



Dear Friends,

I hope this finds you well on what (I hope!) is the tail end of a very long winter.

Order Convention

I was lucky enough to dodge a few weeks of winter cold when Vajrashura, Rijumuni and I travelled to India in February. Our first port of call was Bodh Gaya, where we attended the Triratna Buddhist Order International Convention. Bodh Gaya is the place where the Buddha attained Enlightenment and every day we gathered at the Bodhi Tree – the actual place of Enlightenment – to meditate and pay homage to the Buddha and his extraordinary achievement.

At present about a third of our Order lives in India, so it's not surprisingly then that Indian Order members vastly outnumbered us westerners at the convention, and it was great to get to know Indian Order Members in a bit more depth. In talking to them about their Dharma lives, I came to see how seriously they take the potential of the Dharma to transform, not just individual lives, but society.

Most Indian Order Members come from the very bottom of Indian society and know firsthand the worst kinds of discrimination and injustice. For them, the need for societal change is urgent, and they see the Dharma as the means to achieve it. Their great hero is Dr Ambedkar who instigated a 'Dhamma Revolution', the aim of which is to fundamentally transform society in line with Buddhist values by non-violent means. One of the key aspects of this revolution is that there can be no real change in society without transforming the hearts and minds of the individual members of that society.

A Buddhist Society

One of the places Vajrashura and I visited after the convention was Ajanta, an ancient complex of rock-cut Buddhist cave temples. The caves include paintings and rock-cut sculptures and are world renowned for being among the finest surviving examples of ancient Indian art. They are a remnant of what must have been an extraordinarily rich Buddhist culture and a reminder that a society founded on Buddhist principles has been a reality in India before and could be so again.

The Dharma in Ireland

But what about Ireland? Clearly, we live in a very different country from India. We have an almost entirely different history, culture and climate. However, people are still people wherever they are, and the Dharma addresses universal human concerns. The challenge then is to do what we can to help the values of the Dharma to inform Irish society here and now.

Seeing that it is an intrinsic function of the Dharma to be an active force in

transforming society for the better has always been integral to the Triratna Buddhist Community. I believe there is real merit in taking this seriously. Unlike India, a nation of more than a billion people, Ireland is a relatively small island nation, and I believe it is possible for a small, inspired and committed group of people to have a real and lasting impact.

Buddhist Action Month

It has become a tradition in Triratna, and in the wider Buddhist world, to celebrate and explore the altruistic dimension of Buddhism in June of every year in Buddhist Action Month (BAM). We have a whole range of events planned the details of which you'll find in the subsequent pages.

'As, one by one, we make our own commitment.

An ever-widening circle, the Sangha grows.'

This is an excerpt from an oft-recited verse and expresses the primary way that any real change in the world can be effected, i.e. by individuals exploring the Dharma and making the choice to deepen their commitment to practising it. Society, of course, is made up of individuals, and any change that takes place takes place individual by individual. This is of course a slow process. Slow as it is, I have the sense that in our small community in Ireland it is gathering momentum. For example, there has been a consistent stream of Irish women and men joining the Order over the past few years. The stream continues as we patiently await news of the new name of Eileen McCarney, who is presently on her three month ordination retreat in Spain!

There has also been a steady stream of people meeting the Sangha and deciding to deepen their practice by becoming a Mitra. With that in mind I'd like to invite you to celebrate Buddha Day with us on Sunday May 27th and to witness a number of people taking this significant step on the path of the Dharma.

I look forward to seeing you at this or another event sometime soon.

Much metta,
Jnanadhara



Part of the
Triratna Buddhist Community



Dublin Buddhist Centre
Newsletter

Sangha Nights Every Tuesday night, 7.30pm - 9.45pm. On a drop-in, donation basis.

Tuesday night in the DBC is Sangha Night – ‘Sangha’ being the Buddhist spiritual community. In the small shrine room is an opportunity to meditate with others, especially if you’ve just completed an introductory meditation course and are wondering what to do next. In it we’ll be exploring ways of engaging with meditation and the issues that arise in our lives with help from the Buddhist tradition. All are welcome, whatever your level of practice. In the large shrine room is a chance to come along and do a solid night’s practice with other Sangha folk. The evening consists of a long meditation and then a Puja, with a small amount of input. This is for people who have a regular meditation practice and a desire to practice Puja together with others.

