

# DHARMA E-NEWS

## Christopher Titmuss

In seeing -  
What utter joy!  
The small mind becomes  
transparent, empty,  
without foundation.

Christopher



## DHARMA E-NEWS ISSUE 17 - April -July 2009 & INTERNATIONAL SCHEDULE

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One page of A4 paper is about 500 words.

[My International Teaching Schedule from March 2009 to end of February 2010](#) is on my websites, as well as available at the end of this **Dharma eNews**.

In the Dharma

Three Bows  
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## Yoga, Yoga, Yoga. Where are the Yogis?

*A Dharma perspective*

**Christopher Titmuss**  
6205 words

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*In September, 2008, I gave a workshop including a(recorded) talk titled Yoga, Yoga, Yoga. Where are the Yogis? at the Triyoga Centre in London, a major yoga centre, to yoga teachers and practitioners of yoga. This article addresses the theme from a Dharma perspective and points to what the Western traditions of yoga*

*and dharma share in common.*

Yoga is in many ways a sister tradition of Dharma. They share similar roots in the Indian tradition of liberation and exploration of body, mind and our relationship to the world.

Both traditions have also had to endure an axing of indispensable limbs. Contemporary hatha yoga has tended to become cut off from the depths and expanse of the wider yoga tradition. The same criticism can be applied to insight meditation (vipassana) with its emphasis on sitting meditation or sitting/walking meditation as being at the heart of the dharma teachings and practices. There is not only a neglect of samatha or deep absorption (*jhana*) meditations but also of inquiry into the way of life of the dedicated dharma practitioner and uncovering of ultimate truth. The narrow focus on hatha yoga or vipassana meditation reveals a significant blind spot that needs to be addressed. This article explores the depth and expanse of inquiry found in the Yoga tradition and its relationship with Dharma.

The teachings of the Buddha, as found in the Pali suttas, and the Yoga-Sutra of Patanjali (2<sup>nd</sup> century AD) share a similar vision, namely the utter transformation of a human being. That is the unmistakable message that shines through both the Pali suttas of the Buddha and the Yoga-Sutras of Patanjali. Both these deeply respected teachers emphasised inquiry into mind/body and liberation. Yet you might think that Patanjali, acknowledged by yoga teachers worldwide as a major founder of the yoga tradition, only offered teachings on hatha yoga and pranayama. Equally, you might think from some Buddhist meditators that the Buddha only emphasised mindfulness/meditation and loving kindness. In the 11,000 discourses of the Buddha, you will find investigations into every aspect of life, including both conventional and ultimate truth. In the concise verses of the Yoga-Sutra, there are only three statements referring to the asanas (postures).

*"The postures should embody steadiness and ease.*

*This occurs as all effort relaxes and coalescence arises revealing that the body and the infinite universe are indivisible.*

*Then one is no longer disturbed by the play of opposites." Yoga-Sutra of Patanjali. Chapter 2. Verses 46-48 (translated by C. Hartranft)*

Patanjali acknowledged the value of hatha yoga but clearly did not give the *asanas* (yogic postures) a central place. In fact *asana* traditionally meant the *seat*, *mat* or *cushion* used for meditation. The yogi sits cross-legged in a state of utter stillness with the posture firm and upright enabling her or him to experience oneness and subtle bodily sensations. Hatha yoga is an excellent training for stillness in the sitting meditation posture. However, we live in an age where this preparatory training has become reified at the expense of the rich tradition of yoga with its ultimate aim to free us from our limitations. We have neglected the richness of both yoga and vipassana traditions through the inflation of the significance of mere features of exploration. Lovers of both traditions deserve more than what is on offer. The contemporary practice of yoga and insight meditation are both in need of

revolutionary change and can inform each other in doing so.

To put it bluntly, yoga is far more than stretching. Yoga needs to expand its depth of exploration from its current restricted view excluding reflection and inquiry and mostly concentrating on posture and relaxed awareness at the exclusion of much else. Where will this change come from? Yoga classes are found in most towns and cities in the West but where are the yogis? For yoga teachers to expand their remit rather than confine yoga to hatha yoga would require them to look deeply into the full practice of yoga and to make full use of the teachings of Patanjali.

Even if yoga teachers may be ready to embark on such a dialogue they may wonder if their students are ready to listen, to question, to explore and become yogis 24/7. I have the opportunity to meet with dedicated practitioners of yoga and insight meditation and I do meet many who are ready to make the leap into a yogi way of life with its quiet, sustained disciplines and round the clock commitment to inquiry into every area of their life.

In his *Yoga-Sutra* (Chapter 3. Verses 24), Patanjali borrows from the Buddha's teaching, listing the Four Divine Abidings (*Brahma Viharas*) of love, compassion, appreciative joy and equanimity to remind yogis that their practice includes a real engagement with the world.

The same principle applies to practitioners of insight meditation. Indeed Dharma teachers, including myself, often refer to the practitioners on retreats as 'yogis' - a useful and appropriate label during the time of the retreat. The yogis stay in a small room either alone or with others, with only a handful of clothes that they brought with them. Food is generally simple, e.g. porridge for breakfast, a vegetarian lunch, and bread, condiments and tea in the evening, including herbal tea (pronounced *horrible* tea in Hindi!). There is formal meditation practice from around 5.30 am to 22.00 in the four postures, an hour after breakfast for karma yoga (a work period for service to the retreat centre) and observation of the disciplines and austerities of the day such as silence, stillness and maintaining sustained presence free from desire. Thus the practitioner has the experience for a weekend, weeklong or longer of living as a *dhyana* yogi, a yogi of meditation. Ideally, the same basic lifestyle applies to residential yoga retreats.

Some Buddhist centres and Yoga centres, however, have upgraded the quality of their centres to a level not far removed from 4-star hotels with a daily rate to reflect these upmarket facilities. To pay for these, and for the salaries of those who manage them (who may or may not be interested in practice), ensures that only the better off can afford such retreats unless one goes cap in hand for a scholarship. In such places, it might be better to describe the yogis as hotel guests. When people (as sometimes happens) send to a centre in advance a list of their personal requirements, demand their own room, and bring their laptop, i-Pod, Blackberry and lavish meditation equipment, then the commitment to the fullness of the yoga/dharma tradition has surely faded into the past.

Most retreats have a closing talk encouraging yoga or meditation practice in daily life.

Many yogis leave retreats trying to apply such valuable practices, morning and evening, in daily life. Some are blessed with such a discipline but others find their practice simply falls apart and fades away soon after returning home. It is a constant concern of practitioners, but reflects the over-emphasis on formal practice. The yoga of daily life and the dharma of daily life embraces every single feature of our existence, while yoga and meditation teachers too often give the impression to the practitioners that yoga is asanas and dharma is meditation. Neither the Buddha nor Patanjali subscribed to this narrow and limited view.

## Benefits of Hatha Yoga

There is a vast network of yoga practitioners attending evening classes, weekend workshops, yoga retreats and embarking on yoga training courses. Yoga offers enormous health benefits contributing to the release of flows of healing energy, muscle co-ordination, poise, presence, deep relaxation, purification and a real sense of well being. Through the range of *asanas*, the mind grounds itself in the body enabling a genuine integration of being to take place. Practitioners of yoga can expand their pain horizons by allowing themselves to settle into a posture for extended moments to stretch out the cells, and to relax into the posture before mindfully and slowly moving out of it. Hatha yoga contributes to harmony of body and mind - yoga means to "join together" and is related to the English word "yoke" - that which joins the ox to the plough. This is the great strength of hatha yoga. Pranayama (*prana* - energy, *yama* - discipline) exercises, primarily in the form of application of breathing techniques, bring oxygen deep into cellular life to suffuse physical existence with the air element offering revitalisation and renewal to the whole being.

It is common, and appropriately so, for those who practice hatha yoga also to adopt a vegetarian diet, with a total absence of animals, birds and fish. Meat is superfluous to a balanced diet and is probably more harmful than beneficial for both health and humanitarian considerations. Animals sent to the abattoirs for execution experience high levels of stress and the diet and injections given to cows, sheep, pigs, chickens bear little relationship to their natural diet. Seas and rivers are polluted penetrating the cells of fish. Human beings then eat the harmful consequences. Fish stock in the ocean is desperately low. People may choose to be vegetarian for health reasons, out of compassion for animals, to make a contribution for a sustainable world, or with all three intentions.

The combination of regular hatha yoga, pranayama exercises and a vegetarian diet (with low sugar, low salt and low chemical input) contributes significantly to the welfare of adults and children and makes us far less likely to contract the three scourges of Western life - cancer, heart disease and diabetes, especially if we have no genetic predisposition towards these diseases. The discipline of yoga has a fine track record in safeguarding practitioners from illness triggered by lack of exercise and a poor diet. Yoga also enables *prana* to flow freely and effortlessly for enduring health. In an intelligent society, yoga, pranayama, meditation and wholefood vegetarian diet [*you can get veg food in schools & offices but may be high in fat and not very healthy*] would be available in every classroom, school, university, factory and office leading to a dramatic saving in health care costs for young and old alike. Yet governments, medical science and the pharmaceutical industry,

as well as the strict adherents to the three Middle Eastern religions, generally dismiss yoga and meditation, despite the health and cost benefits.

The Buddhist world also needs to sit up and take notice of the tradition of hatha yoga and a vegetarian diet. There is a woeful absence and ongoing neglect of physical exercise in most of contemporary Buddhism, East and West. In the long standing past, the followers of the Buddha lived a homeless, nomadic way of life for nine months a year making long walks (yatras) up and down hills, through the jungle and in the flat regions, rarely spending more than a few days in each place. Yatras kept the wanderers fit and lean. As time went by, these free and independent spirits gradually faded in numbers. Spiritual seekers took on a uniform (formal robes) and began to settle permanently in the communal homes (monasteries) that householders had built for them for the rainy season. They secured their own hut (a kind of rent free bedsit), abandoned yatras or other exercises, and ate meat, since by offering this most expensive food item to monks, householders believed they made more merit. Not surprisingly, today far too many monks have health problems through a sedentary way of life and suffer from a real lack of knowledge and practice around posture, diet and energy. Only a few Buddhist monks between the various traditions are vegetarian.

Although the Buddha took a tolerant view towards meat eating, it is extremely unlikely that as a wandering ascetic himself, dependent on alms food, he or his practitioners ate any meat since householders throughout India assumed, and still do, that all mendicants would be vegetarian. He also protested about the Brahmin Puritanism around diet. He certainly made little reference to exercise other than to extol the value of sitting, walking, standing and reclining. (The very slow, meditative walking up and down is an aspect of formal meditation practice).

The Buddha expounded on the Noble Eightfold Path of Right (meaning *Complete, Fulfilling*) View, Right Intention, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness, Right Concentration. We need to explore every link for clarity, comprehension and insight, but there is in the Buddhist tradition a grossly exaggerated emphasis on the last two links of the path and associated meditation practices. You could be forgiven for thinking that the Buddha taught a one-fold path or two-fold path.

Yoga practitioners with their wise approach to the body through hatha yoga, formal breathing exercises and diet should not however extol themselves in comparison to narrow Buddhist practices. Yoga teachers and practitioners can learn from the Buddha, who also placed much emphasis on our direct experience of the body and our relationship to it, though he adopted a different approach than hatha yoga. In the celebrated Satipatthana Sutta (Applications of Mindfulness), he endorsed a direct and sustained meditation on the body in six areas.

1. *Breathing*
2. *Four postures*
3. *Bodily movements and functions*
4. *Parts of the Body*

## 5. Four elements

## 6. The Corpse

The Buddha pointed to a direct way to see the body as body rather than as "I," "me" or "mine" and thus revealed the way to immediate liberation from grasping onto the body as "self."

Speaking to a group of men, devoted to his teachings, who were living a nomadic way of life, he said: "In this way, he abides contemplating the body as a body, internally or he abides contemplating the body as a body externally or both internally and externally. He contemplates the nature of arising or the nature of passing or the nature of both arising and passing. Or else mindfulness that "there is a body" is simply established to the extent necessary for bare knowing and prolonged mindfulness. And he abides independent (*anussito* - literally not leaning upon) anything in the world. (see *Christopher's Dharma blog for Pali/English translation of this important refrain*).

The Buddha gave tremendous encouragement to turn full attention to the bare characteristics of bodily life so as to realise clearly and comprehensively the body as simply phenomena arising and passing until we are free from all attachments and clinging to the body. This does not imply any neglect of the body. A wise relationship to the body includes postures, diet, and care for the body as an expression of organic life and as our vehicle for practice, understanding and liberation.

All six ways listed above confirm the body *as not me, not myself, not who I am*. Bodily movement and functions include eating, drinking, defecating, urinating, waking up, talking and keeping silent. Parts of the body include hair of the head, hair of the body, bones, kidneys, contents of stomach, faeces, blood, sweat, snot and urine. This aspect for the practitioner serves as a reminder to meditate on *asubha* (literally - *not beautiful*) parts of the body. Such a yogic practice dissolves the obsession and infatuation with physical beauty and its presence or absence in oneself or another. The practitioner also turns his or attention to the four elements - earth, air, heat and water that constitute the physical make up of the whole body. Earth is the material element or the sensation of hardness. Air is found in the breath and in wind. Heat is found in temperature - feeling hot, cold or warm. Water is found in blood, sweat and tears. Finally, there is meditation on the corpse in different levels of disintegration such as the bloated corpse, the corpse devoured by birds, the skeleton and a body that has become a handful of bones. "This body too is of the same nature. It will be like that. It is not exempt from that fate," commented the Buddha. The practice of the yogi, whether in the tradition of yoga or of dharma, is to know and see this clearly.

