



FOREST SANGHA

newsletter

January 1999

2542

Number 47

The Key to Liberation

Venerable Ajahn Chah, extracts from a recent publication

The Buddha didn't teach us to study the mind and mental factors in order to become attached to them, he taught simply to know them as *aniccam* (impermanent), *dukkham* (suffering), *anattā* (not-self). The essence of Buddhist practice then, is to let them go and lay them aside. You must establish and sustain awareness of the mind and mental factors as they arise. In fact, the mind has been brought up and conditioned to turn and spin away from this natural state of awareness, giving rise to *saṅkhāra* (thought formations) which further concoct and fashion it. It has therefore become accustomed to the experience of constant mental proliferation and of all kinds of conditioning, both wholesome and unwholesome. The Buddha taught us to let go of it all, but before you can begin to let go, you must first study and practise. This is in accordance with nature – the way things are. The mind is just that way, mental factors are just that way – this is just how it is.

Consider *magga* (the Noble Eightfold Path), which is founded on *paññā* or Right View. If there is Right View it follows that there will be Right Intention, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Livelihood and so on. These all necessarily involve mental factors which arise out of the knowing. The knowing is like a lantern. If there is

Right Knowing it will pervade every aspect of the path, giving rise to Right Intention, Right Speech and so on, just like the light from a lantern illuminating the path along which you have to travel. In the end, whatever the mind experiences, it must arise from the knowing. If this mind didn't exist, the knowing couldn't exist either. These are the essential characteristics of the mind and mental factors.

All these things are mental phenomena. The Buddha taught that the mind is the mind – it's not a living being, a person, a self, an 'us' or a 'them'.

The Dhamma is simply the Dhamma – it's not a living being, a person, a self, an 'us' or a 'them'. There's nothing which is substantial.

Whatever aspect of this individual existence you choose, whether it's *vedanā* (feeling) or *saññā* (perception), for example, it all comes

within the range of the five *khandhas* (aggregates). So it should be let go of.

Meditation is like a plank of wood. Let's say *vipassanā* (insight) is one end of the plank and *samatha* (calm) is the other. If you were to pick the plank up, would just one end come up or would both of them? Of course, when you pick up the plank, both ends come up together. What is *vipassanā*? What is *samatha*? They are the mind itself. At first the mind becomes peaceful through the practice of *samatha*, through *samādhi*

*The knowing is like a lantern.
If there is Right Knowing
it will pervade every aspect of the
path...*

(firmness of mind). By developing samādhi you can make the mind peaceful. However, if the peace of samādhi disappears, suffering arises. Why does suffering arise? Because the kind of peace which comes through samatha is itself samudaya (the Noble Truth of the Origin of Suffering). It's a cause for suffering to arise. Even though a certain state of peace has been attained, the practice is not yet finished. The Buddha saw from his own experience, that this isn't the end of the practice. The process of becoming is not yet completely exhausted; the conditions for continued birth still exist; the practice of the Holy Life is still incomplete. Why is it incomplete? Because suffering still exists. He thus took up the calm of samatha and continued to contemplate it, investigating to gain insight until he was no longer attached to it. Such calm is one kind of saṅkhāra and is still part of the world of conditions and conventions. Attaching to the calm of samatha means attaching to the world of conditions and conventions and as long as you are attached to conditions and conventions, you are attached to becoming and birth. That act of taking delight in the tranquillity of samatha is becoming and birth. When that restless and agitated thinking disappears through the practice of samatha, the mind attaches to the resultant peace, but it's another form of becoming. It still leads to further birth.

... o o o o o o ...

