



# One Heart- One Mind

*The Newsletter of the Association  
of Engaged Buddhists*

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## Meditation & Dhamma Teaching

7.30pm every Monday night.

- Join with others in sitting practice.

7.30pm every Wed night.

- Meditation evenings include a Dhamma talk followed by around half an hour of guided sitting practice. Beginners or more experienced meditators are equally welcome.
- There is no charge for the teachings although donations are welcome as this is Sangha Lodge's only means of support.

## Dana Days

*Dana Days are held on the first Sunday of each month. Attendees bring food to offer to the Sangha and to share with each other. This is a great way to show respect for the Sangha and enjoy a delicious meal with others in the lay community.*

*Please note that we must start promptly at 10:30am in order for the Sangha to finish eating by noon. The next Dana Day will be Sunday 22nd Feb 2015 at the Association Picnic*

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## Another Year Ends - A Reminder of Impermanence

Then the Blessed One uttered the exclamation: "Kondañña knows! Kondañña knows!" and that is how that venerable one acquired the name, Añña-Kondañña — Kondañña who knows.

### Dhammacakkapavattana Sutta

The year 2014 is almost over and we might ask ourselves "What do we know as another year comes to an end?" What have we discovered or found over the last twelve months especially in our attempt to follow the path of the Buddha? Has this been a year of new understanding and growth or one of "the same old, same old"?

In the story in which the Buddha utters those famous words, "Kondanna knows" we are told that the Venerable Kondanna has just listened to the words

of the Buddha and then seen and understood their importance and realized for himself their truth. The Buddha almost sings out the words: "Knowing and seeing arose in me thus: 'My heart's deliverance is unassailable.....'" and Venerable Kondanna sees that "now during this utterance, there arose in the Venerable Kondanna the spotless, immaculate vision of the True Idea: "Whatever is subject to arising is all subject to cessation." Kondanna knows and sees and becomes in that instant a true disciple, a stream enterer or in the words of Venerable Piyadassi, dhamma-cakkhu. In other words, he attained sotapatti, the first stage of sanctity.

During the past twelve months each of us has heard on numerous occasions the words of the Buddha and probably from many different teachers in many different situations and settings. Perhaps we have been reading and trying to understand the Suttas or other materials related to Dhamma and practice; but have we truly seen and understood anything? Kondanna saw anicca or impermanence.

As this year runs to its end can we who are living within it see and truly feel its fragility and impermanence?

The Buddha offers in this very first public teaching a glimpse into his own personal experience and opens the path of practice for all who have eyes to see and who are willing to be open to hear.

"These two extremes ought not to be practiced by one who has gone forth from the household life. (What are the two?) There is addiction to indulgence of sense-pleasures, which is low, coarse, the way of ordinary people, unworthy, and unprofitable; and there is addiction to self-mortification, which is painful, unworthy, and unprofitable.

*...Continued on Page 2*





...Continued from Page 1

"Avoiding both these extremes, the Tathagata (The Perfect One) has realized the Middle Path; it gives vision, gives knowledge, and leads to calm, to insight, to enlightenment and to Nibbana. And what is that Middle Path realized by the Tathagata...? It is the Noble Eightfold path, and nothing else- namely: right understanding, right thought, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness and right concentration. This is the Middle Path realized by the Tathagata which gives vision, which gives knowledge, and leads to calm, to insight, to enlightenment, and to Nibbana."

Hearing these words and or reading them is one thing but realizing their deep inner import is another matter. Finding a place within our own hearts/ minds (citta) where these words of the Buddha can settle, resonate and inform our lives is up to us. Each of us individually but with the informed understanding of our interdependence on each other. In the words of the Buddha, "For my own well being and happiness and the well-being and happiness of all suffering sentient beings"

Most of you will be aware of the condition of the Most Venerable Thich Nhat Hahn at the moment. "Thay" as he is affectionately known to his many thousands of students both lay and monastic is old and gravely ill in hospital following a stroke. His whole life has been an example of living Dhamma and now his illness places this teaching of the Buddha, the reality and truth of anicca in front of us. Around the world many people feel great sadness at the news of Thay's present condition and yet he would I am sure smile and reassure us all of anicca, dukkha and anatta held within the great bell of the Dhamma

which rings out liberation from these things even as it offers us a chance to really see them deep within ourselves and our experience.

We offer a deep bow of gratitude (kat-tanu) to Thay for his lifelong devotion to teaching and displaying within his own being the Dhamma and we make a prayer for his well-being and happiness. May his disciples rejoice in his great good heart and the blessings he has showered on all those who have come into contact with him whether in person or through other forms of teaching.

