



Gay Buddhist Fellowship

Newsletter

A Monthly Publication of the Gay Buddhist Fellowship, San Francisco

May, 1995

GBF Calendar

4 May, Thursday, GBF Steering Committee Meeting, 7:30 p.m. at home of John Krowka,

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.

15 May, Monday, Newsletter Committee Meeting, 7:30 p.m. For directions, call Mark Picciano:

18 May, Thursday, Buddhism Study Group begins. Pre-registration required. (See article on this page.)

20 May, Saturday, GBF-sponsored Day of Meditation and Mindfulness. Sangha House, 1800 Arch Street, Berkeley, 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. (See article on this page.)

27 May, Saturday, GBF Potluck Dinner. Information: Clint Seiter.

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

11 June, Sunday Meeting, 10:30 a.m. Speaker: Eric Kolvig.

25 June, Sunday Meeting, 10:30 a.m. Open discussion.

14-16 July, 4th Annual GBF Retreat. Vajrapani Institute in Boulder Creek. Watch for details in upcoming newsletters. ♡

GBF Sponsors Day of Meditation and Mindfulness

GBF will sponsor a silent, one-day sitting on Saturday, May 20, 1995, at Sangha House, 1800 Arch Street, in Berkeley, from 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. The schedule will include sitting and walking meditation, and some brief dharma readings. Please bring a meditation cushion or bench and a bag lunch. Tea will be provided. Space is limited.

To register, please mail a check for \$10 payable to GBF to: GBF Sitting, 2261 Market Street #422, San Francisco, CA 94114. Include your name, address, and telephone number.

If you have any questions about the sitting, call the GBF voicemail line at 415/974-9878. Leave your name and number, and someone will return your call. ♡

Another Earnest Experiment in Sangha



With an eye toward strengthening the ties of our spiritual community, I would like to explore the idea of GBF members sharing a monthly potluck dinner. This would not be anything elaborate, just an informal potluck once a month at a member's home.

I've tentatively selected May 27 as the first trial dinner. If there's enough interest in this idea, we can plan for future events. For more information, call Clint Seiter

Study Group to Focus on Foundations of Buddhism

Beginning on Thursday, May 18, 1995, GBF will sponsor a free, seven-week study group focusing on the fundamentals of the Buddha's teaching. The group will include presentation and discussion of the Buddha's life, the Four Noble Truths, the Eight-Fold Path, and a general overview of the Theravada, Mahayana, and Vajrayana traditions of Buddhism. The format will consist of readings of Buddhist texts, handouts, and general discussion.

The group will meet on seven consecutive Thursday evenings, May 18 through June 29, at the home of Alan Oliver. To register, please call the GBF voicemail line (415/974-9878) by May 11 and leave your name, address, and phone number. Someone will return your call and provide you with details about this offering.

Registration is limited due to space, so we ask that you make a commitment to attend all seven sessions. This will be a closed group after the first meeting. ♡

♦ In This Issue ♦

- 4 New feature: Letters to the Editor.
- 6 Engaged Buddhism project.
- 7 To chant or not to chant?

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 PÖL Pema Ösel Ling: 2013 Eureka 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: Ron Ginsberg, 2215-R Market Street, Box 230, San Francisco, CA 94114. ♥

The Local Dharma

May 1995

[Note: Sometimes schedules change, so we recommend you call to confirm events.]

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

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

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

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

Special Events

6 May **Sitting with Ed Brown.** 5 periods of zazen, outdoor walking meditation, yoga, talks and discussion. 9 am-5 pm, \$20 non-members/\$15 members. GGF

20 May **Men's Day** Robert Hall and Wes Nisker lead this day of traditional Vispassana practice with special attention to the spirit of our lives as men. 9:30 am-5 pm, \$30 includes lunch, contact code MEN. SR

21 May **Monastic Daylong** Ajahn Sumedho, the abbot of Amaravati Buddhist Monastery, leads this day of teachings, sitting, walking, and dharma talk.. 9 am-5 pm, by donation. Bring lunch and something to share with the monks.