Drop-in Meditation Sits

Mornings: This is for those of you who would like to have a communal meditation before you start your day. Please arrive around 7.20am to set yourself up beforehand. And after the Thursday morning sit, there’s a coffee morning in a local cafe! Weekday mornings, 7.30am - 8.20am.

Lunchtimes: Come along for a lunchtime sit in the centre, weekday lunchtimes 1.15pm - 1.45pm.

Meditation Practice Mornings Once a Month – see calendar for dates. 10am - 1pm. Led by Maitrikaya.

These meditation practice mornings are an opportunity to come together regularly for intensive collective meditation practice. The morning consists of three consecutive sits, each around 45 minutes long, with short leg stretches and a tea break in between. No teaching, just a simple morning of practice.

Sub-35s Group Every month – see calendar for dates. Fridays, 7.30pm - 10pm. Led by Sadayasihi, Kevin and Kasey.

This evening is a space where people can meet, share their experiences, practice together, and develop meaningful connections and friendships based on the Dharma. It will be a welcoming place for people interested in exploring meditation and Buddhism with the support and friendship of their peers, and is open to anyone who is 35 years or younger and for all levels of experience. It meets monthly, and begins with meditation, followed by a discussion of Buddhist principles relevant to young people. In particular, it will explore how practicing as a Buddhist can help transform the world in which we live.

Buddhist Action Month – Transforming Self, Transforming World

June 2018 is **Buddhist Action Month (BAM)**, where Buddhists of many traditions will be engaging together in socially beneficial activities rooted in Buddhist values. BAM is an invitation to take part and get involved in actions that express our care and concern for our planet and our environment – for all living beings that exist on it – in a practical way. The theme this year is **Transforming Self, Transforming World** and it provides an opportunity to reach out and engage with friends and communities in ways that we may not be able to do for the most part during the year. We will be running many events exploring this, and all events will be on a donation or dana basis. And you can take various pledges for the month, such as reducing your use of plastic and going more vegan. For more details, see www.dublinbuddhistcentre.org/BAM and www.thebuddhistcentre.com/BAM

Film Night – *Angry Buddha* by Stefan Ludwig *Friday 8th June, from 7pm.* This film is about the curious and inspiring story of the Hungarian gypsies who were inspired to start Dr Ambedkar High School to help young Roma/gypsies to a better life. Giving a picture of life in a Hungarian gypsy community, it tells the story of Janós Orsòs, a gypsy secondary school teacher (and Triratna mitra), his colleagues and pupils and their inspirations and fears: the Buddha, Dr Ambedkar, Subhuti, Triratna India and the Hungarian Far Right. Hosted by Vajrashura & Sadayasihi.

Exploring Beethoven’s *Fidelio*: Liberation, Fidelity and Enlightenment *Sunday 10th June, 2pm - 4pm. Led by Eamonn Lawlor.* We are faced with much that is awry in the world, and how do we stay resourced in the face of these challenges? How can we creatively resist and stay true to our ideals? In this event Eamonn Lawlor will discuss and present extracts from Beethoven’s only opera, *Fidelio*: a story of heroic love and resistance to tyranny, composed in the aftermath of the French Revolution, just one expression of creativity in the face of challenge.

Dharma Talk - *Dr Ambedkar & the Dhamma Revolution in the West* *Friday 15th June, from 7pm. By Jnanadhara.* If we wonder what a Dharma Revolution might look like, the answer is that we’ve already had one in India, led by Dr Ambedkar. What can Buddhists in the West learn from this peaceful revolution and how might we apply his radical social Dharma teachings in the West?

Solidarity with All Beings: Making a Stand Meditation Day on Metta *Saturday 16th June, 10am - 4.30pm. Led by Jnanadhara.* A day exploring the far-reaching implications of Metta Bhavana meditation, how it can bring us into greater solidarity and connection with ourselves and others.

Meditation Practice Morning *Sunday 17th June, 10am - 1pm. Led by Maitrikaya.* This practice morning will have a special BAM flavour, evoked by readings and with three meditation sits to support and nourish us in our Dharmic efforts in the world.

Summer Solstice Ritual *Tuesday 19th June, led by Pavara and Prajnamayi.* We will be connecting more with the passing of the seasons by celebrating the Summer Solstice, an important time of year in the seasonal calendar, celebrated by people on this island for millenia. As part of Sangha Night.

