

A rich tapestry of traditions and practices has been woven by various Asian cultures around the essence of the teachings of Shakyamuni Buddha, who lived 2,500 years ago. The enduring nature of Buddhism is symptomatic of its purity and integrity as a spiritual discipline and remains contemporary in its methods of self development. Over the past several decades, Westerners have begun to learn from, and participate in, this diversity and essence.

As part of its commitment to disseminate the Buddhist teachings, Kagyu E-Vam Buddhist Institute conducts the annual Buddhist Summer School as a vehicle of enquiry and learning. The popularity of the Buddhist Summer School is a mark of the developing range and depth of interest in Buddhism among Australians. This is reflected in enrolments of over 20,000 since the inception of the event in 1984. In acknowledgment of this, we continue to host distinguished Buddhist scholars and teachers from around Australia and overseas.

This twentieth Buddhist Summer School offers a stimulating variety of courses in both theoretical and experiential Buddhism, as well as meditation instruction based on a number of traditions. Two comparative courses on East-West approaches to spirituality are also on offer.

## 1 TRIALS AND TRIBULATIONS OF SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE

### Venerable Traleg Kyabgon Rinpoche

The metaphor of a journey is repeatedly used in Buddhism for the practitioner. The journey is marked by many great heights or peak experiences such as exaltation, ecstasy and bliss; and no less common on the other hand are periods of anguish, frustration and despondency, as part of the difficulties encountered. At times the journey even seems to test the limits of one's sanity causing a crisis of self identity. The spiritual traveller/practitioner may also feel blessed thinking that the self has been found and that the illusions of the conventional have been shattered.

This course will summarise the spiritual journey and recognise the experiences gained through the Buddhist path as well as referring to Western spiritual literature.

The Venerable Traleg Kyabgon Rinpoche has under-gone rigorous scholastic and meditative training under various Tibetan Kagyu and Nyingma masters in India. He has been a resident of Australia since 1980 and has travelled extensively in the U.S.A., S.E. Asia and Europe conducting lectures and courses. Rinpoche is the President and Spiritual Director of Kagyu E-Vam Buddhist Institute.

**3 Sessions: \$45**

## 2 TRAINING THE MIND AND CULTIVATING LOVING-KINDNESS (TONGLEN AND LOJONG)

### Acharya Samuel Bercholz

In order to have compassion for others, we have to have compassion for ourselves. In particular, to have compassion for people who are fearful, angry, jealous, arrogant, proud, miserly, selfish, mean, is to not run from the pain of finding these things in ourselves. One could open one's heart and allow oneself to feel that pain, which will soften and purify us and make us far more loving and kind.

The *tonglen* practice is a method for connecting with suffering and overcoming fear of suffering. Primarily it is a method for awakening the compassion inherent in all of us.

Training the mind is known as *lojong* in Tibetan: *lo* means "intelligence, mind, that which can perceive things," *jong* means "training" or "processing." The teachings of *lojong* consist of several steps or points of Mahayana discipline. The basic discipline of mind training or *lojong* is a sevenfold cleaning or processing of one's mind.

**4 Sessions: \$60**

## 3 THE PROMISE AND PROBLEMS OF BUDDHISM IN THE WEST

### Acharya Samuel Bercholz

What is right about Buddhism in the West? What is wrong about Buddhism in the West? The history of Buddhism in the West is barely 100 years in the making. Streams of Buddhist teaching have come from various Asian countries and Asian teachers. This seminar will explore the effect of this confluence of teachings and the Western students reaction to them. There are now many Western teachers of Buddhism teaching in diverse ways. How do their teachings compare to their Asian roots? What problems are arising in this new transmission? How does a non-theistic tradition fit into a theistic setting? What are the potential problems of Buddhism meeting Western materialism, especially "spiritual materialism"?

**2 Sessions: \$30**

Acharya Samuel Bercholz is a senior student in the Kagyu and Nyingma lineages of Tibetan Buddhism. He is the founder and Chairman of Shambhala Publications and thus has worked closely with Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche and numerous other teachers and translators in developing, publishing and disseminating their teachings on Buddhism. Shambhala Publications is the leading publisher of Buddhist books in the western world. Sam is co-editor of the book, *Entering the Stream: An Introduction to the Buddha and his Teachings*. He has taught Buddhist meditation and Shambhala Training extensively in North America, Europe and Asia.

## 4 "AT HOME IN THE MUDDY WATER" – AN INTRODUCTION TO ZEN

### Geoff Dawson

"May we exist like a lotus, at home in the muddy water, thus we bow to life as it is." These lines come from the traditional Zen meal ceremony called Oryoki. They are a reminder as to why we practice, why we eat, why we work, why we play, why we sleep and why we die – to appreciate life just as it is, not as we would like it all to be, which is the delusion of the ego.

The first day of this workshop will introduce participants to the philosophy and practice of Zen. Participants will learn how to do Zen meditation and apply it to living in the "mud" of everyday life. The second day will be a day of silent meditation. There will be personal interviews available with the teacher and group discussion and closure at day's end.

Geoff Dawson is a teacher in the Ordinary Mind Zen School founded by Charlotte Beck. He has been practising Zen for 25 years and has held many meditation intensives in Australia over the last 10 years. He works as a psychologist in private practice in Sydney and has an ongoing interest in the field of Buddhism and Psychotherapy.