Perhaps as the year ends it might be time for us to try to develop some gratitude toward ourselves too for the efforts made and the inner determination to continue on the path of practice into the new year and the future.

We can take encouragement for the words of the Buddha and make a more determined effort in the New Year (of the Goat!) to realize for ourselves:

"The Noble Truth of Suffering (dukkha), monks, is this: Birth is suffering, aging is suffering, sickness is suffering, death is suffering, association with the unpleasant is suffering, dissociation from the pleasant is suffering, not to receive what one desires is suffering — in brief the five aggregates subject to grasping are suffering.

"The Noble Truth of the Origin (cause) of Suffering is this: It is this craving (thirst) which produces re-becoming (rebirth) accompanied by passionate greed, and finding fresh delight now here, and now there, namely craving for sense pleasure, craving for existence and craving for non-existence (self-annihilation).

"The Noble Truth of the Cessation of Suffering is this: It is the complete cessation of that very craving, giving it up,

relinquishing it, liberating oneself from it, and detaching oneself from it.

"The Noble Truth of the Path Leading to the Cessation of Suffering is this: It is the Noble Eightfold Path, and nothing else, namely: right understanding, right thought, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness and right concentration.....

such was the vision, the knowledge, the wisdom, the science, the light that arose in me concerning things not heard before. 'This Path leading to the cessation of suffering, as a noble truth, should be developed': such was the vision, the knowledge, the wisdom, the science, the light that arose in me concerning things not heard before. 'This Path leading to the cessation of suffering, as a noble truth has been developed': such was the vision, the knowledge, the wisdom, the science, the light that arose in me concerning things not heard before."

I want to express my heartfelt thanks to all of you for all your efforts this year and to encourage you in even greater efforts (with great ease too of course!) next year. May you be well and happy now and always,

With great Metta

**Bhante Tejadhammo**







## Thich Nhat Hanh Seriously Ill

*Plum Village, November 12, 2014*

*To all Plum Village Practice Centers,*

*To all Practice Centers and Sanghas World Wide,*

*To our Dear Beloved Friends,*

With a deep mindful breath we announce to the world the news that yesterday, the 11th of November 2014 Thay, Zen Master Thich Nhat Hanh, experienced a severe brain hemorrhage. Thay is receiving 24 hour intensive care from specialist doctors, nurses and from his monastic disciples.

At present, Thay is still very responsive and shows every indication of being aware of the presence of those around him. He is able to move his feet, hands and eyes. There are signs that a full recovery may be possible.

For the last two months, Thay's health had already been fragile due to his advanced age. He was hospitalized in Bordeaux on the 1st of November. He was gaining strength day by day until this sudden and unexpected change in his condition.

All the monasteries in the tradition of Plum Village are organizing practice sessions to generate the energy of mindfulness and to send Thay this healing and loving energy. We would like to ask the whole worldwide community of meditation practitioners to participate and support us in this critical moment. We know and trust that Thay will receive all your energy and that this will be a big support in his healing and recovery.

Our practice of stability and peace in this very moment is the best support we can offer to Thay. Let us all around the world take refuge in our practice, going together as a river to offer Thay our powerful collective energy. We are all cells of the great Sangha Body that Thay has manifested in his lifetime.

Future reports on Thay health and recovery will be posted officially at [www.plumvillage.org](http://www.plumvillage.org), [langmai.org](http://langmai.org), [villagedespruniers.org](http://villagedespruniers.org), and [www.facebook.com/thichnhathanh](https://www.facebook.com/thichnhathanh).

*On behalf of the Monastic Dharma Teacher Council of Plum Village,*

*Bhikkhu Thich Chan Phap Dang*

*Bhikkhuni Thich Nu Chan Khong Nghiem*

Please read the prayer on the back page of this Newsletter and dedicate your thoughts to Thich Nhat Hanh (Ed.)

## Mindfulness Software

While at the Plum Village website looking for news of Thich Nhat Hhan's health I came across a page where they list a number of software applications that some might find helpful. If you enjoy technology and are interested in how it might help your practice, you might be interested in having a look at : <http://plumvillage.org/mindfulness-practice/mindfulness-software/>

## Poems

### Offering

The sun has not fully risen  
yet she is up,  
she has washed  
and swept the paths  
and now she prepares  
the day's offering.  
In the tiny basket  
with care she places  
petals, frangipani and rice.  
Now, reverently she  
makes the offering  
to the island's Gods.  
Every morning she kneels  
in her home altar  
with her eyes down  
she lights incense  
and with hands in prayer  
she bows to Dewi Sri  
she seeks protection  
for her and her family  
she knows of the struggle  
of good and evil.