The Buddha observed that his mind was conditioned in this way and reflected that the causes for becoming and birth were still present and the practice was still unfinished. As a result, he deepened his contemplation of the true nature of saṅkhāras – because a cause exists,

1. *Khandhas*: Groups or aggregates: from (*rūpa*), feeling (*vedanā*), memory and perception (*saññā*), thought formations (*saṅkhāras*) and consciousness (*viññāna*). These are the five groups which form what we call a person.

there is accordingly birth and death and these characteristics of movement back and forth in the mind. He contemplated this repeatedly to see clearly the truth about the five *khandhas*¹. All physical and all mental phenomena and everything that the mind thinks, are *saṅkhāras*. The Buddha taught that once you have discerned this, you'll let them go, you'll naturally give them up. These things should be known as they are in reality. As long as you don't know things in accordance

with the truth you have no choice but to suffer. You can't let go of them. But once you have penetrated the truth and understand how things are, you see these things as deluding. This is what the Buddha meant when he explained that really, the mind which has seen the truth of the way things are is empty, it is inherently unentangled with anything. It isn't born belonging to anyone and it doesn't die as anyone's. It is free. It is bright and radiant, free from any involvement with external affairs and issues. The reason it gets entangled with external affairs is because it's deluded by *saṅkhāras* and the very sense of self.

The Buddha thus taught us to look carefully at the mind. In the beginning what was there? There was really nothing

there. The process of birth and becoming and these movements of mind weren't born with it and they don't die with it. When the Buddha's mind encountered pleasant mind-objects, it didn't become delighted with them. Contacting disagreeable mind-objects, he didn't become averse to them – because he had clear knowledge and insight into the nature of the mind. There was the penetrating knowledge that all such phenomena have no real substance or essence to them. He saw them as *aniccam*, *dukkham*, *anattā* and maintained this deep and profound insight throughout his practice.

It is the knowing which discerns the truth of the way things are. The knowing doesn't become delighted or sad with things. The condition of being delighted is 'birth' and the condition of being distressed is 'death'. If there is death there must be birth, if there is birth there must be death. This process of birth and death is *vaṭṭa* – the



Venerable Ajahn Chah

cycle of birth and death which continues on endlessly.

As long as the mind of the practitioner gets conditioned and moved around like this, there need be no doubt as to whether the causes for becoming or rebirth still remain; there is no need to ask anyone. The Buddha thoroughly contemplated the characteristics of *saṅkhāras* and as a result could let go of *saṅkhāras* and each of the five *khandhas*. He became an independent observer, simply acknowledging their existence and nothing more. If he experienced pleasant mind-objects, he didn't become infatuated with them, but simply watched and remained aware of them. If he experienced unpleasant mind-objects, he didn't become averse towards them. Why was that? Because he had discerned the truth and so the causes and conditions for further birth had been cut off. The conditions supporting birth no longer existed. His mind had progressed in the practice to the point where it had gained its own confidence and certainty in its understanding. It was a mind which was truly peaceful – free from birth, ageing, sickness and death. It was that which was neither cause nor effect, nor dependent on cause and effect; it was independent of the process of causal conditioning. There were no causes remaining, they were exhausted. His mind had transcended birth and death, happiness and suffering, good and evil. It was beyond the limitations of words and concepts. There were no longer any conditions which would give rise to attachment in his mind. Anything to do with attachment to birth and death and the process of causal conditioning, would be a matter of the mind and mental factors.

The mind and mental factors do exist as part of reality. They truly exist in conventional reality, but the Buddha saw that however much we know about them or believe in them, it's of little real benefit. It is not the way to find real peace. He taught that once you know them, you should put them down, renounce them, let them go. Because the mind and mental factors are the very things which lead you to both that which is wrong and that which is right in life. If you are wise, they can lead you to what is right; if you are foolish they lead you to what is wrong. The mind and mental factors are the world. The Buddha used the things of the world to observe the world. Having observed the way things are, he came to know the world and described himself as being *lokavidū* – one who clearly knows the world.

... o o 0 o o ...

The calm mind is like a resting place for the practitioner. The Buddha rested here as it forms the base from which to practise *vipassanā* and to contemplate the truth. At this point you only need to maintain a modest level of *samādhi*, your main function is to direct your attention to observing the conditions of the world around you. You contemplate steadily the process of cause and effect. Using the clarity of the mind, you

reflect on all the sights, sounds, smells, tastes and tactile sensations you experience, and how they give rise to different moods: good, bad, pleasant or unpleasant. It's as if someone were to climb up a mango tree and shake the fruit down while you wait underneath to collect up all those that fall. You reject any mangoes which are rotten, keeping only the good ones. That way, you don't have to expend much energy, because rather than climbing the tree yourself, you simply wait to collect the mangoes at the bottom.