**7 Sessions: \$80**

## 5 SHATTERING THE DARK: THE LIFE AND LIBERATION OF EARLY BUDDHIST WOMEN

### Venerable Tejadhammo Bhikku

The historical Buddha Shakyamuni had many female disciples yet relatively little has survived of them in early Buddhist literature. However, like gems scattered throughout the early Pali recollections, are stories of great value which centre on women and their liberation from suffering; personal, social/cultural and religious.

This course will look at some of the early Buddhist women, their life stories, songs, practice and teaching. We will attempt an understanding of their lives and experiences and in particular of their experience of enlightenment as found in various places within the Pali canon and in other sources beyond this. Since the practice and experience of meditation forms an essential part of their stories we will also investigate and practise some of the methods of meditation used by these early women.

All textual material will be provided to participants. Please bring your own writing materials.

*Please note that this course is not a formal feminist critique of Buddhism or Buddhist practice but an attempt to free ourselves further by entering into the precious and beautiful experience and teaching of these enlightened women.*

Venerable Tejadhammo Bhikku is a Buddhist monk who apart from the usual teachings and retreat activities, works with people who are seriously ill in various hospitals, hospices and their homes in and around Sydney. Bhante has studied and taught in Thai Universities and jails. He is resident teacher for the Association of Engaged Buddhists at Sangha Lodge. Bhante considers the Dhamma to be larger than any particular school, tradition or sect, and although ordained in the Theravada tradition has also received teachings in the Mahayana and Vajrayana traditions.

**8 Sessions: \$88**

## 6A & INTRODUCTION TO MEDITATION – 6B THE FOUR FOUNDATIONS OF MINDFULNESS

### Christine Biddle

*"Quietness is an element in meditation, but merely striving to attain quietness leads nowhere. It is like putting a paper bag on a cat's head: it will walk backward but it will never be able to advance."* (Nyogen Senzaki)

Mindfulness is the basic approach to the spiritual journey that is common to all traditions of Buddhism. This is the core method for beginning to relate directly with the mind. Four aspects to practice, which helps us to focus without struggle are:

1. **Mindfulness of Body** – Without the body we cannot do any kind of spiritual practice at all. We have to use the body to practise mindfulness and awareness – we have to pay attention to our physical posture and we have to pay attention to our breath.

2. **Mindfulness of Life** – the application of mindfulness has to be precise – whether we are thinking or sensing or experiencing emotions.

3. **Mindfulness of Effort** – we develop further the touch-and-go technique in meditation.

4. **Mindfulness of Mind** – involves paying attention to our thoughts – how we think and what we think about.

This course introduces beginners to some basics which aid meditators with the development of a healthy approach to their practice. Course A and B are a repeat of the same introductory material.

Christine Biddle has been a student of Buddhism for twenty years, during which time she has studied and practised in India and Canada. She currently studies under the direction of the Venerable Traleg Kyabgon Rinpoche and has completed a traditional three year retreat under the late Kalu Rinpoche. Christine is a meditation instructor at Kagyu E-Vam Buddhist Institute.

**6A – 2 Session: \$22    6B – 3 Session: \$33**

*6A & 6B are the same course repeated*

## 7 MEDITATING FOR INSIGHT

### Venerable Pannyavaro

This course is a series of insight meditation exercises and practical advice on how to apply them. It works best if you follow the course progressively, giving each sequence of instructions a good 'work-out' before proceeding further.

Meditation is the intelligent heart of the Buddha's way. The purpose of this meditation course is not to create a system of beliefs, but rather to give guidance on how to see clearly into the nature of the mind. In this way, you can have first-hand understanding of the way things are, without reliance on opinions or theories – a direct experience, which has its own vitality.

Venerable Pannyavaro is an Australian Buddhist monk who has devoted his life to the meditational aspects of the Buddha's teachings. During more than twenty-five years of training, he has studied and practised meditation in all the major Theravada Buddhist countries, including long periods of intensive practice of Satipatthana-vipassana meditation at the Mahasi Sayadaw Centres in Burma. Now, as a qualified meditation teacher, he combines his long training and life experience to bring together a practical, in-depth approach to the teaching of Vipassana or Insight meditation.

**4 Sessions: \$50**

## 8 DANGEROUS FRIENDS AND BREATHING ICONS – THE SPIRITUAL GUIDE IN TANTRIC BUDDHISM AND CHRISTIANITY

### Christina Fox

The spiritual guide or teacher is an archetype, to be found in all the great spiritual traditions, yet in the contemporary West a great deal of ambivalence constellates around such figures. Do Western seekers, Buddhist and Christian, really need a teacher? If so, why are we so often resistant to the very idea? How do we recognise a real spiritual teacher today? How do we tell a master from a charlatan? What are the qualities we should look for in a tantric master or a Christian spiritual father? Do the spiritual guides in these two ancient paths have anything in common? Is the guru Buddha? Or like the Buddha? Is the Christian spiritual director an icon of Christ? Is the teacher the path? Or does the teacher point to the path? What is the risk and promise of following a spiritual teacher and how are that risk and promise experienced in the West today?

We come to the Dharma and to the Gospel as Westerners with distinctively Western and contemporary questions. These questions can bring us to blessing or to blindness. The choice is ours.