"Knowing" the body in a clear and comprehensive way puts an end to the projections, obsessions and suffering associated with the body and its appearance whether of oneself or another. In the *Kayagata Discourse*, the Buddha gave a simile of the mindfulness necessary. He said it is like a man carrying a bowl full of oil on top of his head who sees a beautiful woman singing and dancing surrounded by a crowd. Walking behind him is another man with a sword ready to cut off his head if he spills a drop of oil while watching

the beautiful woman. Beauty can be appreciated but it is not worth gushing over.

Both Yoga teachers and insight meditation teachers need to bring these straightforward practices into the teachings far more clearly. There is much self delusion about the body, including immersion in sexual fantasies and habits that distort clarity and corrupt love. We fall into the trap of spending enormous sums of money on the body to feel good about ourselves and to impress others through clothes, perfume, jewellery, cosmetics and other accessories, as well as the fad of tattoos. Are we simply becoming slaves to the clothes/cosmetic industry or are we moderate, if not frugal, with appearance, decoration and expenditure? Are we a consumer or a yogi?

A tormented ruler, King Ajattsatu of Maghada (in the region of Bodh Gaya) had murdered his father to gain access to the throne. On meeting with the Buddha, the king wanted to know what the point was in adopting a wandering yogi (*samana* in Pali language) way of life. Never one for watering down the dharma teachings, the Buddha spelt out his outlook to King Ajattasatu. He told the king of the "contentment" of those who intentionally live a simple lifestyle. "Just as a winged bird flies wherever it needs to fly with its wings, as its only burden, in exactly the same way, wherever he needs to go, an ascetic can just go taking these basic items. It is in this way that such a person is content."

When yoga and meditation becomes an activity to feel good and look good, it becomes far removed from the original spirit of either tradition, a very pale shadow of its liberating significance. In the most celebrated of all yoga discourses, Patanjali points to the eight limbs of yoga as the way of life of the yogi.

1. **Yama** - *Outer restraint through non-violence, non stealing, acting in a divine way (Brahmacharya) and non-attachment. (note that the name of the Lord of Death is Lord Yama, so restraint here points to the death of the unhealthy ego.*
2. **Niyama** - *inner restraint that contributes to purity of heart, contentment, austerity, study of the self and letting go.*
3. **Asana** - *hatha yoga.*
4. **Pranayama** - *breath exercises*
5. **Pratyahara** - *capacity to keep the mind from running to the senses and subsequent self indulgence*
6. **Dharama** - *concentration on what matters*
7. **Dhyana** - *meditation*
8. **Samadhi** - *total unification and experience of Oneness.*

As with the living body, each limb gives support to the other limbs as inter-connected activities. In the West, far too many yoga teachers have severed some limbs of yoga and retained only the asanas, pranayama and perhaps a little meditation. The first two limbs have often been quietly marginalised so that far too many yoga teachers cater for those with little or no interest in the yama, niyama, and the dissipation of the desires that lead to abuse of the senses. . We have become beggars at the sense doors. Beggars, rich and poor, can never stop their wanting from the world. We have becomes slaves to the

demands of the mind. Yoga, yoga, everywhere - but where are the yogis?

Again there is a certain parallel with the Buddhist tradition. In the sutta on all the taints (Middle Length Discourses, 2<sup>nd</sup> sutta) the Buddha told the dedicated practitioners that *seclusion, dispassion and relinquishment* support all the limbs of awakening, namely mindfulness dharma inquiry, happiness, joy, calmness, concentration, energy and equanimity. He added that *vexation and fever* arise in those who do not develop the limbs of awakening.

Ethics, virtue, love, letting go and appreciation of seclusion from the blind pursuit of pleasure all contribute to access to the seven limbs. The Buddha said running after pleasure to get gratification is behaving like a wild, crazy animal running in one direction after another instead of being firmly established in a centred mindfulness. Sadly, the neglect of total commitment to awakening and what supports the limbs means that realisation of liberation and the emptiness of self become inaccessible. Mindfulness/meditation and yoga then share something in common. Although they are practised at home, in workshops or retreats, the practitioners have failed to apply themselves fully to the other limbs as pointed out by the Buddha or Patanjali.

During my earliest period as a Buddhist monk, I received training in yoga from Sri. Suryagama in Thailand in the early 1970s. He gave me a thorough training to be a yoga teacher and wanted me to start teaching yoga in the Thai monasteries to give support to the practice of the monks and nuns. I eventually approached my Abbot about teaching yoga to help the monks with posture, uprightness and poise. The Abbot dismissed my proposal with the words: "Hinduism." I continued my yoga practice in my hut. Some years later when I became a dharma teacher, I taught a yoga class to the meditators for the first hour of the new day as part of their daily practice of harmony of body and mind.

We can't lay all the responsibility for the decline in the number of real yogis on yoga teachers since they have often developed their skills (and the limits of them) from teachers trained in the East or whose teachers trained in the East. Fortunately, however, there are many true yoga teachers who live the life of the yogi - with restraint, quiet discipline, very modest charges or donations, and selfless service to others. I know many yoga teachers whose way of life is dedicated to yoga and abide undemanding on the world. Such teachers are genuine yogis who keep to the spirit and letter of the yoga/dharma tradition. There is a liberating wisdom in the yogi way of life that is inspirational and insightful.

True yogis, including teachers and students of yoga/dharma, have no interest at all in an opulent lifestyle or to make a career out of yoga for personal status or a significant income. They may live alone or with others, live a celibate life or be in a relationship, be a parent or childless, live in the middle of a huge city or in a remote rural environment. They may or may not find it difficult to make ends meet but there is the strong spirit of the yogi about them. The modesty of such a way of life can remain hidden from others. They remain dedicated to the yogi way of life. They are the unsung heroes of the yoga tradition. It is a privilege to know such yoga teachers who stay true to the eight limbs of Patanjali,

Some of these teachers tell me they hesitate to introduce the eight limbs of the Yoga tradition or other prominent features of yoga in direct and practical ways into their classes. For example, there is a fear that yoga practitioners might object to any inquiry into the *yamas* and *niyamas* that would require them to examine every area of their lifestyle. Some yoga practitioners may be ready to explore all eight limbs of the Patanjali Sutra or an equivalent inquiry into liberation; it is a great pity not to offer them this opportunity.

In the *Bhagavad Gita (Chapter 6: 16-18)*, Krishna stresses the importance of Yoga. "*Yoga is not for those who eat too much or too little. But for those who are moderate in eating, sleeping, wakefulness, recreation, and moderate in all their actions. Yoga will bring an end to all sorrow. Those who have learned to discipline their mind and remain calmly established, free from attachment to all desires will attain to (the final) Yoga.*"

There are *Five Primary Yogas* for exploration constituting a yogi way of life with the ongoing interest in awakening of the whole being to liberation.

- 1. Bhakti Yoga**
- 2. Dhyana Yoga**
- 3. Karma Yoga**
- 4. Jnana Yoga**
- 5. Tantric Yoga**

The teachings of Krishna in the *Bhagavad Gita* offer many profound verses on the application of yoga to daily life. *Patanjali's Yoga-Sutra* and the *Gita* need to be on every yogi's bookshelf just as every Dharma practitioner should have a copy of *Middle Length Discourses* on his or her shelf.

1. **Bhakti Yoga** - the Yoga of Devotion. The ordinary mind that worships God, seeks God's help - for forgiveness, for prayers to be answered, for events to work out well, for a better life, The yogi of devotion experiences a different relationship to the 'Supreme.' He or she desires to offer up their life for the Supreme - meaning *That* which is greater than themselves. To find the Supreme requires a letting go of the finite, the measurable and the limited in whatever way it manifests, inwardly or outwardly. The strength and intensity of devotion can help dissolve the anguish, pain and regrets of a foolish and blameworthy past. There is no easy escape route from the harmful behaviour of the past. The bhakti yogi does not require a belief in a personal God. When our whole being remains steadfastly focussed on the Supreme then the bhakti yogi finds a rightful balance in working with and accommodating the world of change, of impermanence and relativity. Some find comfort in the God language, especially when we strip the word God of its bizarre religious beliefs and wisely sense God as immensity. Others remain totally devoted to the Dharma, the teachings and practices for liberation. Others express devotion through mindfulness, meditation, care and sensitivity to themselves and others. Others have great devotion to the now and trust in presence and others remain devoted to a vision of a free way of life.

2. **Dhyana Yoga** - the Yoga of Meditation. Meditation falls into two primary categories: first to be clear and wise about the appearances of the constructible and destructible, whether sentient or insentient, and second, to be clear and wise about the reality of the Unconstructible and the Indestructible that has no colour, sounds, smell, taste, touch or inner formation yet is knowable - as colour is known to a person with good eyesight or the effortless knowing that the hand is connected to the arm. Meditation includes the formal posture, application of mindfulness and reflection on circumstances to see clearly into events. "The thoughts of the undecided, the irresolute and the wavering are many branched and endless" warns Krishna (*Bhavadgita Chapter 2. Verse 41*). The meditative yogi knows that happiness and contentment are found within, dispels loneliness and finds inner peace. *Kundalini Yoga* (the Yoga of Coiled Power) refers to the energy that lies dormant at the base of the spine that releases in some forms of meditation to enable significant levels of energy and bliss to emerge. *Dhyana* yoga engages in the resources of silence and stillness so that the heart/mind enters into a state of natural samadhi (deep unification). The dhyana yogi lives in a harmonious and integrated way, free from stress, the pressure of longing and has the capacity, to treat alike pleasure and pain, gain and loss, victory and defeat. Peace of mind allows for natural joy overcoming abuse of the senses.

3. **Karma Yoga** - the Yoga of Action. This essentially means the employment of wise and compassionate action in the world contributing the transformation of the inner and outer life. Service to others, to animals and the environment clearly denote expressions of karma yoga. Karma yoga reveals itself as a sacrifice, a renunciation of areas of self interest out of consideration for others. The karma yogi does not feel bound to action while recognising the potential for realisation through direct action. Such a yogi expresses his or her freedom through not being dependent on the results of action, whether foreseen or unforeseen. The karma yogi believes in action without harbouring desire for personal reward whether name and fame, power or personal wealth. Those who set standards for karma yoga inspire others to follow in their footsteps. It is not surprising that men and women we revere over the centuries have engaged in the yoga of action, regardless of the personal cost to themselves. The karma yogi who lives in a state of self delusion believes that "I am the doer." In such a belief, the doer becomes identified with the doing and the results of what is done. This often leads to inflation of the ego, disappointment, despair and collapse of a vision. An authentic yogi sees the emptiness of the claim "I am a doer." Others may attribute the karma yogi with engaging in great actions, in worthwhile deeds, but the yogi declines to grasp onto himself as an agent nor get caught up in the effects of action, whether intended or unintended consequences. There is simply the yoga of action.

4. **Jnana Yoga**. (Yoga of Knowledge). There is a body of unfolding knowledge handed down through the sages and the sacred texts for countless generations that serve to transform consciousness rather than inform the mind. Yoga of knowledge is not a new form of knowledge, such as science might claim before superseding it with another new form of knowledge. Sages, past, present and future, expound a knowledge to liberate human beings from the poisons of the mind, such as greed, hostility and fear, and awaken us to truth and a steadfast reality. Knowledge becomes true knowledge when it makes a real difference to our lives. Prior to then, the jnana yogi treats knowledge as information. Intuitive perceptions, insights, fruit bearing reflections, the emergence of understanding

and the range of realisations, as well as knowing the depths of conventional and spiritual experiences, constitute the abiding interest of the jnana yogi. The true jnani has accomplished everything. There is nothing more than needs to be done. He or she *knows* non-action in action and action in non-action. He or she has let go of action and equally let go of inaction. Echoing the words of the Buddha, Krishna said in the Gita that the jnana yogi knows contentment since such a yogi lives without dependency. "He (she) does nothing though ever engaged in action."

5. **Tantra Yoga** (Yoga of Tantra). Tantric Yoga belongs to a long standing Indian tradition with records dating back to the third or fourth century CE or earlier. Tantra embraces mystery, the esoteric, the arts, poetry, dance, theatre, creativity, sexuality, sensuality, religious rituals, discourses and a range of esoteric teachings. Tantra derives from a Sanskrit word "*tan*" - to expand or to weave (*among its meanings*). The Tantric yogi explores the wise application of creative passion and intimacy serving as the material for awakening and liberation. Women and men have an equal engagement in Tantra. Tantra encourages exploration of consciousness outside of the box of the usual restrictive religious institutions, There is an orthodoxy found in much of Hatha Yoga and Mahayana or Theravada Buddhism that Tantric yogis have moved away from. The Tantric guru can play a prominent role in Tantra for the yogi whose heart wishes to open itself up to the *mysterium tremendum*. (Unfortunately the warped-minded purveyors of Tantric sex exploit a profound tradition for their own narcissistic ends, in what is perhaps the most crude of all examples of the tearing off one limb of a tradition at the expense of the other limbs of Tantra yoga.) True Tantric yogis endeavour to bring together the wealth and diversity of human experience, the heavens and the hells. All such experiences are transformed into the realm of Dharma. The adept practices of the Tantric yogi harness the energies of his or her subtle body so they enter into the fullness of participation and union with what is revealed near and far. Tantra transforms ordinary mortals into Gods and Goddesses. It is said of the authentic Tantric yogi: "The yogi goes about his own life while the world looks upon him laughing, reproaching and with contempt. The yogi wanders in different guises - acting sometimes like dignified person, like a vargrant or like a demon." (Kularnava Tantric text).

