwholesome seeds that have already arisen in our mind consciousness to return to store consciousness → mindfulness.
- ③ Find ways to water the wholesome seeds in our store consciousness that have not yet arisen, to help them manifest in mind consciousness.
- ④ 'Practice' is to maintain as long as we can the mental formations that have already arisen from wholesome seeds on the level of the mind consciousness.

Mel Gibson's film is lop-sided theology as its primary focus is on the first aspect of suffering only. But bad theology aside – I do feel that this film will bring about a constructive dialogue between faiths and force viewers to reflect deeply on violence.

Q. 3: How does Buddhism reach the younger generation? Does it move with the times?

A. Dharma as a set of teachings must move with the times, otherwise it will lose the attention of the younger generation. So dharma must be “living dharma” as living organisms grow and do not remain the same. The Buddha during his ministry always continued to grow and evolve, because the Buddha practiced diligently and was very much alive, always fresh. With the Buddha's passing the dharma continued to evolve as the dharma is itself organic and alive. Such growth is possible under conditions of openness and generosity. Without these conditions we would lose the Buddha and become disconnected from the Dharma and the Sangha. The danger of the dharma dying and becoming irrelevant arises when the Buddhadharma remains static, caught in cultural and historical time frames that have no relevance to the suffering in the twenty first century. When Buddhists are caught in this fashion they remain in ignorance of current realities, which are very different from the realities experienced during the time of the Buddha and also different from the realities experienced in Buddhist countries such as Tibet, Sri Lanka and Vietnam. The Buddhadharma can only continue to be fresh and relevant when it arises from the circumstances in which it is presented. As a teaching about suffering and how to get out of suffering, dharma in the twenty first century may be viewed as a medicine for our times that is prescribed with intelligence, by understanding the nature of suffering embedded in current circumstances. What I am talking about is the challenge of continuously growing, learning and teaching, becoming more skilful through daily diligent practice to alleviate the suffering of the twenty first century. That is what keeps the Buddha alive for the younger generation.

Q. 4: As a Buddhist, do you have concerns about a political party that has a name with religious connotations (e.g. the Christian Heritage Party)?

A. It is not the name that would be of any concern, but the actions that are carried out in that name. If the actions are based on generosity, inclusiveness, loving kindness and wisdom then this reflects positively on the attributes of Christ. But if the actions are based on discrimination, greed and oppression then the use of the term Christian abuses the attributes of Christ. So the scrutiny is not about the name of any given political party but whether the policies, programs and actions of that party provide a fair reflection of Christ or of the Buddha. If this is not the case then the intelligent citizen can always refrain from voting for that party!

Order of Interbeing Training

Cheryl and Matt (Florida)

The third exercise of the OI training involved the re-sculpting of Mindfulness Trainings 5, 6 and 7 from the perspective of personal experience. Also each aspirant was asked to take one of the fifty verses from “Transformation at the Base” and use it as a meditative focus for a month.

Transformation at the Base – Fifty Verses on the Nature of Consciousness is a wonderful book, each verse and commentary filled with wisdom and food for thought. I picked the verse “*In us are infinite varieties of seeds - Seeds of samsara, nirvana, delusion, and enlightenment, Seeds of suffering and happiness, Seeds of perceptions, names, and words.*” This verse helps me understand my personal responsibility for my thoughts, feelings, and actions. The verse also fills me with encouragement that when things seem difficult, that I'll never figure out how to be a patient person let alone a person filled to over-flowing with compassion, that the capacity for this compassion is there. Within this verse is the “big picture” of the concept of compassion, but also the “little picture” of compassion manifesting in my own life.

Matt picked “*Beings manifest when conditions are sufficient. When conditions lack, they no longer*

appear. Still, there is no coming, no going, No being, and no nonbeing." This powerful verse reflects the truth of non-self and impermanence, reminding us yet again that the present moment is the only time we have available to us. That while there is no element that uniquely belongs to us, we are here – only in this moment. Matt is a very visual person and wrote what we've affectionately begun to call the "Cookie Discourse" explaining the non-cookie elements and the bringing together of the conditions needed for the cookie's existence. When we hold a cookie in our hands, we're holding the universe as well.

Rainbow Meditation

Metaphor is a means for awareness to connect to symbol, so that the spiritual guidance inherent in all that symbolizes the transcendental can initially be grasped. The metaphor – be it a concept of the Almighty, or a symbol for Truth – is an external mental form that corresponds to an internal symbolic structure that is not usually known as personal experience. Meditation places you in a particular energy, or consciousness, that brings forth from the metaphor a personal experience that you integrate with physically. Knowledge is then owned by the body – it does not remain a mere intellectual artifice. In meditation, the focus on a particular metaphor is to bring to the surface specific qualities that are felt as a physical circulation throughout and around your body. Be in this energy in a detached manner so that the qualities of the metaphor become physically encompassed as experience, without any accompanying projections. In this manner the qualities inherent in particular metaphors can eventually be brought into form. These changes create shifts in cognitive/perceptual mind states and permit you to see a larger picture of interconnectedness that was formerly not possible. The Rainbow meditation may illustrate the experience of metaphor as vibration through its changing focus on the major energy centers of the body.