This means that when the mind is calm, all the mind-objects you experience bring you knowledge and understanding. Because there is awareness, you are no longer creating or proliferating around these things. Success and failure, good reputation and bad reputation, praise and criticism, happiness and suffering, all come and go by themselves. With a clear, still mind that is endowed with insight, it's interesting to sift through them and sort them out. All these mind-objects which you experience – whether it's the praise, criticism or things that you hear from other people, or any of the other kinds of happiness and suffering which you experience – become a source of benefit for you. Because someone else has climbed up the mango tree and is shaking it to make the mangoes fall down to you. You can gather them up at your leisure. You don't have to fear anything – why should you fear anything when it's someone else who is up the tree, shaking the mangoes down for you? All forms of gain and loss, good reputation and bad reputation, praise and criticism, happiness and suffering, are like the mangoes which fall down to you. The calm mind forms the basis for your contemplation, as you gather them up. With mindfulness, you know which fruits are good and which are rotten. This practice of reflection, based on the foundation of calm, is what gives rise to *paññā* or *vipassanā*.

... o o 0 o o ...

As a result of his experience, the Buddha taught that the practice has to develop naturally, according to conditions. Having reached this level, you allow things to develop according to your accumulated wholesome *kamma*² and *pārami*³. This doesn't mean you stop putting effort into the practice, but that you continue with the understanding that whether you progress swiftly or slowly, it's not something you can force. It's like planting a tree, it knows by itself the appropriate pace to grow at. If you crave to get quick results, see that as delusion. Even if you want it to grow slowly, see that as delusion

2. *Kamma*: 'Actions', both wholesome and unwholesome actions of body, speech and mind.

3. *Pārami*: refers to the ten spiritual perfections: generosity, moral restraint, renunciation, wisdom, effort, patience, truthfulness, determination, kindness and equanimity.

also. As with planting the tree, only when you do the practice will you get the result. If you plant a chilli bush for instance, your duty is simply to dig the hole, plant the seedling, give it water and fertiliser and protect it from insects. This is your job, your part of it. Then it's a matter of trust. For the chilli plant, how it grows is its own affair – it's not your business. You can't go pulling at it to make it grow faster. Nature doesn't work like that. Your job is just to water it and give it fertiliser.

When you practice like this, there's not much suffering. Whether you reach enlightenment in this lifetime or the next, is not important. If you have faith and confidence in the efficacy of the practice, then whether you progress quickly or slowly, can be left up to your accumulated good *kamma*, spiritual qualities and *pārami*. If you see it this way, you feel at ease with the practice.

... o o 0 o o ...

Don't give up the practice of *samatha* just because you have tried it a few times and found that the mind doesn't get calm. That's the wrong way to go about it. You really have to train yourself over a long period of time. Why does it have to take so long? Think about it. How many years have you let pass by without practising? When thoughts arise pulling the mind in one direction, you rush after them, when they start pulling it in another, you still rush after them with your mental proliferation. If you are going to try and stop the flow of the mind and make it stay still, right there in the present moment, a couple of months is just not long enough. Contemplate this. Think about what it might take to have a mind which is at peace with the flow of the different issues and events which affect it and is at peace with the mind-objects it experiences. When you first start to practise, the mind has so little steadiness that as soon as it comes into contact with a mind-object, it gets agitated and confused. Why does it get agitated? Because it's under the influence of *taṇhā* (craving). You don't want it to think. You don't want to experience any mind-objects. This not wanting is a form of craving. It's *vibhava-taṇhā* (craving for non-existence). The more you desire not to experience any agitation and confusion, the more you encourage and usher it in. 'I don't want this impingement, why does it come? I don't want the mind to be agitated, why is it like this?' That's it – there's craving for the mind to be in a peaceful state. It's because you don't know your own mind. That's all. You persist in getting caught up with the mind and its craving, and yet it takes an incredibly long time before you realise where you are going wrong. When you think about it clearly, you can see that all this distraction and agitation comes because you tell it to come! There is craving for it to be otherwise; there is craving for it to be peaceful; there is craving for the mind not to be restless and

agitated. That's the point – it's all craving, the whole mass of it.