Whether primarily a dharma practitioner or yoga practitioner, we establish ourselves as genuinely embodied yogis through the daily application of the *Eight limbs of Patanjali* or the Buddha's *Noble Eightfold Path* and/or the *Five Primary Yogas*. We need to establish in the West a much greater network of dedicated yogis fully committed to total liberation, the dissolution of materialism and utter indifference to the pursuit of personal status. The yogi values simplicity over complexity, sustainability over fashion, austerity over consumption, discipline over desire, love over lust and compassion over pity. The life of the yogi reveals a conscious liberation from the superficiality, neurotic values and violence of Western society. The yogi lives a noble way of life. There is no real substitute.

*May all beings explore the disciplines and exploration of the tradition of the Yogi*  
*May all beings explore the disciplines and exploration of the tradition of Dharma*  
*May all being live a free and liberated life.*

## What is the making of a Dharma Teacher?

Christopher Titmuss

3510 words

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*Dharma teachings and practices address meditation, love, wisdom and emptiness of becoming. We apply Dharma to our various roles in daily life. Like everything else, dharma teachers arise from situations and circumstances. Dharma teaching is one of many ways of serving the Dharma.*

Ajahn Dhammadasa, Thailand's revered Vipassana teacher, told me in the 1970's: "Go to the West and teach Vipassana (insight meditation) and nothing else." Ajahn Buddhadasa, the great reformer of Theravada Buddhism and Dharma visionary, told me in the 1970's: "Go to the West and teach sunyata (emptiness) and *idappaccayata* = conditionality of this (any object)." On a visit I made to Thailand around 1990, Ajahn Buddhadasa also emphasised to me *atammayata* - "not being made up by, or made up from." He stressed to me the importance of giving to the West the ultimate teachings of the Buddha on the unconstructed, the unmade up of.

I never received any formal training as a teacher. For both Ajahn Dhammadasa and Ajahn Buddhadasa the concept of training a Dharma teacher would have been completely alien. How can one train another human being in wisdom? How can one train another human being in emptiness?

Yet, I wasn't entirely left to get on with it. Ajahn Dhammadasa would call upon me to give a Dharma talk with a Thai monk, or the delightful Indian monk, Bhikkhu Nagasena, to act as interpreter. There was no opportunity for preparation. In a Buddhist monastery, the Ajahn (Dharma teacher) is a kind of benign dictator. Out of respect for my teacher, it would not have occurred to me to decline the invitation to speak. The Ajahn never gave feedback about my talks but I could tell whether he approved or disapproved. When he spoke in the hall he would perhaps make reference to it - either about my understanding or lack of it. If he said nothing, it meant the talk fell into the category of neither approval nor disapproval.

Westerners would turn up at the monastery, including occasional missionaries from North America or Europe, anxious to convert me back to Christianity. Wishing to save my soul, one Swedish missionary told me: "Our Church has a direct telephone line to God. But you have to go through the switchboard. There is only one switchboard operator. He is the only person who can put you through to God. His name is Jesus."

"Thank you," I replied. "I'm a Buddhist monk. I don't use a phone."

Other Westerners called in at the monastery to find out about meditation practice - hitchhikers, hippies, junkies, volunteers from aid agencies, students, foreign embassy staff, English language teachers and a handful of Western monks and nuns from other Thai monasteries. The Ajahn used to send them over to me to give Vipassana instructions in the sitting, walking, standing and reclining postures and to check their practice for the days or weeks they stayed. At one point, the number of Westerners reached eleven. Enough, I thought. I had no interest to be a Vipassana teacher. I left the monastery and moved into a cave on Ko Pha Nga island to continue my practice. It was only a couple of years later that I accepted invitations to teach and lead retreats. Ajahn Buddhadasa had once asked me if Westerners were really interested in realising *sunyata* and *idappaccayata*. I said I wasn't sure.

It is worthwhile to give consideration to the process in the West for the making of dharma teachers, to ensure continuity of the Dharma for future generations. I tend to take the view of my renowned teachers that a training course in wisdom and emptiness cannot in itself turn meditators into teachers. However I also regard it as irresponsible simply to tell someone to go and teach the Dharma and let him or her get on with it.

In a typical year of Dharma teaching around the world, I co-teach with between 20 and 35 teachers, all of whom are people whom I have encouraged to serve the dharma to others. Some have many years of experience while others are relatively new to teaching. They are not entirely thrown into the deep end and told to swim. Yet they are challenged to share their understanding, speak to small and large groups and handle the many experiences of dharma practitioners. There are often a lot of expectations and demands upon dharma teachers to be clear and wise on all manner of issues.

A significant number of my co-teachers have participated in my Dharma Facilitators Programme (DFP) that has been running for eight years in different parts of the world. These residential DFP meetings are for those with real experience in the dharma/mind/body field. We share our experience, examine suttas, engage in inquiry, facilitate groups and conduct one to one dialogues on a dharma experience or issue.

I also give the opportunity for DFP participants to give dharma talks, lead dharma practices, offer guided meditations, and take question and answers with the opportunity for participants to give feedback. Some of the participants have been in the DFP programme since its inception. It is not a teacher training programme as such, but new teachers regularly emerge from it. Those who give talks, facilitate groups or offer instructions always receive feedback from others listening in the DFP.

## **The New Generation of Dharma Teachers**

With my encouragement, a new generation of dedicated Dharma practitioners has started to teach. Often, they have spent much time in India and Buddhist countries or have lived for years in Dharma communities in the West, and have a wealth of experiences and insights at many different levels. They have first hand experience of sharing, a certain austerity in lifestyle and well-developed skills in living and working with people. The East

and/or community living serve as an important backbone for many - though not all - teachers of the Triple Gem. Others live a very modest conventional lifestyle, but attend retreats every year, connect with a network of yogis in their home area, and love the practice of dharma in daily life.

Buddhist monasteries in the West make a very important contribution to the development and sustaining the Triple Gem of the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha in the West. Buddhist abbots and senior monks have a wealth of experience in the tradition. Lay teachers and ordained teachers share a vision of service. At times, ordained and lay teachers can experience some isolation in the role. Lay teachers can benefit through contact with the monasteries.

Having known a person for years, and witnessed first hand their development, I may give them encouragement to join me as an assistant to serve the dharma to others. I ensure they pace themselves. I have adopted an approach similar to Ajahn Dhammaddaro in terms of establishing a teacher - that is, offering ongoing support, presence and availability while the person is teaching. Some may teach with me regularly for some years before being ready to teach alone. As a senior teacher, I feel it is important to be patient rather than fix a specific amount of training time to make a teacher. It would be tragic if dharma teaching deteriorated in the years ahead into becoming a career prospect, a formalised training over a set period of time or a means to securing a diploma - thus losing commitment to freedom of the spirit and a certain austerity in the way of life.

On retreats, dharma gatherings, dharma yatras, Dharma Facilitators Programmes and other dharma events, we, the teachers, meet regularly. As teachers, we may have a one day workshop together or meet for a dharma discussion between us every other evening. In this way, teaching and learning are simultaneous events. The ongoing practical guidance, the DFP programme and direct working with other teachers and myself forms the foundation for the ongoing process to establish a teacher. Some teachers wisely continue to explore the teachings and practices of other traditions and schools, East and West, whether Buddhist or otherwise. All credit to them.

In any of our programmes, I can see for myself how a new teacher is developing and also receive feedback from fellow teachers and the yogis in order to respond appropriately to the needs and concerns of the new teacher. Teachers who work directly with me get the opportunity to teach in larger groups, often with people from 20 countries or more, at a single event. This is an invaluable experience, building trust and authority in their role.

There are a handful of new teachers in our network of Sangha who have neither participated in my DFP programme nor yet assisted me anywhere in the world. If I have known the person for years, and know their love of dharma, their dedication to the practice and understanding about practice, then I have encouraged them to offer dharma classes, non-residential workshops and short retreats. It is important that teachers, long standing and new, stay true to their own experiences when sharing the Dharma with others. In some places, two or three teachers support each other if there is not a senior teacher available. A teacher who has to rely primarily on their communication skills and

understanding of the Dharma, as well as other teachers, can contact me by email or phone for advice.

At times, teachers experience a personal difficulty - so do most of the Noble Ones. Some teachers find themselves practising to deal with:

- *a failed relationship*
- *Issues in the Buddhist world*
- *conflict with another teacher*
- *coping with projections onto the strong archetype of the 'teacher' role*
- *enduring health problems*
- *falling in love with a yogi, who reciprocates the love,*
- *family problems and responsibilities*
- *getting caught in recreational drugs or alcohol*
- *married teacher who finds a 'soul mate'*
- *financial issues or the desire for more income*
- *not having a partner*
- *rejection by some other teachers or certain yogis*
- *self doubt*
- *becoming stressed out*
- *struggling with the role*
- *unresolved personal tendencies and history*

Whether we have decades of teaching experience or are rather new, all teachers have had to learn to deal with at least some of these challenges. We have benefitted from the wise counsel of others inside and outside of dharma networks. It is vital that teachers keep in contact so that we can all act as mentors for each other. We are not saints. We are firstly men and women of dharma practice. All experiences must be converted into grist for the mill. Our ongoing practice makes us better human beings, and better teachers.

## **Working with new teachers**

We have a fine network of teachers, mentors, facilitators, managers and co-ordinators around the world. We have about 25 mentors in the Living Dharma Programme. My approach to the making of a dharma teacher is not to make it easy for those involved. My two teachers didn't make it easy for me.

I have to rotate those I invite to be co-teachers and this can generate, understandably, a little unrest. At times, I feel like a football manager. I regularly have to select teachers to co-teach with me and I have to drop others. If I feel a dharma talk is lightweight, unfocussed or with too many personal stories, I don't hesitate to tell the teacher directly. Also, I do not want teachers to depend on the same handful of talks they have prepared. They have to keep developing fresh themes. Occasionally, I have had to give some blunt feedback on the overall tone or specifics in a talk.

I have sometimes had to relate the dissatisfaction that practitioners have felt with a

teacher's approach whether in a group or one to one interview. A teachers needs sufficient authority and confidence for their voice to carry - literally and metaphorically - to those at the back of the hall. It does not matter whether a teacher prepares every word of their dharma talk, or writes down some general notes, or speaks without any notes. What counts is the insight and inspiration of the listener.

Some teachers send me copies of articles, meditation instructions or email advice which they have written for dharma practitioners. A few times, I have told them to rewrite this. The Dharma is concerned with suffering, conditions for it, total resolution and the way to resolution. Dharma is not like the contemporary spiritualities that too often emphasise feeling good about oneself and others through various meditation techniques - which may be useful but don't cut to the bone. Virtue, samadhi, wisdom, knowing of liberation and knowing the emptiness of self constitute what matters. Some teachers have strengths in particular areas of the dharma, and they must respond from those strengths, while developing weaker areas.

Some of my co-teachers feel a close connection with the discourses of the Buddha and his practical methods and form of meditation. Others prefer to keep their teachings free from any Buddhist connection or Buddhist language. Again, it is important that teachers listen to themselves on their priority, though without watering down their approach. It is a wisdom teaching after all, not a clinging to the past, nor reaction against it. I use the Buddha's teachings as a backbone to the Dharma I serve while others prefer a more contemporary language. There can be wisdom in both styles.

Teachers also contact me regularly on the multiple issues that arise when taking the teaching in a new direction - eg psychology, business, the arts, yoga.

#### **Four Resources for the Making of a Teacher**

**First:** There is the invitation to teach from an established Dharma teacher - though it is important to acknowledge that there are some exceptions to this. An authentic dharma teacher can also flower in this world from within due to the arising of love born from deep realisation. Such a person does not require authorisation from another. Although authorised by his two teachers, namely Alara Kalama and Uddaka Ramaputta, the Buddha preferred to pursue his inquiry into the depths of total liberation further than his two teachers. After his awakening under the Bodhi Tree, he did not need anyone's approval to serve the Dharma to others. The majority of Dharma teachers have preferred to accept an invitation from a teacher rather than initiate teaching by themselves.

**Second:** The Dharma student feels reasonably ready to share her or his understanding of the Dharma with others. Many new teachers often need real encouragement to teach. Doubts easily arise particularly when giving a dharma talk to dharma friends. Some new teachers appear too keen to teach. The desire to teach can place pressure on a senior teacher or organisers. Over confidence or under confidence can inhibit the opportunity to be an effective teacher. Despite various shortcomings, the voice of wisdom can shine through for the benefit of practitioners. New teachers can judge their own teachings very harshly only to receive much appreciation from practitioners.