Writing for Transformation *Saturday 23rd June, 2pm - 4pm. Led by Liz Evers.* Looking at how we can use writing to support the arising of insight! Exploring practices from *Writing Your Way* and *The Poet’s Way* by Manjusvara, as well as Ira Progoff’s journaling system. Just bring pen and paper.

Biodiversity Tour and Cycle in Phoenix Park *Sunday 24th June, from 12pm. Led by Declan Brennan.* Explore the fantastic diversity in nature that is the Phoenix Park! And do it on your bike! Declan will expertly guide us around this beautiful space, and we can have a picnic afterwards!

Sub-35s Group Evening *Friday 29th June, 7.30pm - 10pm.* For the Sub-35s group this month, Sadayasihi, Kevin and Kasey will be pursuing a special BAM theme. More details closer to the time. And everyone is invited, regardless of age!

Sangha Hike in the Wicklow Mountains *Saturday 30th June, from 9.30am. Led by Vajrashura and Rijumuni.* A way of reconnecting with nature and reminding us of why cherishing environmental sustainability is so important. A reasonable level of fitness and good hiking gear is required.

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Buddhist Festival Days

These Buddhist festival days are opportunities for the Sangha to come together and spend a day on retreat in the midst of the city. All welcome.

Buddha Day – Sunday 27th May, 10am - 5pm: A celebration of the Buddha's Enlightenment, which Buddhists regard as the highest human achievement, and celebrate not only his accomplishment but also the fact that any man or woman who makes the effort can gain Enlightenment themselves. This day will include Mitra Ceremonies, where we witness people formally committing themselves to practising the Dharma.

Dharma Day – Sunday 8th July, 10am - 5pm: Without the Dharma, the Buddha's teaching, there would be no path to Enlightenment. Dharma Day is a chance to celebrate and rejoice in these teachings, which have led to the transformation of the hearts and minds of countless men and women.

Study Day for Men Mitras and Order Members

 Saturday 19th May, 10am - 5pm. Led by Paramabandhu.

Paramabandhu is a Private and Public Preceptor in the Triratna Buddhist Order. He will be leading this day for Men Mitras, on the theme *Entering the Enlightened Mind*. After the Buddha gained Enlightenment, he spent some weeks near the Bodhi Tree absorbing the experience. On this day we will look at the suttas that describe these weeks, giving us some insight into the nature of the enlightened mind. Cost: €30 waged / €20 unwaged.

*Note that Paramabandhu will also give a Dharma Talk on Friday 18th May, starting at 7pm, open to all, entitled **The Central Teaching of the Buddha: An Exploration of the Profound Teaching of Conditionality**.*

Retreat in Cavan - Metta: The Inner Revolution

 Friday 1st to Monday 4th June.

Metta, loving-kindness, is one of the most basic qualities we can possess, and one of the most powerful. With metta, people become fascinating. With metta, enemies turn into friends. With metta, the world becomes a place of opportunity rather than impediment. With metta, the world can become golden. With metta, we can spark off an inner revolution that ripples out into all our actions in the world, leading us to a warm and expansive heart - and beyond. On this retreat, led by Vajrashura, Pavara and Maitrikaya, we'll be exploring how metta, and the Metta Bhavana practice in particular, can bring about this inner revolution that brings such great benefit to ourselves and to the world. Takes place in Sandville House, Co. Cavan.

Cost: €185 waged / €165 low-waged / €125 unwaged.

Know your Mind Buddhism Course

 Thursday 31st May for six weeks. Led by Vajrashura.

The Buddha's profound insight into the nature of mind informed the Abhidharma, a 'training manual' to help us understand and transform our own minds. In this Abhidharma, we are given the means to live a happier and more fruitful life, a language to talk about our mental states, and ultimately a pathway to liberation from all suffering. We may even catch a glimpse of the ultimate mind in harmony - the mind of the Buddha himself. We will be working from Subhuti's book *Mind in Harmony*, a wonderful guide for the journey. Cost: €125 waged / €105 low-waged / €75 unwaged.

Going Deeper in Meditation Course

 Wednesday 6th June for five weeks. Led by Jnanadhara.

This follow-on meditation course is designed to take your meditation practices of mindfulness and metta deeper. Many facets of meditation will be explored, including the receptive dimension of meditation, the potential for liberating insight in meditation, and the possibility of being in the world in a new way. There will be opportunities to discuss how your meditation is going, the obstacles you experience and how to overcome them, and how to allow the deeper fruits of meditation to unfold. Cost: €125 waged / €100 low-waged / €65 unwaged.