**Beatriz Copello**





# Association News

*Sue Toohey*

## Annual General Meeting

Our AGM for this year was held on November 2nd. The Annual report including the financial report was presented to members and shows the organisation in sound financial shape, with no debts and sufficient income from donations and fund-raising to meet it's operational costs.

Among our activities during 2013-2014 some of the highlights included the 6 retreats that were offered by the Association at Vejjasala – 3 of which were specifically directed at healing practices. Reports from the participants at these retreats were very positive and we thank everyone involved for all the effort that has gone into developing Vejjasala thus far.

Extensive work was carried out throughout the year on the buildings and grounds, including conversion of one of the bathrooms to be suitable for wheelchair access and installation of new fridge & freezer, stove, pantry and bench in the kitchen. Bruce Chatfield rebuilt the existing decrepit animal shelter into a beautiful teacher's kuti.

At Sangha Lodge we continued a vibrant visiting teacher program in addition to Ven Tejadhammo's weekly teaching and continued to welcome Zen Open Circle's meditation group on Friday evenings. Great fund-raisers included the Food Fair (as always), and the Food stall which we offered at Hornsby Council's Healthy Living festival).

Feel free to pick up a copy of the full Annual report at Sangha Lodge.

## New Committee for 2014

Also on November 3rd we elected our management committee for the coming year. Many thanks go to Bronwyn Sweeney, our Secretary for past 2 years

and to Lalith Gunasinghe who stepped down from the committee at the AGM.

We welcome the new committee for 2014 –

Sue Toohey – President

Lean Lee – Treasurer

Caroline Lurie – Secretary

Lachlan Warner

John Wagner, Newsletter Editor

Russell Bastock

Robert Ljubicic, Russell has recently taken over as our Webmaster and will continue in that role.

We also welcome 2 new retreat coordinators who will take over from Caroline Lurie – Jane Young and Thanh Nguyen.

## Kathinga Ceremony at Sangha Lodge

On Saturday 25 October a Kathina ceremony was held at Vejjasala. Venerable Phra Mana and the monks from Sunnataram Monastery at Bunadon came as our guests and brought with them a large group of Thai young people. Gifts of robes were offered to all of the monks present and we shared a most delicious lunch. Many thanks to Lily Koo for doing much of the food preparation and for arranging the robes to be offered.

## An Afternoon of Mindfulness & Insight

Our last formal event at Vejjasala for this year will be *An Afternoon of Mindfulness and Insight* with well known teachers, Graeme White and Lynne Bousefield, together with Bhante, leading Dhamma teaching and Vipassana practice from 12-5pm on Saturday 13 December. Before all the busyness of Christmas and the holiday season does your head in, why not clear a little mental space with this afternoon of practice. Registration is necessary for this free event – submit

your registration on the website by going to the website

<http://www.engagedbuddhists.org.au> and looking under Events in the menu.

It is possible for members to stay at Vejjasala for either the night before or after this event. You need to let our retreat coordinator know if you wish to do this by emailing [retreatsengagedbuddhists@gmail.com](mailto:retreatsengagedbuddhists@gmail.com) Please note that you will need to bring your own food and your towel, bed linen or sleeping bag.

## Bhante in Myanmar

Bhante will join a small group of travelers led by Graeme White for a 10 day journey through Myanmar at the end of January. They will visit some of the famous religious centres.

## New Year Picnic

The Association invites all members and friends to our New Year Picnic on Sunday, 22nd February, starting at 11am. A special invitation to all our stall holders and cooks from the Food Fair – we hope that on this day you will not have to do any cooking! We hope to have 'Satay Lady' Zaidah again to provide the satay sticks, plus a sausage sizzle on the barbeque. Feel free to bring a salad, drinks, or dessert.

We will be in the same place as last year – Bellamy Picnic Area, Cumberland State Forest, 95 Castle Hill Rd, West Pennant Hills.

Please join us as for a relaxed start to the New Year and to welcome Bhante back from Burma.

**Sangha Lodge Closes December /January:** The last meditation meeting for 2014 at Sangha Lodge will be Wednesday 18 December. First meditation for 2015 will be Wednesday, 28 January.

*With much metta to everyone, Sue Toohey*





## Dhamma Blossoms Vejjasala Report

Not by rituals and resolutions, nor by  
much learning,  
nor by celibacy nor even by meditation  
can you find the supreme, immortal joy  
of nirvana  
until you have extinguished your self-  
will

*Dhammapada*  
verses 271=272

## Mindfulness in Everyday Life

Gathas are a rich and beautiful aid to help us remain mindful during the course of a busy day. Why not try writing your own as to help with your mindfulness practice. If you have written a gatha, why not share with friends to assist them. We would be pleased to publish verses members have written in the Newsletter.

