



# Gay Buddhist Fellowship

## Newsletter

A Monthly Publication of the Gay Buddhist Fellowship, San Francisco

April 1995

### GBF Calendar

**6 April, GBF Steering Committee Meeting, 7:30 p.m.** Monthly meeting, open to all who are interested. For directions, call Ding-Hao Ma:

**9 April, Sunday Meeting, 10:30 a.m.** Dharma talk by Katherine Thanas, head teacher at the Santa Cruz Zen Center.

**10 April, Newsletter Committee Meeting, 7:30 p.m.** For directions, call Mark Picciano:

**23 April, Sunday Meeting, 10:30 a.m.** Open discussion.

**14 May, Sunday Meeting, 10:30 a.m.** Peter Goetz and David Sunseri will share their experiences and memories of Zen Buddhist teacher Issan Dorsey-Roshi. Peter and David lived and practiced with Issan at Hartford Street Zen Center in the late 1980s.

**28 May, Sunday Meeting, 10:30 a.m.** Open discussion.

**14-16 July, 3rd Annual GBF Retreat.** Vajrapani Institute in Boulder Creek. Watch for details in upcoming newsletters.

All GBF members are invited to recommend friends who might address our Sunday meetings. Subjects and speakers need to be appropriate, qualified, and of interest to our members. Please bring your suggestions to Ding-Hao Ma or David Holmes, who are now coordinating these meetings. ♡

### What GBF Means to Me

by Jesse

The question "What does GBF mean to me?" immediately raises additional questions such as "Who am I?" and "Why do I have an affinity for GBF?"

GBF is essentially concerned with the universal injunctions "to know thyself," "to thine own self be true," "the unexamined life is not worth living," etc. The Buddha-Dharma unequivocally states that if we learn to relax (*samatha*), focus our attention (*samadhi*), and observe our own mental apparatus, we will discover exactly how our mental strategies generate and charge our egos; how we constantly change our marvelous Buddha nature into emotional reactions.

GBF is about encouraging and facilitating these abilities, so we can better see how our imagination creates the *illusion* that we are emotionally isolated and suffering alone.

I also participate in GBF so I can be around other gay men who, like me, are traveling the path of awakening self-awareness. The dharmic concept of *interdependent origination* explicitly shows that we are the company we keep. The words "company" and "companion" come from the Latin, *panis*, meaning "bread." This is akin to the Latin word, *pascere*, which means "to nourish, pasture, feed."

So the question is, who do we share bread with (companion); what kind of company do we keep (kin)? What kind of pastures, fields, environment, or

belief systems do we move in physically, emotionally, intellectually, and spiritually? Do we nourish ourselves with quality food, quality exercise, quality thoughts, quality friends, quality reading, quality debates, quality meditation? GBF provides me ongoing opportunities to practice all of these things with my gay brothers.

"What GBF means to me" is seeing you at GBF meetings, hearing your authentic words, and getting in touch with the joy of "fellow-feeling" or camaraderie as we synergistically combine our energies in open discussion.

Answering the question, "What does GBF mean to me?" has proven a very profound and provocative mantra for me. It has helped me to clarify and refine my own beliefs, attitudes, and motives regarding GBF. I highly recommend its use to others.

I also encourage GBF members to put these thoughts on paper, reflect upon them, and then polish them into an article for the GBF newsletter. By doing so, you will be contributing to the GBF sangha in the revered tradition of *dana* (meaning, literally, "to donate or give"). You will also be helping with the spiritual evolution of GBF. In addition, the beneficial effects of following this process will enhance your own awakening. ♡