Remember that you breathe with your entire body. Focus in meditation leads to an emphasis, from the

mind, on particular locations and energy centres. Accompanying the location, in this meditation, is attention to particular colours that are precisely connected to each major energy centre. Each represents a tonal chord, or sound current that activate the tonal frequencies of corresponding energy centres. The Red is associated with the root chakra at the bottom of the spine; Orange with the chakra located in the genital region; Yellow with the solar plexus or navel chakra; Green with the heart chakra; Blue with the throat chakra; Indigo with the brow chakra; and Purple and White with the crown chakra. These are all experienced in the Rainbow meditation.

Sit comfortably with the spine erect, with your feet firmly connected to the floor. Place your hands either in your lap or upon your knees. Breathe softly into the heart center, up to the crown on the in-breath, and on the out-breath take it down to the toes and relax into the quiet calm of meditative silence. Take at least five breaths, and when you feel ready to do so, breathe in through the soles of your feet and bring the colour Red up through your legs and fill your entire body. Breathe gently in and out as you note the physical sensation of vibrant and alive Red, where it circulates through the body and, most important, where it is blocked and does not flow. Settle in to the experience of Red for five breaths. Then visualize this colour being pushed out of your body, starting from the head and going downwards, so that the colour Red goes out through the soles of the feet into the earth. Once this is done take time to register with the emptiness in the body. Take five breaths.

Then breathe the colour Orange in through the soles of your feet and fill the entire body. Breathe gently in and out. As before, note the changes in energy circulation throughout the body. Breathe regularly within the experience of the vibrational frequency of Orange for five breaths. After a time, visualize this being pushed out of the body - like a coffee plunger - from the head down through the soles of the feet and into the Earth. Once more register with emptiness in the body for five breaths.

Then breathe the colour Yellow in through the soles of your feet and fill the body with this fresh spring

colour. Note the physical changes in bodily sensations associated with Yellow and the navel chakra as you take five breaths. Then, as before, visualize the colour being pushed out of the body through the feet, and once again register with emptiness for five breaths.

On the next in-breath bring the colour Green directly into the heart chakra, behind the sternum, and from this location flood the body with a lush verdant Green. Breathe into this changed frequency for five breaths and take note of your bodily feedback. After a while, visualize Green being pushed out of the body from the head downwards and out through the soles of the feet into the earth. Register with emptiness in the body for five breaths.

Then breathe the colour Blue into the throat centre, and flood the entire body with this tonal chord of energy frequencies and stay with it for five breaths. Circulation may be blocked as expression is frequently denied, so focus Blue through a clear crystal, which you visualize in the centre of your throat. This may enhance circulation. Note where the colour moves throughout the body, and the corresponding bodily sensations. Breathe regularly into this energy state, and learn about the properties of Blue and of expression. Then push the colour out through the feet and breathe in to the emptiness within the body for another five breaths.

Then bring the colour Indigo directly through the brow and fill the body with this frequency. Spiritual Insight is frequently subject to blockage, therefore circulation through this chakra may be facilitated by visualizing an Indigo octagon in the middle of the forehead through which the frequency of this colour is drawn in to the body. Register with changing body sensations, and become familiar with the tonal properties of Indigo for five breaths, then push it out of the body through the feet and take note of emptiness within the body for a further five breaths.

Bring the colour Purple into the body through the crown chakra on the next breath. This circulation can be enhanced by visualizing the crown chakra as a fully opened lotus flower with a thousand petals, through which you draw in the colour Purple. Feel

the special quality of Purple extending within the body and wear it lightly as an internal cloak. Breathe regularly five times into this changed energy state and note everything in the body as before. Then push the colour Purple out of the body through the feet into the earth. Feel an intense emptiness within the body.

Then breathing with the entire body fill yourself with brilliant, crystalline White light and breathe regularly in to this new frequency. Do not direct your breath, simply be aware of in-breath and out-breath and the circulation of energy in the body. Remain in this breathing state for twenty minutes. When thoughts arise, observe them, but do not participate in them or fuel them with energy. In this way your energy will remain with the experience of meditation. At the end of the meditation reflect on the differences felt during the distinct phases of meditation, and contrast the present feeling within the body to your physical state prior to meditation. Reflect on, and discern the discrete effects and circulation of each colour, and its association with particular chakras and document your experience. With continued emphasis on this delightful meditation you will feel new and changing connections between energy centres, and a sense of unification and harmony within all aspects of your being.