**Third**, the Sangha establishes Dharma teachers by inviting them to offer classes, workshops or retreats, residential or non-residential. If the person rarely offers any teaching, then he or she has not yet established themselves as a Dharma teacher. When I invite someone to teach, my wish is that she or he will go on to receive invitations to teach and to be available to serve others. A person becomes established as a Dharma teacher when he or she has a regular teaching programme throughout the year. Most need to combine dharma teaching with other work to pay their way through the year - nowadays, it is a rare teacher who lives totally on *dana*. In the long term, the senior teacher does not and, in fact, cannot just appoint a new teacher; it is the yogis themselves who establish the teacher through the dharma programmes the teacher and yogis form together.

**Fourth:** New teachers have to work hard to be recognised as a teacher, no matter how selfless their love and wisdom is. If they simply wait around for invitations from individuals or centres they may never have opportunities to teach. Some fine teachers never teach in some centres because the centre's programme is full and the current crop of teachers at a centre fill all the available weeks in the schedule. Centres are also sometimes reluctant to invite a new teacher because registrations will be much lower than with a long standing, well known teacher.

The new generation of dharma teachers may have to provide a website, advertise, make available information about themselves and their teachings, put up posters and let networks know of their availability. There is often a hesitation to do this because it sounds like self-promotion. There is some danger here, so the teacher needs to be clear that she or he is simply making the dharma available. Teachers have to decide where and when it is appropriate to charge, or to charge only for costs and have a *dana* (donation) bowl, or to rely completely on *dana*. Teachers also usually require a network of managers and co-ordinators. This requires trust and appreciation between the teacher and such volunteers, who may well need to be included in the distribution of *dana*.

There are teachers who have been serving the dharma for a decade or more, sometimes two or three decades, yet have never established any teachers. These teachers may prefer to leave the forming of new teachers to other senior teachers. That is their prerogative. Or they may feel that they lack the authority to invite their students to assist them in the teaching role. I would like to see teachers that I have helped establish in the role, who have been teaching for more than 10 years, to consider inviting dharma practitioners with depth of experience and understanding to assist them with a view gradually to making them teachers.

## Practical Information for new teachers

There are many ways to offer Dharma. I find it important to provide much information for those in the teacher role. I have written on various aspects of teaching and leadership following requests from teachers. It is important for new teachers to be able to draw on such resources and adapt in ways suitable for them.

My book "***Light on Enlightenment***" is a commentary on the major lists of the Buddha's teaching such as Four Noble Truths, Noble Eightfold Path and much more. Also translated into German. I have written other books dealing with Buddhist wisdom, mindfulness, suffering, 365 quotes of the Buddha, 365 quotes from the Buddhist tradition, and awakening. Some teachers offer primarily a formal training in Vipassana meditation

perhaps consisting of four weekend meetings per year over two or three years. I believe the new generation of teachers also need to be creative in their communication of dharma inside and outside of retreats, one day events and evening groups.

On my websites I have provided information on a variety of aspects and themes for reflection relevant for both Dharma teachers and yogis:

On [www.insightmediation.org](http://www.insightmediation.org):

- *Triple Gem and its meaning.*
- *30 guided meditations*
- *Comprehensive list in English/Pali of all the major groups of the Buddha,*
- *Definition of Practice*
- *Comprehensive instructions on leadership,*
- *Important factors for the facilitation and working with groups.*
- *Listening, reflecting and reporting*
- *Summary of the 25 main suttas of the 152 suttas in the Middle Length Discourses of The Buddha (translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi). I regard this as the core book of The Buddha's teachings, and indispensable for a Dharma teacher.*
- *Instructions around meditation in the four postures, four applications of mindfulness, working with emotional difficulties in meditation etc.*
- *Guidelines for a psychological/spiritual emergency.*
- *What do in the event of a meditator experiencing a psychological/spiritual crisis*
- *Dharma perspectives on environmental, social and political analysis*

In my websites, there are a number of articles for teachers and dharma practitioners that address some of the important features of dharma practice. We can easily slip into a habitual pattern in terms of the way we present the Dharma, and the forms and language we employ. We must guard against getting stuck. It is important that all teachers and yogis keep alive the spirit of inquiry. Keeping alive the freedom to express ourselves acts as a force for change, even if at times, others dismiss our concerns and our views.

On [www.dharmafacilitators.org](http://www.dharmafacilitators.org):

See *Articles* in Menu on home page

- [\*A Warning To Buddhists: Keep Your Eye On The Goal\*](#)
- [\*An Outline of The Buddha's Discourse On The All-Embracing Net Of Views\*](#)
- [\*Appearance In Court -The Practice Of Mindfulness\*](#)
- [\*Choice? What Choice? An Inquiry Into A Contemporary Myth\*](#)
- [\*How to Prepare A Dharma Talk\*](#)
- [\*How to Give a Dharma Talk\*](#)
- [\*Is It Unethical To Define Ethics As The Five Precepts?\*](#)
- [\*Nine of the Best Books\*](#)

- [The Buddha on Dana](#)
- [The Buddha's Charter For Inquiry: Analysis Of The Kalama Sutta](#)
- [What Are the Major Differences Between Buddhist Teachers and Satsang teachers?](#)

I don't offer an easy path to Dharma service. I believe there is no substitute for first hand experience. Some teachers start with an enormous sense of natural authority right from the beginning while others grow into it. Some will not remain teachers for various reasons, but continue to live a way of life in accordance with the Dharma. I learn a lot from everybody's wisdom and the way they express it. Being a Dharma teacher or Dharma manager isn't easy. Life isn't easy. There is no real ease outside of liberation - that is the core of the teaching of Dharma.

If Dharma teachers, the new generation of teachers and senior practitioners stay true to the Triple Gem, it will be for the real welfare and benefit of all, both present and future generations.

Finally, I would like to thank all the Dharma teachers, past and present, who have encouraged to me offer a programme of exploration and have recommend to me certain people in the Sangha who consistently show wisdom and compassion.

*May all teachers live in peace and harmony  
May all yogis live in peace and harmony  
May liberation remain at the heart of the teaching*

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## **9<sup>TH</sup> DHARMA YATRA NEAR BERGERAC, FRANCE JULY 30 - AUGUST 9, 2009**

DHARMA INQUIRY AND INSIGHT MEDITATION, PAUNEHOF, NEAR DUSSLEDORF, GERMANY  
AUGUST 26 TO AUGUST 30, 2009

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**FRANCE: Thursday July 30 16.00 to 12 noon, Sunday August 9, 2009**

### **9th ANNUAL YATRA (PILGRIMAGE) FOR 10 DAYS.**

Christopher, Cristelle, Chad, Zohar and other teachers.

A Yatra is a pilgrimage. Men, women and children have gone on walking pilgrimages for thousands of years.

Join our Dharma Yatra in Dordogne in the south of France from July 30th to August 9th, 2009. Our Yatra is run entirely on donations (dana) to cover all the running costs, and donations for teachers etc.

The 2009 Yatra will begin not far from near [Le Moulin Meditation Centre](#), Le Maine, 24640

Cubjac.

Cubjac is 120km from Bordeaux Airport, 90 minutes from Limoges and Bergerac airports and 25 minutes from Périgueux railway station.

There are places for 120 men, women and children.

The 2009 French Yatra will be our ninth annual yatra with a team of dharma teachers and expressions of music, poetry and theatre during the yatra.

If you require further information about the Dharma Yatra, and you cannot locate it in this website, then send an e-mail to the address below. Please keep your e-mail with any questions rather precise. Thank you.

Retreat will begin from near Le Moulin de Chaves Meditation Centre

To register, please send €50 or £35 or more to support initial costs or pay upon arrival.

For further information contact Muriel in France [murielbansard@laposte.net](mailto:murielbansard@laposte.net)

[www.dharmayatra.org](http://www.dharmayatra.org)

[info@dharmayatra.org](mailto:info@dharmayatra.org)

**Do join. It is a wonderful event.**

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**GERMANY: Wednesday 18.00 August 26 to Sunday 13.00 August 30, 2009**

### **DHARMA INQUIRY AND INSIGHT MEDITATION (Vipassana)**

Christopher and Tineke Osterloh

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In this four day programme, we will lead inquiry into the dharma in the morning with small groups. There will be silent meditations in the afternoon and a Dharma talk in the evening. This retreat provides the opportunity for in depth exploration of the Dharma and daily life with silence and stillness in the afternoon for meditation and reflection. Wake up until 9.30 am in the morning will also be a silent period. We will provide comprehensive meditation instructions. The programme is suitable for experienced meditators and beginners. There will be opportunity for one to one meetings with the teachers. The retreat will be taught in English/German.

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To register for 1st Dharma Gathering in Germany:

[dharmatreffen@web.de](mailto:dharmatreffen@web.de)

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## Why Western Advaita is Failing the Seeker

Dennis Waite

1264 words

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The word 'enlightenment' conjures disparate ideas in the modern mind and it seems that there are books and teachers to cater for whatever mistake in use a seeker might hold. In traditional advaita however, its meaning is very precise: enlightenment is the event in the mind of a person, when self ignorance is dispelled and it is realised that who-I-really-am has always been free and unlimited and that there never was a 'person' existing as a separate entity. Enlightenment is not an *experience*, e.g. of being totally 'in the present' and 'at one with nature', with no concerns or thoughts and so on. Experiences begin...and experiences end. Enlightenment is irrevocable -- the mind is said to 'take on the form of the undivided reality.'

Another aspect that causes much confusion in the Western world is the *means* by which enlightenment might be brought about. Broadly speaking, as regards the teaching of Advaita in the West today, these can be classified into three categories:

'Traditional Advaita' refers to those methods that have been formally passed down in India from teachers to disciple for well over a thousand years. Teaching utilises gradual, structured, tailored and reasoned explanation that can be verified in our own experience. Typically, an Upanishad or work of Sankara will be explained verse by verse, followed by discussion (satsang) on what has been covered. A complete course will last many years.

'Satsangs' are presented by modern 'teachers' who travel around the world holding short (2 to 3 hour) end bracket sessions in which they answer questions on any topic from whoever has turned up, regardless of their level of understanding.

Neo-advaita is an extreme variant of this same 'satsang' phenomenon, in which the 'teachers' present the final conclusions of non-dual philosophy without having taught any of the reasoning or preparatory groundwork.

Lacking structure, context and continuity, all forms of 'satsang' teaching are likely to prove ineffectual in the majority of cases. But neo-advaita has far more serious problems. It does not, for example, recognise the existence of either seeker or teacher and denies the existence of ignorance or a spiritual path to remove it. As my book *Enlightenment: the Path through the Jungle* puts it: "The message has now been reduced to an almost content less 'This is it!' A high energy message, low in spiritual nourishment; the 'fast food' of non-dual teaching."

All approaches agree that, *in reality*, there is neither seeker nor enlightenment but we do not perceive reality. Most seekers believe themselves to be separate entities, suffering in an apparent world. 'Bottom line,' absolute statements do not help -- they contravene all that the person sees and believes. Traditional advaita recognises this condition of self ignorance and provides proven techniques for progressively disabusing the seeker of false notions and enabling direct realisation of the non-dual truth.

The main problem of neo-advaita is its failure to recognise 'levels' of reality. From the relative point of view (i.e. the world of appearance) there *is* a person and this person *can* become enlightened. It is only from the absolute perspective the reality that it could be said (except that there is no one there to say it!) that there is nothing to be gained. As soon as we say anything at all, we are necessarily firmly in the relative viewpoint; only silence is commensurate with reality, since speech and thought are themselves dualistic. The irony is that, when ever neo advaita teachers host a satsang, they speak to other individuals. It is pointless to deny the transactional level of reality when they are charging £10 per person for a three hour tour (to know one)! Whilst traditional advaita also uses duality to point to non-duality (and openly admits this), it does so in an infinitely more logical, reasonable and effective manner.

The absolute truth is there has never been any creation -- there are no objects, no people, no duality of any kind. Traditional advaita and neo advaita alike teach this. But this does not seem like this to the 'person' who is deluded by self ignorance into believing that he or she is a separate individual living in an alien world. A useful metaphor is the dream. The dream world may be endlessly complex and totally believable to the dreamer but this is not seen until the dreamer awakens, when the dream world and the dreamer are seen (by the waker) never to have existed separate from the mind that apparently created them.

Non-duality is contrary to 'common sense' -- it cannot be perceived, inferred, presumed, or deduced by an analogy. Simply stating it to be so will never persuade a mind that has been entrenched in the belief of separation since birth. It is necessary to utilise proven techniques to undermine these false beliefs until the light of self-knowledge dispels the ignorance. Traditional advaita provides such an approach; the ultimate statement of neo-advaita do not.

As regards the likelihood of enlightenment, the traditional methods are still flourishing and achieving results. Traditional advaita is not under threat; it has survived because it works. Since neo advaita denies the existence of the person or enlightenment, self realisation *cannot* result from this teaching according to their own definition! And it is unlikely to do so according to the traditional one. Neo-advaita is a modern phenomenon which has risen to satisfy the 'want it now' mentality -- but enlightenment is not about getting what you want.