Well, never mind! Just get on with your own practice. Whenever you experience a mind-object, contemplate it. Throw it into one of the three 'pits' of *aniccam*, *dukkham*, *anattā* in your meditation and reflect on it. Generally, when we experience a mind-object it stimulates thinking. The thinking is in reaction to the experience of the mind-object. The nature of ordinary thinking and *paññā* is very different. The nature of ordinary thinking is to carry on without stopping. The mind-objects you experience lead you off in different directions and your thoughts just follow along. The nature of *paññā* is to stop the proliferation, to still the mind, so that it doesn't go anywhere. You are simply the knower and receiver of things. As you experience different mind-objects, which in turn give rise to different moods, you maintain awareness of the process and ultimately, you can see that all the thinking and proliferating, worrying and judging, is entirely devoid of any real substance or self. It is all *aniccam*, *dukkham*, *anattā*. The way to practise is to cut off all the proliferation right at its base and see that it all comes under the headings of the three characteristics. As a result it will weaken and lose its power. Next time when you are sitting in meditation and it comes up, or whenever you experience agitation like that you contemplate it, you keep observing and checking the mind.

You can compare it with looking after water buffalo. There is a buffalo, its owner and some rice plants. Now normally, buffaloes like to eat rice plants; rice plants are buffalo food. Your mind is like the buffalo, the mind-objects which you experience are like the rice plants. That part of the mind which is 'that which knows' is like the owner of the buffalo. The practice isn't really any different from this. Consider it. What do you do when you are looking after a water buffalo? You let it wander freely, but try to keep an eye on it the whole time. If it walks too near the rice plants, you shout a warning and when the buffalo hears, it should stop and come back. However, you can't be careless. If it's stubborn and doesn't take heed of your warnings you have to take a stick and give it a good whack, then it won't dare to go anywhere near the rice plants. But don't get caught taking a siesta. If you can't resist taking a nap, the rice plants will be finished for sure.

... o o 0 o o ...

So there is this balanced way of practice which means you contemplate everything that you experience. Whatever you do, contemplate it thoroughly and don't give up the work of meditation. Some people think that when the formal meditation ends, it all stops and they can take a rest, so they let go of their meditation object

and stop contemplating. Don't be like that! Keep reflecting on all that you experience. Whether you encounter good or bad people, rich or poor, important or unimportant, young or old, keep contemplating everything. See that it is all part of meditation. ❖

LIFE IS UNCERTAIN

Life is uncertain; the future is uncertain. The only certainty is that there will be death – and even the time and manner of that is wonderfully unknown. The wise, contemplating this simple fact, use it as an incentive to practise; that in us which is not so wise seeks security in what is insecure, taking refuge in an image of the world that can be swept away at any time. Fortunately from time to time there is a reminder, an event in our lives that we can't ignore, we can't pretend it didn't happen and the fact of uncertainty or change takes on a deeper meaning; our ideas of the future – at least for a short time – cease to be something that we take for granted.

Luang Por Chah would always emphasise uncertainty in his teaching, and so it is one of the main focusses of practice in his monasteries. Any undertaking is made with the proviso, 'If things work out.' One of the sisters reminded me of something that I had said during one morning gruel meeting: 'I will be at the evening puja this evening – if I am all right.' It had just seemed a sensible thing to say; it was not, as one could have suggested, that I had had any foresight or intimation that a few hours later I would be on my way to hospital in quite a precarious condition. From the inside it was a remarkably peaceful experience; there was no energy to think or to be concerned about the future. All I could do was be there, drifting in and out of consciousness, while others attended to my immediate physical needs or beamed in powerful thoughts of kindness for my well being.

Having survived the ordeal pretty much intact, there is the time now to review this life and its priorities. My responsibility as editor of this newsletter is something that I have been questioning for some time since, not being so skilled at delegation, I have found it taking a disproportionate amount of time and effort to gather and prepare material to a suitable standard. Clearly it had to change but until recent weeks, it was uncertain how that change would happen. So now Tavarro is faithfully continuing to offer his skill as typesetter and help with the design, and Ajahn Sucitto once again has stepped in – preparing a more modest Dhamma offering in a simpler format. All being well, the next couple of issues will be taken care of in this way. After that, who knows? The future is uncertain!