Book Review

Richard Arnold

Richard teaches English and Environmental Literature at Malaspina University College in Nanaimo B.C. The review appeared in the online journal "The Trumpeter" V 19, 3, 2003.

The Essential Spiral: Ecology and Consciousness After 9/11, by Ian Prattis

(University Press of America, 2002)

<http://www.ianprattis.com/essentialspiral.htm>

Ian Prattis, Professor of Anthropology and Religion at Carleton University in Ottawa, has published a multi-disciplinary book with a title which will resonate for anyone who has been following current

events—particularly as regards “terrorism”—for the past two years.

In fact, the title is, in my opinion, the only real weakness of the book; it “hooks” the post-9/11 reader and promises something it fails to deliver. Ironically, what the book does deliver is far superior to any “news” stories, et cetera, about the World Trade Center and Pentagon attacks on September 11, 2001. If Prattis publishes a second edition, I would suggest he either delete “After 9/11” from the title, or say more in the book about this topic. After all, a reader does expect certain things from a title, especially one as fraught as this one.

I will pick at two more nits that need to be fixed before the book goes to a second edition: first, the annoying use of the words “lead” and “mislead” when the correct spelling should be “led” and “misled” (past tense). I noted this throughout the book. And I wonder why the publisher did not use recycled paper? Surely we have come to the point where every ethical publisher should at least try to employ recycled paper. (New Society, in British Columbia, is one who does.) Otherwise, this is an attractive and satisfying production. The book begins, as does each chapter, with an abstract or overview of the subject matter a bibliography follows each chapter, and there is a comprehensive and helpful index. The layout is functional and sturdy.

Although one picks this book up expecting to read about the terrorist events of 2001, what one really finds is a book on “mindfulness.” The author stresses that we must attempt to cultivate this virtue in every aspect of our daily lives. He frequently cites the Buddha, and other teachers from the ancient as well as present world. The application to “9/11” thus gradually becomes revealed as the book goes on: the best way, perhaps only way, to combat evil in any form is to develop an extreme “mindfulness” about things. Prattis reinforces the theme—at least as old as Buddha—that any meaningful action must start with the self. If we really want to heal the earth’s ecological and

political wounds, each individual must first heal him/herself.

Actually, this is a fascinating book, perhaps more so because, as earlier stated, it turns out to be different from what one expects on first seeing the cover. Ian Prattis explains the choice of title: “The Essential Spiral insists that Ecology and Consciousness are inseparable, akin to the double helix of DNA. To separate the double helix eliminates life. The same portent applies to Ecology and Consciousness” (viii). The “walking meditation” (30–35) is an exercise which I have already begun using, and is simple enough for virtually anyone to use every day. The crux of the book is Chapter 4: Meditation for Gaia. Here, the author stresses the theme of self-healing, saying that no matter how discouraged, angry, or dejected he gets over the current state of Earth, his “first choice is to be still.” The final chapter, Guidelines to Recreate our World, will be most interesting to students and practitioners of Deep Ecology.

This is an effective and useful synthesis of Buddhism, meditation, and the global political climate of the twenty-first century. The book concludes with a short parable entitled “The Merchant and the Diamond,” in which a rich man is given an unexpected gift that changes his life. If I may employ the language of that story, The Essential Spiral is the diamond, and Ian Prattis has the great heart that gave it to us. Thank you, good sir!

2004 Talks and Retreats with Dharmacharya Ian Prattis

Saturday April 3 Day of Mindfulness
 Pine Gate Meditation Hall 10.00am – 4.00pm
Contact: Carolyn Hill Chill@TierneyStauffer.com 613 726 0881

Saturday June 26 Day of Mindfulness
 Wild Geese Sangha 10.00am – 4.00pm
 Strathmiglo, Scotland
Contact: Cathy Bache cathybache@highdoocot.freemove.co.uk

Friday July 2 Public Dharma Talk
 Findhorn, Scotland 8.00pm
Contact: Susanne Olbrich susanneolbrich@yahoo.co.uk 01309 690006
 Gordon McAlpine gordon@woodheadcom.org 01309 690796

Sunday July 4 Day of Mindfulness
 Findhorn, Scotland 10.00am – 4.00pm
Contact: Susanne Olbrich susanneolbrich@yahoo.co.uk 01309 690006
 Gordon McAlpine gordon@woodheadcom.org 01309 690796

Thurs Sept 30 – Oct 3 Theme: “The Buddha at the Gate”
 Southern Dharma Retreat Center
 North Carolina, USA
Contact: Southern Dharma Retreat Center, 1661 West Rd, Hot Springs, NC 28743, USA
 828 622 7112 info@southerndharma.org www.southerndharma.org
Registration: <http://www.southerndharma.org/registration.htm> forms in HTML and PDF