That neo-advaitans' denial of the world means that they can never help the seeker in any way since they deny the existence of such an entity. In fact, they have a net negative effect since they often turn the seeker away from a path that might have led somewhere,

leaving them lost in a forest of misunderstanding. There is no doubt that many seekers are severely frustrated bracket (and even occasionally suicidal) as a result of taking on board the non-teaching of neo- advaita and it was principally to help them that I wrote the book.

Some seekers go to satsang simply because they are dissatisfied with their lives and want to be 'happy' and many satsang teachers reinforce the belief that being vitally in the moment and living life to the full is the purpose of spiritual being. But the aim of traditional advaita is to realise the Self, not to gain a better samsara. Only removal of self-ignorance can bring true fulfilment (by enabling us to see that we are already fulfilled).

Seekers and teachers alike must reconcile themselves to the fact that there can be no short-term message measures. Wrong thinking is instilled into us from birth and this has to be corrected before we can begin to look at ourselves and the world in a completely different way, ultimately to realise that both Self and the world are one. Instinct, habits and deeply held opinion can never be overturned by a brief question and answer session on no particular topic by individuals who each have their own agenda. It requires a prolonged, concerted and coordinated inquiry, using proven techniques, with the help of teachers skilled in using those techniques. Genuine seekers of the truth need to find a teaching environment that satisfies these requirements and the onus is on today's Western satsang teachers to provide it.

*Article appeared in The Mountain Path.  
Published by Sri Ramana Maharshri Ashram,  
Tiruvannamalai. Tamil Nadu. South India  
January to March 2009*

**Enlightenment: The Path through the Jungle  
By Dennis Waite**

Published by O Books, May 2008  
£11.99 \$22.95.

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## **THE BUDDHA'S WORDS ON THE QUALITIES OF THE ULTIMATE PERSON.**

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**596 words**

"Seeing how,  
behaving how,  
is one said to be  
at peace?  
Gotama, tell me about  
-- when asked about --

the ultimate person."

*The Buddha:*

"Free from craving  
before the break-up  
[of the body],  
independent  
of *before*  
& *the end*, [1]  
not classified *in between*, [2]  
no yearning is his.

Un-angered,  
un-startled,  
un-boastful,  
un-anxious,  
giving counsel unruffled,  
*he* is a sage,  
his speech  
under control.

Free from attachment  
with regard to the future,  
not sorrowing  
over the past,  
he sees seclusion  
in the midst of sensory contacts. [3]  
He can't be led  
in terms of views. [4]

Withdrawn, un-  
deceitful, not  
stingy, not  
miserly, not  
insolent, in-  
offensive,  
he doesn't engage in  
divisive speech.

Not intoxicated with alluring things,  
nor given to pride,  
he's gentle, quick-witted,  
beyond conviction & dispassion. [5]

Not in hopes of material gain

does he take on the training;  
when without material gain  
he isn't upset.

Unobstructed by craving,  
he doesn't through craving[6]  
hunger for flavors.

Equanimous -- always -- mindful,  
he doesn't conceive himself as  
equal,  
superior,  
inferior,  
in the world.  
No swellings of pride  
are his.

Whose dependencies  
don't exist  
when, on knowing the Dhamma,  
he's in-  
dependent;  
in whom no craving is found  
for becoming or not-:  
*he* is said  
to be at peace,  
un-intent  
on sensual pleasures,  
with nothing at all  
to tie him down:  
one who's crossed over attachment.

He has no children  
cattle,  
fields,  
land.  
In him you can't pin down  
what's embraced  
or rejected,  
what's self  
or opposed to self.[7]  
He has no yearning  
for that which people run-of-the-mill  
or priests & contemplatives  
might blame --  
which is why

he is unperturbed  
with regard to their words.

His greed gone,  
not miserly,  
the sage  
doesn't speak of himself  
as among those who are higher,  
equal,  
or lower.  
He,  
conjuring-free,  
doesn't submit  
to conjuring,  
to the cycling of time.[8]

For whom  
nothing in the world  
is his own,  
who doesn't grieve  
over what is not,  
who doesn't enter into  
doctrines  
phenomena: [9]  
*he* is said  
to be  
at peace."

## Notes

1. Nd.I: "Independent of before & the end" = no craving or view with regard to past or future.
2. For discussions of how the awakened one cannot be classified even in the present, see MN 72 and SN XXII.85-86.
3. Nd.I: "He sees seclusion in the midst of sensory contacts" = he sees contact as empty of self. This passage may also refer to the fact that the awakened person experiences sensory contact as if disjoined from it. On this point, see MN 140 and MN 146, quoted in *The Mind Like Fire Unbound*, pp. 116 and 113.
4. See AN X.93.
5. Beyond conviction & dispassion -- The Pali here can also mean, "A person of no conviction, he does not put away passion." This is an example of the kind of pun occasionally used in Pali poetry for its shock value. Other examples are at Dhp 97 and the end of Sn IV.13. For an explanation of what is meant by being beyond dispassion, see note 2 to Sn IV.6.
6. The Pali word *tanhaya* -- by/through craving -- here is a "lamp," i.e., a single word that functions in two separate phrases.
7. "Embraced/rejected, what's self/what lies against self" -- a pun on the pair of Pali words, *attam/nirattam*.

8. "Conjuring, the cycling of time" -- two meanings of the Pali word, kappam.
  9. "Doctrines, phenomena" -- two meanings of the Pali word, dhamma. Purabheda Sutta. Chapter of the Eights. Number 10 (as translated in [Access to Insight](#) website)
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## Samatha and Samadhi:

### Review of Two Books

1898 words

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### FOCUSSED AND FEARLESS

*A Meditator's Guide to States of Joy, Calm and Clarity*

**Shaila Catherine**

*Wisdom Publications, Boston, USA. 2008*

*260 pages. \$17.95*

### THE EXPERIENCE OF SAMADHI

*An In depth exploration of Buddhist Meditation*

**Richard Shankman**

*Shambhala. Boston and London, 2008*

*236 pages. \$18.95*

The Buddha made it abundantly clear that there are two types of meditation - *samatha* (deep calmness) and *vipassana* (insight). Both have equal validity but there has been a noticeable emphasis on *vipassana* (insight) meditation in the Buddhist tradition. The *Vipassana* tradition has its roots in the monastic tradition of Theravada Buddhist countries, where mindfulness, calmness, contentment of mind and faith in the dharma were strong characteristics of Buddhist monks. When certain monks felt the limitations of the daily rituals, chanting and strict adherence to the *Vinaya* (disciplinary rules), they engaged in sustained meditation practice to arouse insight as outlined by the Buddha in the *Satipatthana Sutta* (Discourse on the Application of Mindfulness) and numerous other discourses pointing to awakening and full realisation. From monastic beginnings, the influential *Vipassana* tradition developed in Burma, Sri Lanka and Thailand.

I spent more than three years in Wat Chai Na, Nakornsridhammaraj with Ajahn Dhammadaro, probably the greatest *Vipassana* teacher in Thailand of that era. I recall asking him once why he didn't teach *samatha* and the *jhanas* (deep absorption meditations with happiness, contentment and equanimity). He responded: "The monks

are content enough already. They lack insight and realisation." The Ajahn belonged to the hard core school of *Vipassana*. We started at 4 am and finished after 22.00. He dismissed books. He said books were the primary destroyer of practice. Reading was forbidden. He discouraged talking. We were also discouraged strongly from meditation in our huts so we sat on the balcony of our huts, where he could see us. Like the Buddha, Ajahn Dhammaddaro gave equal emphasis to sitting, walking, standing and reclining. Once a week, on the new, quarter and full moon days, we practised all night - outdoors, of course.

Mostly, the West has foolishly neglected *samatha* meditation even though we would not think of the Western mind as happy and content on a daily basis. The Western heart-mind endures agitation, desire, anxiety, blame, fear and there is huge relief when the various levels of stress dissolve temporarily to reveal some relief from the inner agitations, the outflows and inflows (*asavas*) of problematic daily life. The Western mind remains vulnerable in and out of retreat to the multiple hindrance attack. The practice of *samatha*, as taught by the Buddha, requires as much interest and application as *Vipassana*. Far too many dharma practitioners rely on *Vipassana* practice to find peace of mind. *Samatha* is a very direct route towards real peace of mind, not superficially.

In this context, Shaila Catherine's book, *Focussed and Fearless*, is groundbreaking. We need as many teachers and centres in the West teaching *samatha* as *vipassana*. Shaila is one of the very few dharma teachers fully qualified to point to the depth of *samatha meditation* and the way to the depth.

She has written a comprehensive and illuminating guide to the practice of the *jhanic* states of happiness, deep joy and a grounded serenity. As she points out in her first chapter, the practice of meditative concentration (*samadhi*) is a key to deep inner well being through the four *jhanas* that cover the different depths, born of *samatha* practice. *Jhana* practices point to a shift in inner priority - away from the blind pursuit of pleasure through the senses and the desire to get what we want from the world to realising deeply through our own experience that happiness truly lies within, not externally. If we are clear about this, we lose interest in making demands upon others and the world to get satisfaction while remaining intimate with life in a grounded way.

A respected dharma teacher in the USA, Shaila has been devoted to the exploration of *samatha* and *vipassana* for 25 years. She has spent more than seven years in actual retreat, either a group retreat, personal retreat or monastic retreat in the East and West - more than anybody I know whether teacher or otherwise. She draws from her wealth of experience and suitably quotes the Buddha more than 150 times in the course of the book. The combination of first hand experience, practical exercises and the words of the Buddha make for formidable reading. In the depth of *samadhi*, the hindrances - desire for pleasure, negativity, boredom, restlessness, anxiety, self-doubt and fears - start losing their power over the inner life. The Buddha said "gladness arises in him, from gladness comes delight, from delight in his mind his body is tranquillised, with a tranquil body he feels joy and with joy his mind is concentrated..." (Page 117).

Environmental conditions, outdoors and indoors, serve as very supportive conditions for

the development of the four *jhanas*. Read the book for a comprehensive description of each of the *jhanas*. There are some general references to supportive conditions, indoors and outdoors, in the book but much detailed advice about specific ally helpful outer conditions would have been helpful whether the meditator is new to *samatha* or with years of experience of meditation.

Having covered the inner features of the preparatory ground, she then gives a chapter to each of the four *jhanas*. The *jhanas* can arise in the course of formal *vipassana* practice or insights can arise subsequent to *jhanas*. The remaining chapters of the book then address the movement of consciousness from *samatha* to *vipassana* and to liberation. Shaila devotes the last chapter to going beyond practice and realising emptiness - an appropriate conclusion to a remarkable book.

I have known Shaila for more than two decades. We have taught together at Spirit Rock, Woodacre in the Bay area, USA, together to her Sangha in the Bay area and in Sarnath, India. She spent years in practice in India and Thailand in all manner of environments and situations. Her story is the stuff of a woman's legend.

*Focussed and Fearless* deserves to be on the bookshelf of every meditator. Yet, never forget, that there is no substitute for practice. Hopefully, *samatha* practices and *jhanic* absorptions will soon have an equal place as *vipassana* in the West. *Focused and Fearless* is a major stepping stone in this direction. Better still, contact Shaila for her teachings.

## **THE EXPERIENCE OF SAMADHI**

*An In depth exploration of Buddhist Meditation*

**Richard Shankman**

*Shambhala Publications. Boston and London*

236 pages. \$18.95

Shaila Catherine's *Focussed and Fearless* and *The Experience of Samadhi* belong to a new era of meditation books and meditation teachers. Both books serve as the fruits of many years of dedicated meditation practice. Both books specialise in a specific aspect of meditation, namely *samatha* (calm) and *samadhi* (meditative concentration). Few Westerners 20 years ago would have had enough experience and authority to write such a meditation book devoted to a single theme. Richard Shankman belongs to the new generation of teachers who have practised widely in the West.

Richard Shankman has addressed a central theme for meditation, namely the place and significance of *samadhi*. He has drawn from the primary resources, namely the wealth of explanation and insights into *samadhi* from the Buddha, the traditional commentary in the 6<sup>th</sup> century text of Path of Purification (*Visuddhimagga*) by Acharya Buddhaghosa and

interviews with eight contemporary *Vipassana* teachers from Burma, England, Sri Lanka and the USA. For lovers of Buddhist meditation, it is a fascinating read. The author has truly done his homework.

The author has dug out some gems on *samadhi* from the 11,000 Pali discourses (*suttas*) available. The Buddha said: "Without the peace of *samadhi* in high degree, without attaining to calm, without winning one-pointedness that one shall enter and abide in mind-emancipation, insight emancipation, that cannot be." (Page 6). The Buddha made it unambiguously clear the major function of *samadhi* in the process of liberation of heart/mind and liberation of insight.

The Buddha also warns of the danger of egotism around *samadhi* experiences and the consequences such as arrogance. There are many precious insights in the book. There are probably around 140 quotes of the Buddha, plus 50 quotes from the *Path of Purification*. It would be worthwhile for practitioners to look at the quotes and the context of them. They offer inspiration and insights for further practice.