Introduction to Meditation Days

 Saturday 9th June & Saturday 11th August, 10am - 4.30pm. Led by Jnanadhara.

On these days, both the Mindfulness of Breathing and the Development of Loving Kindness meditations will be taught, as well as walking meditation. They are ideal as an introduction to meditation, or as a refreshing day retreat if you'd like a boost to your practice. Cost: €75 waged / €35 unwaged.

Summer Retreat – The Four Tantric Rites

 Friday 13th - Friday 20th July. Led by Jnanadhara & Vajrashura.

Jnanadhara and Vajrashura would like to invite you to join them on the DBC's Summer Retreat at Sandville House in Cavan, where the theme will be *The Four Tantric Rites*. The Four Tantric Rites come from the Indian magical tradition, but are adapted by the Bodhisattva to better benefit all beings. They are referred to as the 'Four Enlightened Activities' and are the outpouring of the Bodhisattva's spontaneous compassionate activity. They comprise the Red Rite of Fascination, the White Rite of Pacification, the Black Rite of Destruction and the Yellow Rite of Enrichment, and are different modes of being we can use to break through to Buddhahood. We'll do this through talks, discussion, community, meditation, and come to see how we can skilfully and effectively wield the four rite for ourselves in our own Dharma lives. Cost: €350 waged / €310 low-waged / €240 unwaged.

Yoga and Meditation Day

 Sunday 29th July, 10am - 5pm. Led by Pavara.

This Yoga and Meditation Day is suitable for all levels of yoga, as well as for those interested in meditation. It will be an opportunity to reconnect with your meditation or yoga practice if it has slipped, as well as a great way to try them out if you haven't done them before. On the day, the Mindfulness of Breathing and the Metta Bhavana will be taught, as well as two sessions of yoga. Cost: €75 waged / €35 unwaged.

Nature's Enchantment – Awakening to the Natural World Retreat

 Friday 3rd - Monday 6th August.

While we are of the natural world, we can often feel separate from it. But we can have a more embodied, connected experience of ourselves within nature - where we feel a sense of ease and belonging in the more than merely human world. On this retreat, we'll be exploring how an enchanted experience of nature allows us to awaken to a deeper appreciation of the world around us. We'll be practising mindfulness and metta not just on the meditation cushion, but as part of an awakening to the fullness and beauty of our natural environment. This retreat will take place in Sandville House, Co. Cavan, and will be led by Prajñagita, Vajrashura & Jo Goldsmid. Cost: €255 waged / €205 low-waged / €135 unwaged.

Study Weekend for Mitras and Order Members

 Saturday 18th & Sunday 19th August, 10am - 5pm. Led by Sagaramati.

Sagaramati is well known as a great study leader and scholar of Buddhism. He's been involved in Dharmapala College and other major Triratna study projects for over thirty years, and now lives in Birmingham. On this weekend for Mitras and Order Members, he'll be leading study on *The Dhammapada*, one of the most seminal Buddhist texts representing the 'true voice of the Buddha', and the Canki Sutta. A study weekend not to be missed! Booking required. Cost: €60 waged / €40 unwaged.

108 Year Puja for Bhante Sangharakshita

 Tuesday 28th August, from 7.30pm, as part of Sangha Night.

August 26th is the 93rd birthday of Bhante Sangharakshita, who set up the Triratna Buddhist Community. Each year around this date we celebrate his life and work, and express our well-wishing for him and our gratitude for his efforts in creating and sustaining the Triratna community. This will be year 16 of the planned 108 years that the puja will be taking place, so come along to celebrate Bhante and to be part of this ongoing 108 year celebration!

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- Wed 2nd Mindfulness & Loving Kindness Meditation Course begins. 7.30pm - 10pm.
 Fri 4th - Mon 7th Women's Mitra Retreat in Wicklow and Men's Mitra Retreat in Cavan.
 Sun 13th Meditation Practice Morning. Led by Maitrikaya. 10am - 1pm.
 Fri 18th *The Central Teaching of the Buddha: An Exploration of the Profound Teaching of Conditionality.*
 Dharma Talk by Paramabandhu. Starts 7pm with meditation.
 Sat 19th Study Day for Men Mitras - *Entering the Enlightened Mind.* Led by Paramabandhu. 10am - 5pm.
 Fri 25th Sub-35s Group. An evening of Dharma for those 35 years and younger. 7.30pm - 10pm.
 Sun 27th Buddha Day Festival, celebrating the Enlightenment of the Buddha. 10am - 5pm.
 Including Mitra Ceremonies in the context of a special Puja.
 Thu 31st *Know Your Mind* Buddhism Course. Led by Vajrashura. 7.30pm - 10pm for six weeks.