ANNUAL RETREAT OF PINE GATE SANGHA, 2004

with

Dharmacharya Ian Prattis

“Lotus in a Sea of Fire”

FRIDAY AUGUST 27 – SUNDAY AUGUST 29, 2004

At “The Barn” Retreat Centre, (819) 456 2144

186 Route 366 West, Ste Cecile de Masham, (Near Wakefield), Quebec

The retreat program begins on Friday evening with Orientation at 8.00pm. A light supper will be served during registration on Friday, between 6.00pm and 8.00pm. The retreat finishes mid afternoon on Sunday, after lunch, with a sharing circle and a closing ceremony. In between are dharma talks, sutra readings, exercises, walking meditation, and silent time with Mother Earth, as we learn to touch the seeds of that loving and compassionate nature which dwells within each one of us. The “Lotus” is the energy of mindfulness and the development of Bodhichitta. The “Sea of Fire” refers to the hell states we engage with from the global to the personal level. Cultivating the “Lotus” is the means to transform the fire into ash so that flowers may grow. It is a mostly silent retreat so that we nurture deep compassion. From that energy we can go forward together to reconstruct the world.

COST: \$150.00 – Includes lodging, and all meals

REGISTRATION: Carolyn Hill; 1252 Rideout Cr., Ottawa, ON, K2C 2X7

726 0881; CHill@TierneyStauffer.com

Please make checks payable to Carolyn Hill, marked Barn Retreat.

BRING: Meditation cushion; sheets, pillowcase & towel; walking shoes; notebook

TENTING: This is an option if you prefer it.

BUGS: Very few bugs at the end of August. But bring insect repellent anyway

FOOD: Catered by our friend Tanya Wodicka, the food is delicious vegetarian – a gourmet treat.

DIRECTIONS: “The Barn” Retreat Centre is located at the north end of Gatineau Park, 20 minutes from downtown Ottawa. It is charming and comfortable. If you come from Toronto or Montreal on the 417, take the Vanier Parkway Exit and go until Beechwood Ave; LT on Beechwood; RT on King Edward; continue until you cross the McDonald-Cartier bridge. Follow Rte. 5 until the end; RT go 200 meters then LT at traffic light, take Highway 105 N. towards Wakefield; LT on Rte 366 (just past the Wakefield turnoff). Continue on Rte. 336 in the direction of St Cecile de Masham. The Barn is 4.6 km from the 366/105 intersection. Watch for the sign on the LHS to turn into The Barn.

April - June 2004 Sangha Schedule	
SATURDAY April 3 10.00pm – 4.00pm	Day of Mindfulness Pine Gate Meditation Hall
Thursday April 8 7.00pm – 9.00pm	Qi-Gong with Carolyn
Thursday April 15 7.00pm – 9.00pm	The Pine Gate Story
SATURDAY April 17 10.00am – 12 noon	Peace Song Circle Parliament Hill
Thursday April 22 7.00pm – 9.00pm	Thich Nhat Hanh in Scotland I Consciousness, Heart, Mindful Speech
Thursday April 29 7.00pm – 9.00pm	Five Touchings of the Earth Ceremony
SATURDAY May 1 10.00am – 1.00pm	Spring Hike and Picnic in Gatineau Park Meet at Parking Lot #7, Kingsmere
Thursday May 6 7.00pm – 9.00pm	Thich Nhat Hanh in Scotland II Engaged Buddhism, America, Renewal
Thursday May 13 7.00pm – 9.00pm	Dying with Peace I Thich Nhat Hanh Dharma Talk on video
Thursday May 20 7.00pm – 9.00pm	Dying with Peace II Thich Nhat Hanh
Thursday May 27 7.00pm – 9.00pm	Beginning Anew Ceremony
Thursday June 3 7.00pm – 9.00pm	Deep Relaxation With Sr Chan Khong on audio
Thursday June 10 7.00pm – 9.00pm	Five Mindfulness Trainings Dharma Talk on Video
Thursday June 17 7.00pm – 9.00pm	The SATIR Method of Mindful Therapy
Thursday June 24 7.00pm – 9.00pm	Five Mindfulness Trainings Recitation Ceremony
Thursdays evenings in July and August	Lazy Days of Summer Initiatives by the sangha for Pine Gate program

DIRECTIONS TO PINE GATE MEDITATION HALL

Take Queensway to Woodroffe South exit; Go to Baseline Rd; RT on Baseline; RT on Highgate (next lights); RT on Westbury; LT on Rideout and follow the crescent round to 1252.

Tel: 613 726 0881. E mail: iprattis@cyberus.ca or Chill@TierneyStauffer.com