*The Experience of Samadhi* has a comprehensive summary of the Discourse on Mindfulness of Breathing (*Anapanasati Sutta*), where the meditator develops meditative concentration through 16 steps. Each of the four tetrads can relate to each of the Four Applications of Mindfulness - namely body, feelings, states of mind and dharma. There is *samatha* meditation, *vipassana* meditation or *samatha-vipassana* meditation in the Mindfulness of Breathing discourse. *Samadhi* serves as a vital link between these two kinds of meditation. A dedicated *samatha* practice can trigger tremendous insights (*vipassana*). A dedicated *vipassana* meditation practice can trigger a depth of calmness and absorption.

Richard rightly points out that the *Visuddhimagga* sees *jhana* meditation in order to turn other practices for cultivating insight (Page 101). The Visuddhi magga continues to influence strongly the Theravada tradition of meditation. The Buddha tended to see *samatha* and *vipassana* as belonging to the same path rather than two different paths. Let us not never forget that the Buddha is the supreme master of meditation and the psychology of the heart/mind - although subsequent commentaries, traditional and contemporary, can be helpful.

Both books give support to each other. *Focussed and Fearless* offers the practical exercises and comprehensive explanations of meditation practices suitable for *samatha-vipassana* meditation leading into the meditative absorptions (*jhana*s) with frequent quotes from the Buddha. *The Experience of Samadhi* concentrates on the meaning and application of *samadhi* as expressed by The Buddha, Acharya Buddhaghosa and contemporary Buddhist meditation teachers in the Theravada tradition.

Finally, Richard has interviewed eight senior teachers about their responses to *samadhi*. The teachers are Jack Kornfield, Ajaan Thanissaro, Sharon Salzberg, Bhante Gunaratana, Christina Feldman, Leigh Brasington, Ajahn Brahmavamso and Pa Auk Sayadaw. Each of the teachers express and explain their views about the importance of *samadhi*, its value

and its place in their teaching with what appears to be only mild differences in emphasis between them, except perhaps Pa Auk Sayadaw in Burma, a very strong proponent of *samatha* meditation.

*The Experience of Samadhi* makes no real reference to the Buddha's inter-connected teaching of virtue, *samadhi*, wisdom, knowledge and knowledge of liberation. *Samadhi* can lead to wisdom and wisdom can lead to knowing liberation, to realising emptiness and nirvana. None of the quotes from Buddhaghosa, nor the contemporary teachers interviewed, addressed the important link from *samadhi* to liberation. There are dedicated practitioners who are deeply interested in liberation, via *samadhi* practices.

I agree wholeheartedly with Richard Shankman on the value of practical ancient and modern texts for the deeply experienced meditator as well as the person embarking on meditation as a transformative vehicle. A big thank you to Richard for his dedicated research and explanation of *samadhi*.

*The Experience of Samadhi* has staying power for many years ahead because it combines first hand experience, a manual for learning and a variety of resources, ancient and contemporary. The sources, glossary, sources for the Pali texts, credits and extensive index places the book in the classics of Buddhist meditation practices.

Buy both books. Money well spent even in these financially trying times!

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## FOR AUDIO AND VIDEO WEBSITE

Nadamo

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Dear friends in the Dhamma,

[www.christophertitmuss.org](http://www.christophertitmuss.org)

There has been a considerable expansion of Christopher's audio - video website in the first three months of 2009. Andy Peri in the USA, Benoit Martin in Canada and Europe and myself (Nadamo) in Germany have been working together so that a wide selection of Christopher's audio talks are available freely for easy download of the complete talk.

Here are five of the major features of the website.

**1. Free downloads:** [http://www.christophertitmuss.org/index.php/welcome/eng/free\\_downloads](http://www.christophertitmuss.org/index.php/welcome/eng/free_downloads)

I have chosen a total of around 65 talks for free download of Christopher given in 2006, 2007 and 2008 on various Dharma themes. Christopher and I would like to express immense appreciation to Andy and Benoit for also putting in many, many hours to set up the facilities on the website for free and full access to the talks. Every year another 20 talks or more will be added to the website. It was a real teamwork with mainly three players, who do not know each other. It is a reflection of what is possible in our globalised world. I have edited out in many talks any distracting sounds. Christopher records around 30 to 50 of his talks a year. Additional talks can be always ordered via the website which will mention all the talks:

<http://www.christophertitmuss.org/index.php/welcome/eng/Dharma>

**2. Video / DVD:** <http://www.christophertitmuss.org/index.php/welcome/eng/DVD>

In the last four months, I worked to make three DVDs with filmed talks given by Christopher. Titles of the three DVDs

are:

*The Joy of Emptiness (Given in Gaia House in 2002). Plus two extra features.*

*A Transformed Life (Given in Sarnath in 2004). Plus extra features including photo introduction to Sarnath, India, where the Buddha gave his first teaching.*

*The Self and the Timeless.*

A Transformed Life has a sequence of photos of Christopher from babyhood to his 65th year. It also includes an introduction to Sarnath with photos from the main stupa, the meditation hall, the Sangha and Mahadev's chai shop in front of the main temple. Music from Kevin MacLeod has been added to these parts of the DVD.

The total running time of each DVD is about one hour. These DVD's can be ordered via the website. Christopher will also make the DVDs available wherever he is teaching. Viewers can watch the DVDs either on a computer or on a DVD player. It is generally agreed that a film of a Dharma teaching is the nearest to the experience of being present at the time. Then comes listening to a Dharma teaching through an audio player and finally comes reading the words of a Dharma teacher.

I am developing new features for the DVDs as time goes by. Talks have now been filmed in Bodh Gaya, Sarnath, Israel and Germany. Talks will also be filmed in other countries. We will use a small selection for DVD.

A German documentary film company have made a documentary on Christopher's international teaching schedule. Filming is complete. Around 120 hours of filming has now been edited down to two hours. The film is now in its final stages of editing. It should be complete by the end of the summer. We will bring you an update about this

documentary towards the end of the year.

### **3. Subscriptions (German: Abonnements)**

<http://www.christophertitmuss.org/index.php/welcome/eng/subscriptions>

This is also a new feature! You have three possibilities to order talks on subscription base.

- 1. Offer: 2 CDs a year. 1 every 6 months.*
- 2. Offer: 4 CDs a year. 1 every 3 months.*
- 3. Offer: 2 DVDs and 2 CDs a year: 1 each every 6 months.*

This gives you the possibility to always stay updated and get the newest available talks send to your home. I meet Christopher several times a year and will always get the latest talks from him. If you have a subscription you will get these new talks send first.

### **4. Themed CDs:**

<http://www.christophertitmuss.org/index.php/welcome/eng/themedcds>

These CDs center around a common theme like 'Meditation' or 'Love' from Christopher's talks of the last years. All 'Themed CDs' are edited. The purpose of editing is to eliminate background noises, coughs and sniffs, sometimes repetitions, hisses and other sounds which make understanding difficult. My intention was to improve the sound and make listening to the spoken word easier. In general the sound quality is higher and the talks have a clear beginning and end. I will try to add more themes to the list of seven so far. Dharma Seed Tape Library has available more than 400 talks from Christopher starting 1980. So please look for new themes in the near future.

### **5. Prajna Vihara School in Bodh-Gaya, Bihar, India:**

<http://www.christophertitmuss.org/index.php/welcome/eng/pvschool>

Our Prajna Vihara school in Bodh Gaya, India runs entirely on donations mostly from our sangha. The kids are lovely and belong to all religious faith. Each year the kids make a special dance/theatre performance for the yogis after the Bodh-Gaya retreats.

Somebody asked me in an email about giving a donation to the school. This request for information gave me the idea to establish a PayPal button on the website. You can now make a donation, via Paypal, to the Prajna Vihar Inter-Religious School with its 560 children through the website. The school has its own account in Totnes, Devon, England. Christopher will then transfer any donation to the school account. So now you have a PayPal button and with (nearly) a single click you can send donations for the education of the children. It costs about \$40 per child for a year's education.

I hope this information is helpful and will increase your interest in Christopher's unique audio site!

I wish you all a lovely day!

Nadamo

(Audio-DVD Manager)

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## 22 Reasons to be a Vegetarian

- as an act of wisdom and compassion

**Brad Yantzer**

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DEFINITION OF A VEGETARIAN:

ONE WHO NEVER EATS THAT WHICH HAS A FACE - ANIMALS, BIRDS OR FISH.

1. Number of people worldwide who will die as a result of malnutrition this year: 20 million
2. Number of people who could be adequately fed using land freed if Americans reduced their intake of meat by 10%: 100 million
3. Percentage of corn grown in the US eaten by people: 20. Percentage of corn grown in the US eaten by livestock: 80
4. Percentage of oats grown in the US eaten by livestock: 95
5. Pounds of potatoes that can be grown on an acre: 40,000. Pounds of beef produced on an acre: 250
6. Percentage of US farmland devoted to beef production: 56. Percentage of US topsoil loss directly related to livestock raising: 85
7. Number of acres of US forest cleared for cropland to produce meat-centred diet: 260 million
8. Area of tropical rainforest consumed in every quarter-pound of rainforest beef: 55 square feet
9. Current rate of species extinction due to destruction of tropical rainforests for meat grazing and other uses: 1,000 per year
10. Increased risk of breast cancer for women who eat meat daily compared to less than once a week: 3
11. Increased risk of fatal prostate cancer for men who consume meat, cheese, eggs and milk daily vs sparingly or not at all: 3.6 times
12. Number of US medical schools: 125. Number requiring a course in nutrition: 30. Nutrition training

received by average US physician during four years in medical school: 2.5 hours

13. Average US man's risk of death from heart attack: 50 percent. Risk of average US man who eats no meat: 15 percent. Risk of average US man who eats no meat, dairy or eggs: 4 percent

14. Half of all water used for all purposes in the US is for livestock production

15. Gallons of water needed to produce a pound of wheat: 25. Gallons of water needed to produce a pound of California beef: 5,000

16. Years the world's known oil reserves would last if every human ate a meat-centered diet: 13. Years they would last if human beings no longer ate meat: 260

17. Calories of fossil fuel expended to get 1 calorie of protein from beef: 78. To get 1 calorie of protein from soybeans: 2

18. Percentage of all raw materials (base products of farming, forestry and mining, including fossil fuels) consumed by US that is devoted to the production of livestock: 33. Percentage of all raw materials consumed by the US needed to produce a complete vegetarian diet: 2

19. Response of European Economic Community to routine feeding of antibiotics to livestock: Ban. Response of US meat and pharmaceutical industries to routine feeding of antibiotics to livestock: Full and Complete support

20. Percentage of US mother's milk containing significant levels of DDT: 99. Percentage of US vegetarian mother's milk containing significant levels of DDT: 8

21. Contamination of breast milk, due to chlorinated hydrocarbon pesticides in animal products, found in meat-eating mothers vs non-meat eating mothers: 35 times higher

22. Number of animals killed for meat per hour in the US: 660,000.

[brad@evolutionmovement.com](mailto:brad@evolutionmovement.com)

Note from Christopher: No need to eat meat or fish to please others including any physician, East or West , who advises you to eat meat. Seek out healthier alternatives.

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## A Serious Disease - Crisis Or Opportunity?

**Dr. Stephen Fulder**

1188 words

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Living with a life-threatening health problem, such as cancer, is one of the most severe challenges we can face. The mind is besieged by fears, worries about what will happen, concerns for our children or family, about fighting the disease, about looking for causes and often blaming ourselves for the problem, and by anger (such as towards the medical system) and jealousy (such as towards healthy young people). All of this creates despair and makes the struggle for health seem sometimes impossible.

And then, if someone (or a book) comes along and tells us that a disease can be an opportunity, a turning point in our lives, and it is not all bad, it can sound absurd, unreal and irritating.

Yet there is a profound truth in it, which often cannot get through to us because it is presented as words, and not experiences, or because we are so drowned in our suffering, that there is no room to listen.

We need to be wise, heartfelt and persistent to open new channels in us to messages that will transform the situation.

As an example, I would like to discuss a recent weekend retreat which I taught with two other teachers in the north of Israel for those with sickness and pain. There were 50 participants, most of whom suffered from cancer, fibromyalgia, and other diseases, some severe.

At the beginning, the despair and confusion was palpable. The room was heavy with the personal stories that each person carried, and shared, the tears flowed and it seemed impossible to lighten the load. At the end of the short weekend there was laughter, and lightness, there was hope and hugs, there was deep gratitude, and most of all, the participants felt truly alive, in some cases for the first time in a long time. I would like to describe here the methods we used and how they worked.

There were some underlying values that helped to clear the emotional ground. Firstly there was no professional agendas. There were no promises that 'professional others' would fix, cure, treat or lessen the disease.

Secondly as teachers we did not come over with a system, a belief, or even a special status. In some way we tried to show that we are all the same, the situation of human suffering is universal, that there were not sick and healthy people there, but just people, all with different issues. Thirdly we made sure it was not expensive, and there was an atmosphere of giving, helping, volunteering rather than getting.