In the meantime may I express sincere appreciation for the many kind messages, gifts and offers of help that have come during my illness and recuperation. And may we all continue in our striving to find peace and security in the midst of uncertainty.

Search for Small Things

shells of snails

under the hedges

the dew on a leaf
dripping in puddles

Awaiting
Illustration...

all for the robin
to drink, all
these things, so
self-contained

these small things
immaculate

Samanera Issaramuni

AMARAVATI TEMPLE OPENING – JULY 1999

As many of you will already know, the official opening of the Amaravati Temple and Cloister is planned for the weekend of July 3rd and 4th 1999. Much of the administration and preparation is already in progress.

Over this weekend and also during the days before and after the official events themselves, we are hoping to welcome many of our friends to Amaravati – Sangha members past and present, lay friends from this country and overseas and representatives from other faiths.

It is clear that in order to host a gathering of this size, we are going to need a great deal of help!

If you are in a position to offer assistance before, during or after the festival period, July 1st – 7th, we are keen to hear from you. Please let us know if you are able to offer help in the following areas:

- *kitchen: cooking, cleaning and serving*
- *child – care*
- *reception duty: hosting and stewarding visitors*
- *car park management*
- *driving: especially own vehicle*
- *general site maintenance and cleaning*
- *campsite setting-up and management*
- *care of the grounds and garden*
- *first-aid and medical support*
- *laundry*

Also we would very much appreciate offers of equipment for use during the festival. We are particularly keen to borrow camping equipment – tents, air mattresses etc.

*Please contact Shirley Cox,
Temple Opening Co-ordinator at Amaravati.*



WINTER RETREAT

There will be a three-month retreat in all the European monasteries (except Santacittarama) in the first part of 1999, beginning early in January and concluding either towards or at the end of March. The Italian monastery will resume its normal schedule at the end of February. During this time the Sangha will be devoting its time to meditation and introspection. Different monasteries have slightly different opportunities for visitors and guests and it is best to phone or write to them if you are considering a visit or wish to support the retreat. It may well be the case that the meditation hall is open and you are welcome to attend any teachings that are being given. At Amaravati and Cittaviveka visitors are welcome to come and offer dana or help in the kitchen generally. You are especially welcome to join the evening puja. Other than observance days it would pay to telephone to confirm it is on.

It is however unlikely that anyone will be available to attend to you personally.

WORKING FOR THE SANGHA

Our monasteries run on Dhamma and dana – and the time and effort of many dedicated volunteers. If you ever visit the Amaravati office, you usually find a hive of activity in the midst of a sea of monastic tranquillity. This is where travel arrangements are made, building repairs organized, bills paid,

enquiries answered, etc. etc. It's also the registered office of the English Sangha Trust, the charity which acts as steward for Amaravati and Cittaviveka.

When the Trust was set up some 40 years ago, it was conceived as a lay body, supporting the Sangha. In recent years however, the burden of administering both the monastery and the Trust has fallen on the shoulders of 3 or 4 monastics willing to do this work as an offering of service. Now with the charity world becoming ever more complex, its management requires professional skills which our monks and nuns just don't have. Indeed in some respects this kind of role conflicts with the monastic discipline. We feel it is time to correct the balance and involve more lay people in the workings of the Trust. This will enable the Sangha to focus more clearly on their training, teaching us and taking care of the monastery.

Of course there is nothing new in this. Even in the Buddha's time the roles and responsibilities of samanās (monastics) and upāsikas (lay-followers) were divided, as part of the interdependent relationship between the two groups. An important lay role was that of the kappiyakaraka (steward), a lay follower trusted by both the samanās and lay supporters to channel donations according to the Sangha's needs and the donors' wishes.