28 May-2 June **Five-Day Sesshin** led by Abbot Zoketsu Norman Fischer, this is a traditional Soto Zen meditation retreat. Orientation begins at 3 pm on 28 May. \$150 non-members/\$125 members, registration deadline 23 May. GGF

28 May **Vipassana Daylong** Ajahn Jumnien leads this day of meditation. 9 am-5 pm. \$25. Call for contact code. SR ♥

Reader Comments on Aging and Death

Compiled by Ron Ginsberg

"Aging is a reminder of impermanence and an invitation in practice to seek that which is not born and does not die."

"I am 53 and haven't given much thought to aging. I don't feel old, exercise, have become vegetarian and given up smoking and drinking. My mind is stable and aware of change, and age doesn't seem to fit anymore. It is not my focus—irrelevant. I focus on the dharma and change."

"My apprehension and fear of aging show me how little I understand about impermanence and the illusion of control."

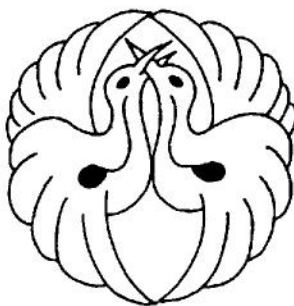
"Aging sucks."

"I don't have time to think about a satisfactory answer to this question."

"Aging is an opportunity to experience very personally the Buddha's first two Noble Truths. It is also an invitation to commence on the

path that leads to the end of the suffering that aging brings."

"Aging is one of the major experiences in life that we all have to go through. It is a process that we can strive to be aware of moment to moment as it is happening to us, the net result being a growth of maturity and eventual wisdom.



Or if we go through life in a closed and ignorant state, all that we will experience will merely be a physical process and a fearful one at that.

So the key to the aging process is to be as totally aware as possible, and a good way for this to happen is to be mindful of our breathing. For it is

the breathing process that connects us to the body-mind state."

"As I grow older and realize at 66 years of age that I have far fewer years ahead of me than I did at age 30 or 40, time grows more precious, but so do people—strangers as well as friends.

Life seems more precious in whatever form it may appear. I'm more conscious, too, of the beauty of the natural world—plants, trees, and flowers. As you become older, you (I, at least) no longer take life for granted. This helps me to live more in the present.

At times I have negative thoughts, like why does my body have to slow down, or why couldn't I have been more successful in the world's eyes, such as having more material goods. To subdue these negative thoughts, I find meditation to be very helpful, and I do more of that now." ♥

Thich Nhat Hanh to Visit Northern California

Three events have been planned for Thich Nhat Hanh's visit to northern California this fall. There will be a five-day retreat at Camp Swig in the Santa Cruz mountains on September 18-22, a Day of Mindfulness at Spirit Rock Meditation Center in Woodacre on September 23, and a dharma talk at the Berkeley Community Theater on September 26.

To register, please send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to Community of Mindful Living, P.O. Box 7355, Berkeley, CA 94707. ♥

Pre-Registration now Required at Spirit Rock Daylong Retreats

Now that lunch is being served at many of the daylong retreats held at Spirit Rock Meditation Center, staff need to know how many people will be attending. This will prevent wasting food and not having enough food for participants.

Beginning July 1, most daylongs will cost \$30, and will include lunch only for those who have pre-registered in advance with a check that is either postmarked the Monday before an event, or received in the Spirit Rock office the Wednesday before the event. Registrants will receive a postcard confirmation that is also your ticket for lunch. ♥

Macintosh Owner, Layout Persons Needed

Do you own a laser printer and Macintosh computer that you could make available to the newsletter committee one day a month? Or are you experienced in using Page-Maker, and would enjoy helping with layout? If so, please contact Bob Hass



Contributors

Thanks to the following people who helped with this issue of the *GBF Newsletter*: Alan Oliver, Bob Hass, Clint Seiter, David Sunseri, John Krowka, Mark Picciano, Maurice Dockrell, and Ron Ginsberg.