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June is Buddhist Action Month!

- Fri 1st - Mon 4th Retreat in Cavan - *Metta: The Inner Revolution.* Led by Vajrashura, Pavara & Maitrikaya.
 Wed 6th *Going Deeper in Meditation.* Led by Jnanadhara. 7.30pm - 10pm each week for five weeks.
 Fri 8th **BAM:** Film Night - *Angry Buddha.* Hosted by Vajrashura and Sadayasihi. Starts 7pm.
 Sat 9th Introduction to Meditation Day. Led by Jnanadhara. 10am - 4.30pm.
 Sun 10th **BAM:** *Exploring Beethoven's Fidelio: Liberation, Fidelity and Enlightenment,* with Eamonn Lawlor. 2pm - 4pm.
Mon 11th New cycle of Meditation & Yoga courses begins.
 Mon 11th Mindfulness & Loving Kindness Meditation Course begins. 7.30pm - 10pm.
 Wed 13th Mindfulness & Loving Kindness Meditation Course begins. 7.30pm - 10pm.
 Thu 14th Mindfulness & Loving Kindness Meditation Course begins. 10.30am - 12.45pm.
 Fri 15th **BAM:** *Dr. Ambedkar & the Dhamma Revolution in the West.* Dharma Talk by Jnanadhara. Starts 7pm.
 Sat 16th **BAM:** *Solidarity with All Beings: Making a Stand.* Meditation Day on Metta. Led by Jnanadhara. 10am - 4.30pm.
 Sun 17th **BAM:** Meditation Practice Morning. Led by Maitrikaya. 10am - 1pm.
 Tue 19th **BAM:** Summer Solstice Ritual with Pavara and Prajnamayi, as part of Sangha Night.
 Sat 23rd **BAM:** *Writing for Transformation.* Led by Liz Evers. 2pm - 4pm.
 Sun 24th **BAM:** Biodiversity Tour and Cycle in the Phoenix Park. Led by Declan Brennan. From 12pm.
 Fri 29th **BAM:** Special Sub-35s Group. Suitable for anyone 35 years and under. 7.30pm - 10pm.
 Sat 30th **BAM:** Sangha Hike in the Wicklow Mountains. Led by Vajrashura and Rijumuni. Starts 9.30am.

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- Sun 8th Dharma Day Festival, celebrating the teaching of the Buddha. 10am - 5pm.
 Tue 10th Welcome back for ex-Eileen McCarney, who is returning from her ordination retreat. Starts 7.30pm.
 Fri 13th - Fri 20th Summer Retreat - *The Four Tantric Rites.* Led by Jnanadhara & Vajrashura.
 Fri 20th Sub-35s Group. An evening of Dharma for those 35 years and younger. 7.30pm - 10pm.
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 Wed 25th Mindfulness & Loving Kindness Meditation Course begins. 7.30pm - 10pm.
 Sat 28th Meditation Practice Morning. Led by Maitrikaya. 10am - 1pm.
 Sun 29th Yoga & Meditation Day. Led by Pavara. 10am - 5pm.

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- Fri 3rd - Mon 6th *Nature's Enchantment - Awakening to the Natural World* Long Weekend Retreat in Cavan.
 Led by Prajnapita, Vajrashura & Jo Goldsmid.
 Fri 10th Sub-35s Group. An evening of Dharma for those 35 years and younger. 7.30pm - 10pm.
 Sat 11th Introduction to Meditation Day. Led by Jnanadhara. 10am - 4.30pm
 Sun 12th Meditation Practice Morning. Led by Maitrikaya. 10am - 1pm.
 Sat 18th & Sun 19th Study Weekend for Mitras and Order Members. Led by Sagaramati. 10am - 5pm each day.
 Tue 28th 108 Year Puja for Bhante Sangharakshita. Starts 7.30pm.

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