As Summer approaches and many of us go to work in our gardens, word from Thich Nhat Hanh may help with being mindful as we tend to the things that call for our attention.

Earth brings us into life  
and nourishes us.

Earth takes us back again.

Birth and death are present in every  
moment.

Our development application, phase 1, Change of Use is still with the Wingecarribee Council and it seems that it will be for a while longer. We have looked at some means to speed this process up but it seems it isn't really possible. We will just have to wait.

Dave Denton has noted that the main deck is in need of some TLC in the form of some more decking oil or similar. If anyone is interested in looking into doing this with a product called Intergrain, then please let me or Dave know

Much metta!

*Lachlan*

## Sue Toohey's October Yoga Retreat

We have had some very good feedback on the yoga retreat that Sue Toohey ran in October. Here is just a sample of what participants had to say:

"Thank you for organising a very relaxed and calming meditation and yoga weekend with Sue. We were very comfortable, the food was excellent and the space for our practice was good. My husband who had never been on a retreat before was really pleased he attended."

"Fabulous retreat. Sue was an excellent teacher of Dru yoga. Her mum was amazing. And the cooks Leanne and team were great. Lovely group on the retreat as well."

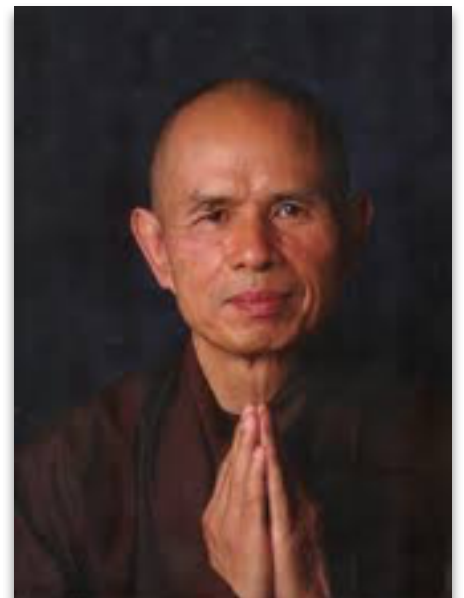
"The retreat was wonderful. Sue, I wanted to let you know that I have been almost literally bouncing out of bed since your retreat. I have done this every day so far since the retreat, apart from one day. On Thursday, I had my regular 1.5-hour yoga class, the first of Term and was feeling virtuous. I had not done your Mini Vinyasa, as usual, by evening so - a little short of time by this stage - decided it would be okay to miss a day, in the circumstances. I was wrong. I had trouble getting out of bed the next day so have decided not to miss this Vinyasa again. And, you're right. It takes no time at all

I wanted to thank you for putting so much time and effort into the retreat and for running it for all the right reasons. I would be surprised if every single one of us has not taken something very worthwhile home with us from your retreat."

With best regards and many thanks

*Caroline Lurie*

Retreat Coordinator







# Quotable Quotes

This month's quote comes from an unlikely source. Those of you who know the characters Lilly Tomlin has portrayed might be surprised to find such insight in her words. But then perhaps not....

"Forgiveness means giving up all hope for a better past."

Lili Tomlin

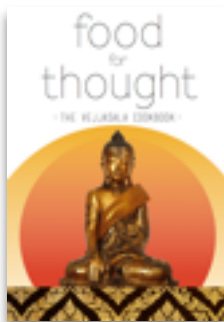
b 1939, American comedian, writer and producer

## Food for Thought

The Association is pleased to have produced Food for Thought, a recipe book written by Jan McCarthy who does the catering for our retreats at Vejjasala. Food for Thought is an A5 (150X 210 cm) spiral bound book of 128 pages, with many photos in full colour. It features 10 chapters and over 100 vegetarian recipes. All proceeds for the sale of the book go to The Association.

Copies of the book can be bought from Sangha Lodge (see Gus Real) for \$25. You can also purchase copies by mail order. To do this please arrange and electronic funds transfer for \$30 (\$25 for book and \$5 for postage and handling) to the Associations bank account. The details of this are:

**Association of Engaged Buddhists  
St George Bank  
BSB: 112 879  
Account number:  
131328823**



Please put FFT and your full name in the reference box for the transaction and email a copy of the transaction confirmation along with your full postal address to Jan McCarthy at janmccarthy.1@gmail.com and Cc to kahrenwhite@iprimus.com.au. Alternatively, you can pay by cheque, forwarding this and your full address (printed clearly) to Jan McCarthy, 10 Carysfort St, Blackheath, NSW, 2785.