A basic tool was mindfulness meditation, using breath and body as the main focus. We taught this in several sessions throughout the 2 days with plenty of real time guidance and imagery. One of the main images that went along with the meditation was that of coming home, of finding a genuine refuge within us rather than expecting it to come from the changing and often distressing conditions of our lives. Bringing back the awareness into the lived immediate experience, creates a sense of wholeness and intimacy with our life, which is quite beyond the disease. Being aware that all our projections, fears of the future, scenarios, memories, and worries are in the end just thoughts, however loaded they seem, takes some of the weight off.

Resting in the experience of the natural flow of breath and sensations in the body is not

only a safe place but a place in which we discover that there are messages within us of healthy lived experience.

The disease is shouting so loud we cannot usually hear other quieter voices within us. For example we usually don't know we have a head unless we have a headache.

Taking the disease down off centre stage and replacing it with our lived experience creates a profound shift in attitude. Our situation lightens, we can become a participator in our fate and not its victim.

The power of this intimacy with present moment experience to take us to a place beyond disease is illustrated by this quote from Treya Wilbur, in her book: *Grace and Grit*. She was dying from cancer at the time:

*'If I do become well for long periods of time, will I lose this deliciously keen knife-edge of awareness I now have?...new creativity pours forth under pressure of this illness, I would hate to lose that...there are moments when I feel practically ecstatic just sitting on the veranda and looking at the view at the back of the house, and watching the puppies play. I feel so blessed in this moment. Each breath is so incredible, so joyful, so dear. What am I missing? What could be wrong?'*

Besides, learning to reconnect with the present moment of breath and body is a great help in coping with stressful and painful situations such as hospitals and treatments. One or two conscious aware breaths and the anxiety fades and we are in a different place. In addition, as is well known, meditation is a tool that can be used to help support our healing and the life force in us.

Another important element was groups. Here there was a chance to ventilate fears and experiences, including issues of death and dying. It was a chance to listen to others and feel the support. The first morning's groups were indeed full of tears and the most difficult stories, but as the retreat progressed, the dialogue shifted - towards inquiry into the meaning of being ill, towards illness as a personal journey. Several times, participants, for example, raised the issue of control. Do we have control? Is it better to fight even though that may bring expectations and anxiety, or is it more helpful to surrender? The groups helped, by talking, to cut the 'demons' down to size, reducing the denial and avoidance which generally increases the suffering. On the second day the groups were actually like alchemical vessels in which change happened because of the intensity. New insights emerged into how life could be lived, new directions were realised, joys were shared.

Another method that we used was to open the heart to ourselves and to others, by means of several guided visualisations and other exercises. We cannot easily 'befriend our cancer', but we can be friends to ourselves. We can bathe in soft appreciation. We can feel gratitude for those ordinary moments which are in fact quite miraculous. We can experience a softness in our belly, softness that can hold all the pain. We can feel compassion to ourselves and to all others who suffer. We can feel the preciousness of ourselves and of each other.

And a final part was more contemplative, taught by talks and mutual inquiry. It is about the truth that the experience of the disease is not the disease. The consciousness is freer than we think. We can be bigger than the problem. Whereas at first we may be circulating like a moth around the candle of our problem, slowly we can realise we are like a moth circulating around the candle of our mystery.

*Dr. Stephen Fulder is a senior Dharma teacher in Israel and co-founder of Tovana offering Dharma teachings and insight meditation programmes.  
Tovana, Post office box 23504, Tel Aviv, 61234, Israel  
[www.tovana.org.il](http://www.tovana.org.il)  
[tovana@tovana.org.il](mailto:tovana@tovana.org.il)*

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## **INTERNATIONAL TEACHING SCHEDULE**

### **March 2009 - End of February, 2010**

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Christopher Titmuss

Dharma Retreats, Dharma Gatherings, Yatras (Pilgrimages), Dharma Talks and Inquiry  
See [www.dharmafacilitators.org](http://www.dharmafacilitators.org) for DFP dates for DFP residential programmes in Germany, Israel, Australia and New Zealand.

For comprehensive flight information, times and costs between two cities check out [www.farechase.yahoo.com](http://www.farechase.yahoo.com) For current exchange rates between two currencies, check out [www.xe.com/ucc](http://www.xe.com/ucc)

Christopher's websites are:

[www.insightmeditation.org](http://www.insightmeditation.org) (teachings, articles, practices)

[www.livingdharma.info](http://www.livingdharma.info) (do you need a Dharma Mentor?)

[www.dharmafacilitators.org](http://www.dharmafacilitators.org) (programme for experienced meditators)

[www.christophertitmuss.org](http://www.christophertitmuss.org) (to order CD's of teachings, inquiry etc)

[www.christophertitmuss.org/blog](http://www.christophertitmuss.org/blog) (Christopher's Dharma blog)

[www.bodhgayaretreats.org](http://www.bodhgayaretreats.org) (information about Bodh Gaya /Sarnath programme in India)

[www.dharmayatra.org](http://www.dharmayatra.org) (annual French pilgrimage. July 30 to August 9, 2008. Foix, Toulouse)

Dharma Retreats, Dharma Gatherings, Yatras (Pilgrimages), Dharma Facilitators Programme, Dharma Talks and Inquiry

## **INTERNATIONAL OVERVIEW**

See below for dates, places, website addresses and e-mail contacts of centres organising the international schedule.

**MARCH 2009 ENGLAND**

**APRIL 2009 ISRAEL**

**MAY 2009 ENGLAND AND GERMANY**

**JUNE 2009 ENGLAND**  
**JULY 2009 ENGLAND**  
**AUGUST 2009 FRANCE AND GERMANY**  
**OCTOBER, 2009 UK and Germany.**  
**NOVEMBER, 2009 AUSTRALIA**  
**JANUARY and FEBRUARY 2010 INDIA**

Saturday March 7, 2009 10 pm to 6 pm.

Bogan House, Totnes

### **LOVE AND INTIMACY**

What is a relationship – whether as a friend, relative, partner or employer? Our relationships can touch places of love, sharing and joy or hit a dark place of feeling misunderstood, unloved and unwanted.

Love without understanding ourselves or another is likely to end up with waves of discontent. Love with wisdom doesn't trigger disappointment, guilt or ongoing resentment. It is an enormous challenge to stay true to Love, no matter what. In this workshop, we will include different kinds of love – romantic love, friendship, loving kindness, generosity and compassion. Handled well, love is a powerful force for healing and happiness for our humanity.

**Sunday March 8, 2009. 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.**

**Totnes**

### **THE PATH OF AWAKENING**

Many people have as a priority the maximisation of pleasure and the minimisation of pain. Others have expanded their values. Life is looked upon as a journey of exploration, an inquiry into being and doing and a path to profound realisation and awakening. What does all this mean for us in the course of our daily life? Where do all our thoughts come from? Do we have any spiritual experiences? If so, what are they? If not, why not? Some people have been on the path of awakening for years and are still struggling in so many areas. Others feel enormous benefits from the path, from the range of practices and way of life. Others intimate or claim to know the end of the path of awakening? In this workshop, we will explore features of the path, our relationship to them, and address the end of the path of awakening.

Bogan House, Totnes

Totnes DFP is at Bogan House, opposite Civic Square, High Street, Totnes, Devon, England.

**NON-RESIDENTIAL.**

Totnes is exactly three hours on the train from Paddington station, London. Bogan House is a few minutes walk from the station.

**Sunday March 14, 2009 10 am to 6 pm**

**Bodhi Garden, Brighton.**

### **DOES ANYTHING MATTER?**

At times, our life seems swept along with daily circumstances – work, money, friends, love, social life, spiritual interests. Does anything really matter? If so, what matters? Are we living according to what matters? If we are not, what stops us? If, ultimately, nothing really matters, then how do we feel about that? Are we relaxed about that or cynical? If we wish to make real changes in our life or our attitudes, what would they be? What matters

can show itself through contentment or discontent. In this workshop, we will share our experiences in small groups, intimacy circles and inquiry. The workshop will keep to the practical level, not in terms of philosophical abstractions

**Saturday March 15, 2009 10 am to 6 pm**

**Bodhi Garden, Brighton**

### **THE POWER-LESSNESS OF NOW?**

Contemporary spirituality and Buddhist practices put much emphasis on being here and now. Thoughts of the past and future are said to be unreal. Is this a wise view or a delusion? Have we identified with this view as if reality is the Now? What are the benefits to this standpoint? Is there anything naïve or irresponsible about it? Is the view substantial or insubstantial? In this workshop, we will explore and share our experiences of the Now through meditation, reflection and inquiry. Open to all.

### **DHARMA FACILITATORS PROGRAMME**

[www.dharmafacilitators.org](http://www.dharmafacilitators.org)

to attend this course on Dharma exploration for those experienced with inner work, please register first with the website, or e-mail [christopher@insightmeditation.org](mailto:christopher@insightmeditation.org) . Second course is in October, 2009 at Waldaus, Nickenich. Bonn

Thursday March 26 at 9 am to Sunday March 29, 2009 at 13.00

Pauenhof e.V.

D - 47665 Sonsbeck Hamb

Pauendyck 1

(40 minutes from Düsseldorf)

Germany

Tel. 0049-2835 / 44133

[info@pauenhof.de](mailto:info@pauenhof.de)

[www.pauenhof.de](http://www.pauenhof.de)

### **ISRAEL**

Friday April 10 - Wednesday April 15, 2009 Regular course - for new comers and old students

Thursday April 16 – Tuesday April 21 Old Students' retreat.

April 17-18 City Gathering in Tel Aviv (with you giving talks in the evenings, Stephen stays in Ein Dor to cover for the retreat).

April 21. Teacher meeting with Christopher

April 22-25 Dharma Facilitators Programme

Tovana, Post office box 23504, Tel Aviv, 61234, Israel

[tovana@tovana.org.il](mailto:tovana@tovana.org.il)

Tel: 972- 54 – 5695931

### **ENGLAND**

Friday May 1 to Monday May 4, 2009

Talk and Inquiry. Freedom Without Measure

(time and date for talk at festival to be fixed)

Wild Heart Gathering

Ashdown Forest  
East Sussex  
Ticket Sales from January 27, 2009  
01273 480429  
<http://wildheartgathering.com>

## **GERMANY**

Friday May 8 - Friday May 15, 2009

### **A DEEP SENSE OF PRESENCE**

### **A SILENT RETREAT**

with Christopher and Nicole Stern  
translated into German

This classical Vipassana retreat will include comprehensive meditation instructions in Vipassana (Insight) meditation, a daily talk and regular one to one meetings with the teachers. The retreat offers the opportunity to go deeply into ourselves in a supportive and caring atmosphere. The retreat points to inner renewal, a deep sense of presence and the emptying of the mind for fresh perceptions and insights. Suitable for new and experienced meditators. The retreat will include regular one to one meetings with the teachers. Suitable for new and experienced meditators.

### **EINE TIEFE ERFAHRUNG VON PRÄSENZ**

Schweigekurs

Englisch mit deutscher Uebersetzung

Dieses klassische Vipassana Retreat beinhaltet umfassende Meditationsanleitungen der Vipassana (Einsichts-) Meditation, einem taeglichen Vortrag und Einzelgespraechen mit den Lehrern. Das Retreat gibt die Moeglichkeit tief in eine unterstuetzende und fuersorgliche Atmosphaere einzutauchen. Es geht um innere Erneuerung, einem tiefen Gefuehl von Gegenwaertigkeit und dem "Entleeren" des Geistes fuer frische Sichtweisen und Einsichten. Geeignet fuer neue und erfahrene Praktizierende.

Zentrum for Buddhismus

Waldhaus am Lachersee

D 56643, Nickenich, Germany

0049 2636 3344

[budwest@t-online.de](mailto:budwest@t-online.de)

[www.buddhismus-im-western.de](http://www.buddhismus-im-western.de)

## **ENGLAND**

Thursday May 28, 2009

Talk and Q and A

### **Romantic Love as a Vehicle for Transformation**

7 pm to 10 pm. £5.

The Barrel Coffee Shop (upstairs), high street, corner of Castle Street),  
Totnes  
Devon

Saturday June 13, 2009 10 am to 6 pm  
Bodhi Garden, Brighton, Sussex, England

### **WHAT THE BUDDHA TAUGHT**

In this one day workshop, we will look at some Pali texts of the Buddha's teachings. The day will consist of pointing out some of the main discourses of the Buddha and how to squeeze the honey out of the texts. We will examine some of the key themes that the Buddha addressed. Participants will leave with some valuable tools to dig deeper into these ancient texts much loved for more than 2000 years. The Buddha's teachings address both relative and ultimate. Suitable for those who have had exposure previously to Dharma practice.

Sunday June 14, 2009. 10 am to 6 pm

Bodhi Garden Brighton, England

### **WHAT AM I WILLING TO GIVE UP?**

Life is given to us. In course of time, life will give us up. Yet we live as though life is made for us to take what we want from it. Human desire is having a destructive impact on the individual level since never experience a deep, inner contentment and at the global level. If the technological fix is not the answer, then what is? What are we willing to give up to live wisely, sanely, happily and freely? We will look into these important issues, share our concerns and perhaps be ready to make some real commitments at the end of the day.