#### In This Issue

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## Dharma Centers

- BSC Berkeley Shambhala Center: 2288 Fulton Street, Berkeley. 510/841-6475 or 510/549-1481.
- GGF Green Gulch Farm (SF Zen Center): 1601 Shoreline Highway, Sausalito. 415/383-3134.
- HSZC Hartford Street Zen Center: 57 Hartford St., SF. 415/863-2507.
- HBC Healing Buddha Center/Medicine Buddha Healing Clinic: [Two locations: (1) Unitarian Universalist Church, corner of Cedar & Bonita in North Berkeley, 2nd floor, Fireside Room - entrance through garden on Bonita; (2) 702 Solano Ave., Albany.]
- KDK Kagyu Drogen Kunchab: PO Box 170370, SF 94117. 415/752-5454.
- LMB Land of Medicine Buddha: 5800 Prescott Road, Soquel. 408/462-8383.
- NI Nyingma Institute: 1815 Highland Place, Berkeley 94709. 510/843-6812.
- ODD Orgyen Dorje Den/Bay Area Yeshe Nyingpo: 410 Townsend #406 SF. 415/826-7181.
- POL PDL Pema Osel Ling: 2013 Bureka Canyon Road, Corralitos. 408/761-6266.
- RF Rigpa Fellowship: 816 Bancroft Way, Berkeley. 510/644-1858.
- SFBC San Francisco Buddhist Center: 37 Bartlett St., SF 94110. 415/282-2018.
- SFSC San Francisco Shambhala Center: 1630 Taraval St., SF. 415/731-4426.
- SFZC SF Zen Center: 300 Page Street, SF. 415/863-3136.
- SR Spirit Rock Meditation Center: 5000 Sir Frances Drake Blvd., Woodacre. 415/488-0170; 488-0164.
- TCL Tse Chen Ling Center: 4469 23rd St., SF. 415/641-0671.

Do you want a Dharma center's events listed here? Send a note with information on special events, or better yet, arrange for their mailings to be sent regularly, to: Mark Picciano,

# The Local Dharma

April 1995

### Ongoing Events

**Sundays Introductory Open House.** Meditation and study according to Tibetan Buddhist traditions, as taught by Chogyam Trungpa Rinpoche. 9-noon. Free. Meditation instruction available. BSC

**Sundays Community Practice Day.** Open house, sitting practice session, Shambhala practice session, and talk. Meditation instruction available. SFSC

**Sundays Weekly Vipassana Sitting** with Eugene Cash. 45-minute silent meditation followed by discussion. 2150 Lyon St., SF. Call 979-4879, 7-9 pm.

**Mondays-Saturdays Meditation and Services, 5-7 am.** Zazen/Evening Service, 6 pm. Zazen instruction at 5 pm on Mondays. HSZC

**Tuesdays Sitting, 7-8pm.** BSC

**Tuesdays Weekly Vipassana Sitting** with Howard Cohn. 675 Dolores St. (at 20th St.), SF, 7:30-9:30 pm.

**Wednesdays Shambhala Sitting Practice, 7-8pm.** BSC

**5 Wednesdays An Introduction to Buddhism,** begins 5 Apr, \$60. Low-income rates available, 7-9 pm. SFBC

**Thursdays Weekly Vipassana Sitting,** with James Baraz. Albany United Methodist Church, 980 Stannage (at Marin), 2 blocks up from San Pablo, Berkeley. 7:30 pm-9:30 pm

**5 Thursdays Afternoon Meditation Series,** begins 6 Apr, \$40. Low-income rates available, 2-4 pm. SFBC

**Thursdays Sitting, 7-8pm.** BSC

**Saturdays Zazen & Dharma Talk, 9 am.** HSZC

### Special Events

**2 Apr Vipassana Daylong** with Jack Kornfield. 9 am-5 pm, \$35 includes lunch. Contact code JK4. SR

**2 Apr Gourmet Vegetarian Dinner.** Monthly event for visitors and friends to join in a gourmet vegetarian menu. 7pm, \$15. Call for reservations. NI

**4 Apr Beginner's Mind Class.** Jill Grundberg leads this class. 7:30 pm, \$25. SFSC

**8 Apr A Short Introduction to Tibetan Buddhism: A Talk and Discussion.** Ven. Carol Corradi and Amy Miller. An opportunity to engage in active discussion about the fundamentals of Tibetan Buddhism. 10 am-1 pm, \$10 donation. TCL

**10, 24 Apr Lama Chopa/Tsog, 7 pm.** TCL

**10-13 Apr Mastering Successful Work: Special Evening Series.** 4 evening lectures, 7-8 pm, \$5 per evening/\$15 for the series. NI