The Trust is now seeking to find an administrator based at Amaravati. The post would be non-residential and at the time of writing it has yet to be decided whether it will be a full or part time appointment. In either case we would expect to pay a salary. The ideal person would obviously be sympathetic to the monastic tradition. He

or she would have all the personal qualities that you would expect of a practicing Buddhist. Good management, communication and IT skills are needed. A background in financial administration will be important, and experience in working with volunteers desirable.

An information pack providing full details is available from the Trust Secretary at Amaravati (A5 size sae appreciated).

Colin Ash – EST, Chairman

MONASTERY ON-LINE

The web site hasn't moved but has a simplified address is now available at:

FSnews.cjb.net

FAMILY EVENTS 1999 AT AMARAVATI

Rainbows Weekend: 30th April - 3rd May a weekend of creative activities to produce 'Rainbows' Magazine.

Summer Camp: 21st - 29th August: over a week of activities catering for all the family. It follows a relaxed monastic schedule with classes.

Young Persons' Retreat: 3rd - 5th December: A taste of Silent meditation for teenagers

For details contact
Dan Jones, 59 Cavendish Avenue,
Cambridge, CBI 4UR
Tel: 01223 246257

LAY RESIDENTIAL OPPORTUNITIES AT AMARAVATI

THERE ARE a number of lay residents at Amaravati fulfilling supportive roles; with responsibilities in the office, maintenance, retreat centre, kitchen, library and grounds. Opportunities to fill these positions

GARDENER: We need an extra person to assist with care for the maintenance of the gardens and grounds of Amaravati (about 30 acres). The work requires physical strength and stamina, gardening knowledge, and the ability to work with volunteer helpers. A vigorous and natural way to complement one's meditation practice!

occasionally come up and we would be pleased to receive expressions of interest for future reference. At the moment we are looking for people to take up the following duties.

MAINTENANCE: Someone with building skills e.g. carpentry or plumbing - who can make a significant contribution to our maintenance team. The ability to lead less experienced helpers and/or organise jobs for outside contractors would be a definite advantage.
For more information please contact the Secretary.

We try to bring out the *Newsletter* quarterly, depending upon funds and written material. In the spirit of our relationship with lay people, we naturally depend upon donations: any contributions towards printing/distribution costs can be made to: 'The English Sangha Trust', Amaravati. In that same spirit, we ask you to let us know if you wish to be put on (or removed from) the mailing list, or if you have moved. Write to *Newsletter*, Amaravati. The newsletter is also available on the internet from: <http://www.FSnews.cjb.net>

Data Protection Act: The mailing list used for *Forest Sangha Newsletter* is maintained on computer. If you object to your record being kept on our computer file, please write to *Newsletter*, Amaravati, and we will remove it.

This Newsletter is printed by: *Ashford Printers*, Harrow. Telephone – (0181) 427-5097

Teaching and Practice Venues

MEDITATION GROUPS

These are visited regularly by Sangha members.

BATH Catherine Hewitt, (01225) 405-235	LONDON BUDDHIST SOCIETY 58 Eccleston Square, SW1 (Victoria) (0171) 834 5858 Meditation Sundays: led by a monk or nun, every 2nd month. 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. Thursday classes – 6.00pm
BERKSHIRE Penny Henrion (01189) 662-646	
BRISTOL Lyn Goswell (Nirodha), (0117) 968-4089	
SOUTH DORSET Barbara Cohen-Walters (Sati sati), (01305) 786-821	LEEDS AREA Daniella Loeb, (0113) 2791-375 Anne Voist, (01274) 670-865
EDINBURGH Muriel Nevin, (0131) 337-0901	
GLASGOW James Scott, (0141) 637-9731	SOUTHAMPTON Ros Dean (01703) 422430
HAMPSTEAD Caroline Randall, (0181) 348-0537	SURREY/WOKING Rocanā, (01483) 761-398

MEDITATION GROUPS

These meet regularly & receive occasional visits from Sangha.