## Vejjasala Grounds Report

Just a note firstly about how beautiful the buildings and grounds of Vejjasala are looking. The work that Bruce has done fixing up the main house is amazing. I got a clear sense that the house is being cared for and that will hopefully be the feeling that people get when they visit.

The work that Dave, Pip and Fran's have done on the grounds is a joy to behold. There are jonquils out everywhere and a light coloured wombat was walking around taking things in with me. Birds everywhere!

On the development side, we are just about to resubmit our change of usage so that Vejjasala becomes recognised as a "Place of Worship" by the local council. Our initial application was sent back to us as needing more information and a new application will likely be submitted by around the end of June.

Much metta

Lachlan

## Reader Recommends

The recommendation for an enjoyable and beneficial book this month comes from our President Sue Toohey.

Sue recommends *In Buddha's Kitchen* by Kimberley Snow.

*Kimberley Snow offers an outrageously funny and honest account of her adventures*

*as head cook at a Tibetan Buddhist retreat center. With her earthy sensibility and sharp sense of humor, the author shows this world in a light devoid of preciousness—while expressing with heart the integrity of the spiritual work being undertaken. We come away from our visit to this exotic realm having found it both extraordinary and surprisingly familiar. The neuroses, obsessions, and petty concerns exposed by Snow—both in herself and her fellow staff members—prove to be grist for the mill for discovering the grace inherent in life just as it is.*



<http://www.shambhala.com/in-buddha-s-kitchen.html>

## A Prayer of Forgiveness

If I have harmed anyone in any way either knowingly or unknowingly through my own confusions I ask their forgiveness.

If anyone has harmed me in any way either knowingly or unknowingly through their own confusions I forgive them.

And if there is a situation I am not yet ready to forgive I forgive myself for that.

For all the ways that I harm myself, negate, doubt, belittle myself, judge or be unkind to myself through my own confusions I forgive myself.

## Donations

You may or may not realise that Sangha Lodge is solely funded from your donations. Following the teaching of the Buddha, we do not charge for teachings or meditation evenings, preferring instead to rely on our members' generosity. Unfortunately, this often means a shortfall when it comes to meeting our weekly expenses from the donation box on a Wednesday night. It would be much easier for the Centre to function if we were able to rely on regular donations from more members and guests of the centre.

One easy way to arrange for funds to be regularly transferred is via Internet Banking. Most Banks now offer a 'pay anyone' service whereby you are able to set up a regular monthly transfer to any nominated account. If you would like to set up this kind of regular donation to Sangha Lodge you will need the following account information - Bank: St George BSB#: 112 879 Account#: 131328823 Account Name: Association of Engaged Buddhists. If you would like to make a tax deductible donation to the Building Fund please make your direct transfer to the following account: Bank: St George BSB: 112-879 Account Number: 430589986 Account Name: Association of Engaged Buddhists.

In order that we can budget our funds effectively and where appropriate supply you with a receipt for tax purposes we would appreciate it if you would email [office@engagedbuddhists.org.au](mailto:office@engagedbuddhists.org.au) with the details of your regular transfer or tax deductible donation. Your Dana (generosity) is greatly appreciated by the many people who come to the centre or are served by it in the wider community (hospitals, hospices and private visits by the Sangha). Please help, even a small monthly donation can make a big difference to Sangha Lodge.

## Association Membership

If you would like to become a member of the Association and thus receive this newsletter (if you don't already!), please fill in a membership form and leave it with a Committee member. You can pick one up from Sangha Lodge the next time you visit, or ring our office and get one posted to you. Membership is due for renewal each September and costs \$50/year.

## For Those in Need

Please keep our brothers and sisters who are ill or struggling with some other distress in your thoughts during the day. This short prayer for freedom from suffering may help you be mindful of their needs.

### Prayer for Freedom from Suffering

May all beings everywhere plagued with sufferings of body and mind quickly be freed from their illnesses.

May those frightened cease to be afraid, and may those bound be free.

May the powerless find power, and may people think of befriending one another.

May those who find themselves in trackless, fearful wilderness--the children, the aged, the unprotected--be guarded by beneficent celestials, and may they swiftly attain Buddhahood

If you know of someone who would like to be remembered by our community, let Bhante know and we can mention them in future issues of the Newsletter. Even when there are no particular friends to remember, we ask you to send thoughts of good will in general to those who are experiencing hardship or pain.