**11, 18, 25 Apr Lam Rim Meditation,** 7 pm. TCL

**14-16 Apr Spring Open Retreat.** Fri., 8 pm-Sun., 4 pm. Open to all levels of experience and non-experience. \$100. Low-income rates available. SFBC

**16 Apr-23 May 1995 Study Session II** Call for details. GGF

**21-23 Apr Ordinary Magic: Introduction to Shambhala Training.** Fri., 8 pm, at Omine Karate Dojo in San Bruno (call for location). Free Fri. eve. talk open to the public; \$125 for the weekend. SFSC

**30 Apr Emptiness and Interdependence.** Ven. Robina Courtin leads this workshop at Vajrapani Institute in

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# What They Say About Aging and Death

compiled by Ron Ginsberg

*What the Buddha said:*

"Of all footprints, that of the elephant is supreme; Of all mindfulness meditations, That on death is supreme."

"Age is a true suffering."

*What the great masters said:*

"Life is impermanent, but that does not mean that it is not worth living. It is precisely because of impermanence that we value life so dearly. Therefore we must know how to live each moment deeply and use it in a respon-

sible way. If we are able to live the present moment completely, we will not feel regret later...When we accept that all things are impermanent, we will not be incapacitated by suffering when things decay and die. We can remain peaceful and content in the face of change, prosperity and decline, success and failure." —Thich Nhat Hanh

"We plan many projects and activities for the coming days, months, and years. Although death is the only event that is certain to occur, we don't count it among our plans." —Kathleen McDonald

"I spent 20 years without thinking of practicing the Dharma and then I spent another 20 years thinking I would practice later and then I spent 10 years thinking about how I had missed the chance to practice the Dharma." —Gung-thang Rinpoche

"The birth of a man is the birth of his sorrow. The longer he lives, the more stupid he becomes, because his anxiety to avoid unavoidable death becomes more and more acute. What bitterness. He lives for what is always out of reach! His thirst for survival in the future makes him incapable of living in the present." —Chang Tzu



"Body. It is prey to illness and pain; when it does not accord with our wishes, we have grief and sorrow. Not understanding the natural aging and decay of the body, we suffer. We feel attraction or repulsion toward the bodies of others and are robbed of our peace." —Achaan Chah

*Coming Next Month: How do you feel about aging? We will print a sampling of reader comments in this newsletter. Please drop me a line: Ron Ginsberg, 492 Grove Street #3, San Francisco, CA 94102. ♡*

## Local Dharma

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Boulder Creek. 10 am-4 pm, \$15 includes lunch. Call 408/338-6654.

29 Apr Attention, Awareness & Avowal: Buddhist Practice & Psychotherapy, led by Steve Weintraub. The work of psychotherapy in the context of the practice of Zen—through instruction and practice in meditation, talks, and discussion. 9 am-5 pm. \$60 includes lunch. GGF

Drikung Kagyu Teachings with Ven. Khenpo Konchog Gyaltsen Rinpoche. Call for details, 415 731-4426. SFSC. ♡

## Zen Hospice Project

Volunteer training begins on May 3

Volunteers provide practical, emotional, and spiritual support to men and women with cancer or AIDS. Each volunteer receives thorough training, is closely supervised, and is supported by a community of like-minded individuals. No prior experience in health care is necessary; we each have the capacity to empathetically care for another.

The program has its roots in Buddhist practice; however we wish to encourage the participation of a multicultural community. We welcome all spiritual traditions both for patients and volunteers.

The training begins a one-year program of service and is open to those able to make a commitment of five hours weekly and attend bi-monthly support meetings. ♡

### Training Dates:

Wed. & Thu., May 3-4  
5:45 pm-10 pm

Sat. & Sun., May 6-7  
8:30 am-7 pm

Wed. & Thu., May 10-11  
5:45 pm-10 pm

Mon., May 15  
5:45 pm-10 pm

Training fee: \$150

Application deadline: April 17

Nursing certification: 30 CEUs

Call for an application or more information: 415/863-2910.