BEDFORD David Stubbs, (01234) 720-892	MAIDSTONE Tony Millett, (01634) 375-728
BELFAST Paddy Boyle, (01232) 427720	MIDHURST Barry Durrant, (01730) 821479
BRIGHTON Alex Clingan, (01273) 327-925	NEWCASTLE ON TYNE Andy Hunt, (0191) 478-2726
CAMBRIDGE Gillian Wills, (01954) 780-551	OXFORD Peter Carey, (01865) 578-76
DUBLIN Eugene Kelly, (1) 854-076	PEMBROKESHIRE/S. WALES Peter and Barbara (Subhdra) Jackson, (01239) 820-790
ESSEX (Billericay) Rob Howell, (01702) 559-241 (Harlow) Pamutto, (01279) 731-330	PORTSMOUTH Dave Beal, (01705) 732-280
HEMEL HEMPSTEAD Bodhinyana Group Chris Ward (01442) 890-034	REDRUTH Daniel Davide (01736) 753175
LONDON / NOTTING HILL Jeffrey Craig, (0171) 221-9330 Nick Carroll, (0181) 740-9748	STEYNING / SUSSEX Joe Bartlett, (01903) 879-597
LEIGH-ON-SEA Gool Deboo, (01702) 553-211	STROUD John Groves, 01453 753319
	TAUNTON Martin Sinclair, (01823) 321-059

AMARAVATI CASSETTES

Cassette tapes of Dhamma talks given by Ajahn Sumedho and other Sangha members, plus tapes of chanting and meditation instruction are available for sale at cost price. For catalogue and information send SAE to:

Amaravati Cassettes,
Ty'r Ysgol Maenan,
Llanrwst,
Gwynedd, LL26 OYD

Amaravati

Retreats:

1999



April 2 – 11	10 Days	Ajahn Viradhammo
April 16 – 18	Weekend	—
May 7 – 9	Weekend	—
May 14 – 28	14 Days	Ajahn Sumedho (<i>Experienced</i>)
Sept. 3 – 5	Weekend	—
Sept. 10 – 19	10 Days	Ajahn Sumedho (<i>Beginners</i>)
Sept. 24 – 26	Weekend	Ajahn Sumedho (<i>In Thai</i>)
Oct. 8 – 10	Weekend	—
Oct. 15 – 20	5 Days	Sister Thanasanti
Nov. 5 – 7	—	—
Nov. 19 – 28	(Teacher to be decided)	—
Dec. 3 – 8	5 Days	Venerable Kusalo

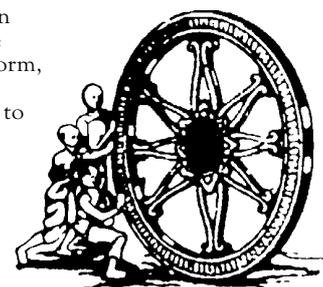
There are no plans to hold any lay retreats between 8th December 1999 through to March 2000.

Retreat Centre Work Weekend 1999

March 26 – 28 : June 4 – 6 : October 22 – 24

Please note that bookings are only accepted on receipt of a completed booking form and booking fee. The fee is refundable on request, up to one month before the retreat starts. To obtain a booking form, please write to the Retreat Centre, stating which retreat you would like to do.

Unless otherwise stated, all retreats are open to both beginners and experienced meditators, and are led by a monk or nun.



INTRODUCTORY MEDITATION—AMARAVATI

Saturday Afternoon Classes 1.30 – 3.30 pm

During the winter retreat, January - March, meditation instruction for beginners will be given by experienced lay teachers.

Classes are in the Bodhinyana Meditation Hall.

Feel free to come along – no booking is necessary.

VIHARAS

BRITAIN

◆ Amaravati Monastery
Great Gaddesden,
Hemel Hempstead,
Hertfordshire HP1 3BZ
Tel: (01442) 84-2455 (Office)
84-3411 (Guest Info.)
84-3239 (Retreat Info.)
Fax: (01442) 84-3721
*Stewards: English Sangha Trust,
Amaravati.*

◆ Cittaviveka: Chithurst
Buddhist Monastery
Chithurst, Petersfield,
Hampshire GU31 5EU
Tel: (01730) 81-4986
Fax: (01730) 81-7334
*Stewards: English Sangha Trust,
Cittaviveka.*

◆ Hartridge Buddhist
Monastery,
Upottery, Honiton,
Devon EX14 9QE
Tel: (01404) 89-1251
Fax: (01404) 89-0023
Stewards: Devon Vihara Trust.