Bodhi Garden

7a Ship Street Gardens (three minutes walk from the beach)

Brighton BN1 1AJ

Sussex,

England

+44 07796 331167

[info@bodhigarden.org](mailto:info@bodhigarden.org)

[www.bodhigarden.org](http://www.bodhigarden.org)

ENGLAND, DEVON

Wednesday July 15 to Sunday July 19 2009

### **DHARMA DOME, BUDDHAFIELD FESTIVAL**

### **DHARMA TEACHINGS, INQUIRY AND WORKSHOPS**

Christopher Titmuss and co-teachers

The site address is:

The Gallops, Clayhidon, Nr Wellington, North Devon, England (roughly six miles south of Taunton and three miles from Wellington)

Around 3000 adults and children go to this festival with numerous workshops, one to one sessions for mind, body, spirit, plus music and dancing.

Must book in advance.

[www.buddhfield.com](http://www.buddhfield.com)

### **FRANCE**

Thursday July 30 16.00 to 12 noon, Sunday August 9, 2009

### **9th ANNUAL YATRA (PILGRIMAGE) FOR 10 DAYS.**

Christopher, Cristelle, Chad, Zohar and other teachers.

A Yatra is a pilgrimage. Men, women and children have gone on walking pilgrimages for thousands of years.

Join our Dharma Yatra in Dordogne in the south of France from July 30th to August 9th, 2009. Our Yatra is run entirely on donations (dana) to cover all the running costs, and

donations for teachers etc.

The 2009 Yatra will begin not far from near Le Moulin Meditation Centre, Le Maine, 24640 Cubjac.

Cubjac is 120km from Bordeaux Airport, 90 minutes from Limoges and Bergerac airports and 25 minutes from Périgueux railway station.

There are places for 120 men, women and children.

The 2009 French Yatra will be our ninth annual yatra with a team of dharma teachers and expressions of music, poetry and theatre during the yatra.

If you require further information about the Dharma Yatra, and you cannot locate it in this website, then send an e-mail to the address below. Please keep your e-mail with any questions rather precise. Thank you.

Retreat will begin from near Le Moulin de Chaves Meditation Centre

To register, please send €50 or £35 or more to support initial costs or pay upon arrival.

For further information contact Muriel in France [murielbansard@laposte.net](mailto:murielbansard@laposte.net)

[www.dharmayatra.org](http://www.dharmayatra.org)

[info@dharmayatra.org](mailto:info@dharmayatra.org)

Do join. It is a wonderful event.

## **GERMANY**

Wednesday 18.00 August 26 to Sunday 13.00 August 30, 2009

### **DHARMA INQUIRY AND INSIGHT MEDITATION (Vipassana)**

Christopher and Tineke Osterloh

In this four day programme, we will lead inquiry into the dharma in the morning with small groups. There will be silent meditations in the afternoon and a Dharma talk in the evening. This retreat provides the opportunity for in depth exploration of the Dharma and daily life with silence and stillness in the afternoon for meditation and reflection. Wake up until 9.30 am in the morning will also be a silent period. We will provide comprehensive meditation instructions. The programme is suitable for experienced meditators and beginners. There will be opportunity for one to one meetings with the teachers. The retreat will be taught in English/German.

Pauenhof e.V.

Pauendyck 1

D - 47665 Sonsbeck Hamb (40 minutes from Düsseldorf)

Germany

Tel. +49-(0)2835 / 44133

[www.pauenhof.de](http://www.pauenhof.de)

To register for 1st Dharma Gathering in Germany:

[dharmatreffen@web.de](mailto:dharmatreffen@web.de)

Saturday October 3, 2009 10 am to 6pm

Bodhi Garden. Brighton

### **TO SPEAK OR NOT TO SPEAK?**

When we speak we express not only our views and opinions but reveal our attitudes, expectations, tone of voice and needs. We need to listen equally to ourselves as to another or others. What are supportive conditions if we have something important to say to another? Do we get lost in the story of the situation? Do we want to be heard by another?

Wise communication is a skill and a practice. In this workshop, we will share our experiences, learn skilful tools and apply in two's and three's. We will examine the construct of language, of words, including the spoken and the written, and the importance of silence and space in and out of communication.

Saturday October 4, 2009 10 am to 6pm

Bodhi Garden, Brighton.

### **WHAT IS MINDFULNESS? WHAT IS SEEING?**

The Buddha has made a clear distinction between the practices of mindfulness, meditation, concentration and the nature of 'seeing.' The practices all belong to the path of awakening. Seeing and knowing is a different order and dimension altogether. How do we distinguish mindfulness from seeing? In this workshop we will explore through our experience these important features of consciousness. The intention is to come to deepen our insights into our processes. Suitable only for those who have prior experience in the Dharma.

Friday evening 19.00 October 16, 2009 to lunchtime Tuesday, October 20, 2009.

Dharma Facilitators Programme (DFP). PLEASE REGISTER FIRST WITH DFP WEBSITE OR [christopher@insightmeditation.org](mailto:christopher@insightmeditation.org)

Zentrum for Buddhismus

Waldhaus am Lachersee

D 56643, Nickenich, Germany

0049 2636 3344

[budwest@t-online.de](mailto:budwest@t-online.de)

[www.buddhismus-im-westen.de](http://www.buddhismus-im-westen.de)

[www.dharmafacilitators.org](http://www.dharmafacilitators.org)

This residential DFP will be followed up with a silent retreat – open to all - until Sunday lunchtime.

Tuesday evening October 20 2009 to Sunday lunchtime October 25, 2009.

### **A SILENT RETREAT**

with Christopher

This classical Vipassana retreat will include comprehensive meditation instructions in Vipassana (Insight) meditation, a daily talk and regular one to one meetings with Christopher. The retreat offers the opportunity to go deeply into ourselves in a supportive and caring atmosphere. The retreat points to inner renewal, a deep sense of presence and the emptying of the mind for fresh perceptions and insights. Suitable for new and experienced meditators. No groups. Suitable for new and experienced meditators. Totnes DFP dates and themes for June 2009 and October 2009 not yet fixed.

Do pass the word onto others who might be interested to attend the residential DFP in Germany, Australia, Israel and New Zealand. For DFP in Germany, contact myself

[christopher@insightmeditation.org](mailto:christopher@insightmeditation.org)

### **Australia**

Friday November 6 at 6.00 p.m. until lunch time Wednesday, November 11, 2009

### **A RETREAT IN NSW, OZ ON MINDFULNESS, INSIGHT MEDITATION AND AWAKENING**

Christopher and Radha Nicholson

at Gunundi, Ballina, NSW

Organisers: Judy Baderle [jbaderle@bigpond.net.au](mailto:jbaderle@bigpond.net.au)

Tuesday November 17. Evening Talk. 7 pm to 9pm

### **Dharma Talk**

Cloudroom

147 Richmond Road

Morningside

Brisbane

Australia

[www.dharma.org.au](http://www.dharma.org.au)

Thursday, Friday November 20

### **ONE DAY WORKSHOP**

For Australian Council of Insight Meditation Teachers  
with Christopher at Yarrhapinni Rainforest, NSW

Saturday November 21– 28, at 2 pm. 2009

### **DHARMA GATHERING**

Christopher, Subhana, Radha, Patrick Kearney and several other Dharma teachers  
Yarrhapinni Rainforest,  
near Coffs Harbour,  
NSW, Australia

Yarrhapinni Ecology Centre is situated on coastal rainforest.

Coffs Harbour is the nearest major airport and Macksville the nearest major town.

Families welcome.

Contact: Will James [wvjames@yahoo.com.au](mailto:wvjames@yahoo.com.au)

[www.dharma.org.au](http://www.dharma.org.au)

Saturday evening November 28 – Wednesday 2 December, 2009 until 2.00 p.m.

### **Dharma Facilitators Programme**

Christopher and Radha

Yarrhapinni Rainforest,

near Coffs Harbour,

NSW, Australia

Yarrhapinni Ecology Centre is situated on coastal rainforest.

[jbaderle@bigpond.net.au](mailto:jbaderle@bigpond.net.au)

[www.dharma.org.au](http://www.dharma.org.au)

## **INDIA**

### **GENERAL INFORMATION**

Our India programme will probably run through from November, 2008 until May 2009  
Every month during this time, there are teachings and practices in very different  
environments all over India including Jaya, Gemma, Ajay, Sanghaseva and others.

See also [www.opendharma.org](http://www.opendharma.org)

email [opendharmainfo@yahoo.com](mailto:opendharmainfo@yahoo.com)

[www.sanghaseva.org](http://www.sanghaseva.org)

[emailsangha\\_seva@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:emailsangha_seva@yahoo.co.uk)

Do come to India to join all or part of this extraordinary and truly unique six month programme, much of it run entirely on your donations (dana).

Our retreats in Bodh Gaya (started 1975) and the Dharma Gathering in Sarnath (started 1999) are run entirely on dana (donations) from participants.

TO REGISTER FOR BODH GAYA RETREATS

See [www.bodhgayaretreats.org](http://www.bodhgayaretreats.org) for more information on our programme for Bodh Gaya  
[bodhgayamanagers@yahoo.com](mailto:bodhgayamanagers@yahoo.com)

PLEASE REGISTER YOUR NAME FOR BODH GAYA AND SARNATH BY E-MAIL.

January 15 18.00 to January 22, 2010 12.00

### **2nd DHARMA GATHERING IN TIRUVANNAMALAI**

Five minutes walk from Sri Ramana Maharshi Ashram

Mountain Breeze Guest House

Tiruvannamalai

Tamil Nadu.

Radha Nicholson

Radha Nicholson teaches the cultivation of wisdom and compassion through insight. Her teachings focus on inquiry and non-duality. Radha first met Christopher in India in 1975 where she participated in extended retreats. She was one of the founding members of the Australian community, Bodhi Farm, where she lived for 13 years. She is a Registered Psychologist with a private practice in Bangalow near Byron Bay. NSW. She has been a co-teacher of the Bodh Gaya retreat with Christopher for five years.

### **INDIA JANUARY/FEBRUARY, 2010**

#### **36TH ANNUAL DHARMA RETREAT IN BODH GAYA**

January 17 - 27, 2010

#### **BODH GAYA RETREATS**

Radha Nicholson

Thai Monastery

Bodh Gaya, near Gaya, India

[www.bodhgayaretreats.org](http://www.bodhgayaretreats.org),

[bodhgayamanagers@yahoo.com](mailto:bodhgayamanagers@yahoo.com)

January 27 - February 6, 2010

#### **BODH GAYA RETREATS**

Christopher Titmuss, Radha Nicholson,

Thai Monastery

Bodh Gaya, near Gaya, India

[www.bodhgayaretreats.org](http://www.bodhgayaretreats.org),

[bodhgayamanagers@yahoo.com](mailto:bodhgayamanagers@yahoo.com)

February 9 - 19, 2010

## 12th ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL DHARMA GATHERING

Christopher, Jaya, Gemma, Zohar and Jess

Sarnath, near Varanasi, India

Come any day, leave any day.

Dharma Gathering offered totally on donation.

[www.bodhgayaretreats.org](http://www.bodhgayaretreats.org)

No need to register. See also [www.insightmeditation.org](http://www.insightmeditation.org)

We have printed a beautiful flyer with colour pix to promote Bodh Gaya and Sarnath.

Families welcome.

In the Dharma

Three Bows

**Christopher**

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E-mails are checked very irregularly when teaching overseas. See teaching schedule on websites. Websites regularly updated. Control and click on website name below.

Christopher's dharma blog is [www.christophertitmuss.org/blog](http://www.christophertitmuss.org/blog) See flickr for around 3000 photos of Sangha in various sets.

See [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com) for five minute Dharma clips of Christopher.

1. [www.insightmeditation.org](http://www.insightmeditation.org) International teaching schedule of Christopher Titmuss, to subscribe to freely distributed quarterly Dharma e-News, Dharma teachings, guided meditations, Dharma reflections, articles, social-political-analysis, 150 linked sites ... Around a million hits a year on this website.

2. [www.christophertitmuss.org](http://www.christophertitmuss.org) Audio library of world-wide talks and inquiries. Listen to audio guided meditations, poems, extracts from books and see more than 1500 photos of Sangha around the world on *flickr*. Listen to teachings and opportunity to download or order on CD.

3. [www.dharmafacilitators.org](http://www.dharmafacilitators.org) Meet for four days twice a year to explore the depths of the Dharma and develop facilitation skills - DFP held in Australia, England, Germany, Israel and New Zealand. Limited to 35 people in a session.

4. [www.livingdharma.org](http://www.livingdharma.org) Twice a month personal e-mail contact with a Dharma mentor. To develop your meditation, practice and wisdom in daily life. Around 28 mentors from 12 countries. See photos, bio, article of mentors and how to join. Donation based with modest registration cost.

5. [www.bodhgayaretreats.org](http://www.bodhgayaretreats.org) How to register for the two annual 10 day Bodh Gaya retreats in Bihar, India, dates and information. 35th annual retreat in January 2009. Join also the 11th annual 10 day Dharma Gathering in Sarnath, near Varanasi in February 2009. All run on donations

6. [www.dharmayatra.org](http://www.dharmayatra.org) Join the Dharma Yatra (pilgrimage) in France starting in Serres-sur-Arges, 15 minutes from Foix, one hour south of Toulouse, south of France between afternoon of August 11 and morning of August 21, 2008. Places for 108 adults and children. Run on donations with modest registration cost.

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