◆ Aruna Ratanagiri
Harnham Buddhist Monastery
Harnham, Belsay,
Northumberland
NE20 0HF
Tel: (01661) 88-1612
Fax: (01661) 88-1019
web site: www.ratanagiri.org.uk
e-mail: harnham@mailcity.co
*Stewards: Magga Bhavaka
Trust.*

THAILAND

◆ Wat Pah Nanachat
Bahn Bung Wai,
Amper Warin,
Ubon Rajathani 34310

AUSTRALIA

◆ Bodhinyana Monastery
Lot 1, Kingsbury Drive,
Serpentine 6125 WA
Tel: (08) 952-52420
Fax: (08) 952-53420

◆ Dhammaloka Buddhist
Centre (Perth)
18-20 Nanson Way,
Nollamara 6061 WA
Tel: (08) 934-51711
Fax: (08) 934-44220
*Stewards: Buddhist Society of
Western Australia.*

ITALY

◆ Santacittarama
Via Delle Prata 22
Località Brulla
02030 Frasso Sabino (Rieti)
Italy
Tel/Fax: (0765) 87 21 86
*Stewards:
Santacittarama No 20163/38.*

SWITZERLAND

◆ Dhammapala
Buddhistisches Kloster
Am Waldrand,
CH 3718 Kandersteg
Tel: 033 / 675 21 00
Fax: 033 / 6752 241
*Stewards:
Dhammapala 31921-201-5.*

NORTH AMERICA

◆ Abhayagiri Monastery,
16201 Tomki Road,
Redwood Valley,
CA 95470
Tel: (707) 485-1630
Fax: (707) 485-7948
(Sangha literature and West
Coast newsletters are
distributed from here.)
*Stewards:
Sanghapala Foundation.*

◆ Boston Area:
Dorothea Bowen, Boston,
Mass. Tel.(617)332-2931
Mailing for E. Coast USA
& Thailand: to be placed on
the mailing list, please write
directly to Amaravati.

NEW ZEALAND

◆ Bodhinyanarama
17 Rakau Grove,
Stokes Valley,
Wellington 6008
Tel: (+ + 64) 4 563-7193
Fax: (+ + 64) 4 563-5125
e-mail: sangha@actrix.gen.nz
*Stewards:
Wellington Theravada Buddhist
Association.*

◆ Auckland Buddhist Vihara
29 Harris Road,
Mount Wellington,
Auckland
Tel: (+ + 64) 9 579-55443

MONASTIC WINTER
RETREATEarly January until the
end of March

See Grapevine for details.

OBSERVANCE DAYS

On these days the community devotes itself to quiet reflection and meditation. Visitors are welcome to join in the evening meditation vigils, and on the Full and New moon, there is an opportunity to determine the eight precepts for the night.

Moon Phase	☾ HALF	◯ FULL	☽ HALF	● NEW
JANUARY	24 (Sun)	1st & 31st	9 (Sat)	16 (Sat)
FEBRUARY	22 (Mon)	—	8 (Mon)	14 (Sun)
MARCH	24 (Wed)	☽1 & 31	9 (Tues)	16 (Tues)
APRIL	22 (Thurs)	29 (Thurs)	8 (Thurs)	14 (Wed)
☽ Magha Puja				

If undelivered, please return to: AMARAVATI MONASTERY
Great Gaddesden, Hemel Hempstead
Hertfordshire HP1 3BZ, England

ROYAL MAIL POSTAGE PAID
2 HEMEL HEMPSTEAD
173

Forest Sangha Newsletter© is edited from material sent to or written at our monasteries in Britain; it is distributed without charge. Comment within is personal reflection only and does not necessarily represent the opinion of the Sangha as a whole. We welcome appropriate articles and artwork, information for fellow Buddhists, or comments on the Newsletter itself (please send c/o 'Newsletter' to your local monastery). For permission to reprint any material please write to the editor c/o Cittaviveka.

Closing date for submissions to the next issue is 20th November 1998.